

Grey-Bruce and Parry Sound-Muskoka-Area Flooding: Water and Electricity Are a Lethal Mix!

Electrical Safety Authority offers important information for flood-affected areas

Mississauga, ON – April 1, 2016. With the significant flooding expected or already occurring in some areas including the Grey-Bruce and Parry Sound -Muskoka regions, 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.

If you have to evacuate your property in advance of a flood, switch the main breaker in your electrical panel to the “OFF” position to ensure the power is off upon your return home to potentially flood damaged electrical equipment.

If flooding has occurred, 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 experience flooding on your property:

- Do not assume that the area affected by the flood is safe.
- Stay out of your basement or property 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 near the electrical panel, contact your local electric utility immediately and arrange for them to disconnect power to your home.

If flood water contacts the electrical system inside your home, cottage or other buildings on your property, it may be damaged and you need to follow these safety steps:

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

Assessing the safety of your electrical system after a flood

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 and use the [Contractor Look Up](#) tool directly from the homepage.

About the Electrical Safety Authority

The Electrical Safety Authority's (ESA's) role is to enhance public electrical safety in Ontario. As an administrative authority acting on behalf of the Government of Ontario, ESA is responsible for administering specific regulations related to the Ontario Electrical Safety Code, the licensing of Electrical Contractors and Master Electricians, electricity distribution system safety, and electrical product safety. ESA works extensively with stakeholders throughout the province on education, training and promotion to foster electrical safety across the province. More information on the Electrical Safety Authority can be found at www.esasafe.com, through <https://twitter.com/homeandsafety> and on Facebook at www.facebook.com/ElectricalSafetyAuthority.

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