

Burlington Area Flooding: Water and Electricity Are a Lethal Mix!

Electrical Safety Authority offers important information for flood-affected areas

Mississauga, ON – August 11, 2014. With the significant flooding that happened in Burlington last week, the Electrical Safety Authority (ESA) is reminding Ontarians that there is a heightened risk of electric shock when water makes contact with electrical systems that could result in serious injury or death. Follow these electrical safety steps; it could save your life, or the lives of first responders and utility personnel working in the area:

If you experienced flooding in your basement:

- Do not assume that the area affected by the flood is safe.
- Stay out of your basement if you know or suspect water has risen above the level of electrical outlets, baseboard heaters, furnace or was near your electrical panel. Electricity can move through water or wet flooring and cause a severe electrical shock.
- In the event that flood water has risen above outlets, baseboard heaters or your furnace, covered power cords, or was near the electrical panel, contact your local electric utility immediately and arrange for them to disconnect power to your home.

If you had or still have water in contact with the electrical in your basement you may have damage to your electrical system and need to follow these safety steps:

1. If the flood water rose above the outlets, baseboard heaters or your furnace, covered power cords, or was above or near the electrical panel you should have your electrical system assessed and repaired by a Licensed Electrical Contractor (LEC).
2. If you have electrical appliances or products that may have been damaged by flood water. **Do not** plug in or attempt to use the electrical appliances until they have been checked or serviced by a Licensed Electrical Contractor or appliance service provider. Call an LEC, or contact the manufacturer or dealer for the nearest service location.

For more information on dealing with floods

ESA strongly recommends you hire a Licensed Electrical Contractor to evaluate your home's electrical system to determine if it is safe. You can find a Licensed Electrical Contractor at www.esasafe.com in the Customer section under Hire a Contractor.

- The contractor will file for an electrical permit with the ESA so there is a record of the work;
- When the contractor completes the work, the contractor will notify ESA and the ESA Inspector will confirm work has been done safely and power can be reconnected;
- ESA will inform the utility that it is safe to reconnect; the utility will reconnect when it is able to do so.
- After the work is done, ask the contractor for a copy of the ESA Certificate of Inspection for your records and insurance.

ESA reminds all homeowners and businesses including restoration companies to ensure that power has been disconnected to the entire property before entering to avoid shock and electrocution. This includes flooded basements and outbuildings that contain electrical equipment or are connected to the electrical system.



For more information or to find a Licensed Electrical Contractor in your area visit www.esasafe.com in the Customer section under Hire A Contractor.

About the Electrical Safety Authority (ESA)

The Electrical Safety Authority (ESA) is an administrative authority acting on behalf of the Government of Ontario with specific responsibilities under the Electricity Act and the Safety and Consumer Statutes Administration Act. As part of its mandate, ESA is responsible for administering regulation in four key areas: the Ontario Electrical Safety Code; licensing of Electrical Contractors and Master Electricians; electrical distribution safety; and electrical product safety.

For further information:

Electrical Safety Authority Media Relations

905-712-7819 or Media.ESA@electricalsafety.on.ca