



Ontario Flooding: Water and Electricity Are a Lethal Mix! *Electrical Safety Authority offers important information for flood-affected areas*

Mississauga, ON – April 17, 2014 – With flooding occurring or imminent in many areas in Central and Eastern Ontario, 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 flooding has occurred:

- Do not enter your basement if you know or suspect water has risen above the level of electrical outlets, baseboard heaters, furnace or is 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, covers power cords, or is near the electrical panel, contact your local electric utility immediately and arrange for them to disconnect power to your home.
- Watch out for downed powerlines in flood-affected areas. If you see one, stay back 11 metres or the length of a school bus and call 9-1-1 and your local electric utility to report it.

If you need to leave your home because flooding is imminent and there is no floodwater in your basement:

- Disconnect the power to your home by ensuring that the main switch by your electrical panel is left in the “off” position before you go.
- Move electrical appliances and devices out of your home or to an area in the house above the expected level of flood water. Do not attempt to use these products if they have been in contact with flood water.

If you have water contact or damage to your electrical system, follow these four steps:

1. If water in your basement has risen above the electrical outlets, baseboard heaters, furnace or electrical panel, **DO NOT** enter the basement until the power has been disconnected by the local electric utility.
2. If your electrical system has been affected, your utility may not be able to restore power to your property until damage has been assessed and necessary repairs have been made.
3. ESA strongly recommends you hire a Licensed Electrical Contractor to evaluate your home’s electrical system to determine if it is safe to have the local electric utility restore power to your home. You can find a Licensed Electrical Contractor at www.esasafe.com.
 - The contractor will file for a 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.
4. 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 the 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.

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 more information contact:

Electrical Safety Authority

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www.esasafe.com