

# PLUGGED IN

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## Welcome to the first edition!



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"I am excited to introduce our contractor newsletter designed specifically to "plug you in" to industry information that will help you do your job", says **Bob Stelzer**, President & CEO, Electrical Safety Authority (ESA). "Although there are several other industry-related publications, ESA's *Plugged In* newsletter will provide you with insights and updates on various ESA and industry changes that you need to know about."

Specifically, ESA has a number of new initiatives that directly impact electrical contractors including the new contractor licensing, our on-line notification service that allows you to submit and check the status of your notifications on a 7/24 basis, information on changes to ACP, and much more.

According to Bob, "ESA values our relationship with electrical contractors and knows you are the key to ensuring public electrical safety. We see ourselves as important safety partners so we're always looking for ways to make it easier for you to do your job. With *Plugged In* we're building knowledge and awareness of ESA services that can benefit you."



Bob Stelzer, left with electrician Milan Kolarov

### Next Issue

- New Fees
- Power Line Safety
- 347 Health & Safety



# GETTING CONNECTED - Get On-Line with ESA

ESA offers a web-based program that provides contractors with internet access to ESA systems **24 hours a day, 7 days a week.**

By using our "On-Line" program, ESA account customers can submit applications, display and print a list of their submitted applications, display the inspection status of their existing notifications, and schedule ACP notifications.

**The following are needed to access the "On-Line" program:**

- internet connection and web browser,
- ESA account number, and
- email address.

It's user-friendly and password-protected so you control who accesses your information.

Contractors using this "On-Line" option tell us this service improves their operational efficiency - this could explain why 536 contractors (over 10% of our customers) have chosen the "On-Line" system.

According to Cindy at Campoli Electric, "It's wonderful, quick and easy to use. It is also very self explanatory and convenient."

Give it a try with our on-line simulation at [www.esasafe.com/business/lnk-001.php](http://www.esasafe.com/business/lnk-001.php) using your ESA account number and password guest. Or call the CSC at 1-877-esa-safe (372-7233) and ask the customer service representative to create your user ID so you can get connected to ESA anytime, at the touch of a finger!

## Technical Insights with Ted Olechna



### Most Common Defects

Why does an inspector issue a defect on an electrical installation? The reason relates to safety and is defined by the objective of the Electrical Code. *It is to establish safety standards for the installation and maintenance of electrical equipment. In its preparation, consideration has been given to the prevention of fire and shock hazards, as well as proper maintenance and operation. Compliance with the requirements of this Code and proper maintenance will ensure an essentially safe installation.*

In 2004, 71,841 work orders were filed for work performed in a commercial or industrial environment. Of those, 7%, or 4,898 had defects requiring some sort of corrective action. In total, 11,536 specific defects were issued last year.

Approximately 30% of defects were administrative and concerned arranging access, affixing ACP labels per program requirements, and calling for inspection when ready.

Other administrative defects included:

- Rule 2-022(2) The use of unapproved equipment in an installation. (2%)

- Rule 02-100(3) Completing the panel directory. (3.1%)

The remaining 12% involved non-compliance with the safety requirements of the Code which, if not corrected, could constitute life and property hazards. They included:

- Rule 12-3026 Unused openings in boxes and cabinets shall be effectively closed with plugs or plates. (3.07%)
- Rule 12-3002(4) All outlet boxes are to be provided with a cover or a fixture canopy. (1.89%)
- Rule 12-618 Armoured cable is to be supported within 300 mm of every box or and at intervals of not more than 1.5 m throughout the run. (1.26%)
- Rule 2-308 Working Space Requirements around serviceable equipment in switchboards. (0.93%) This is addressed in Bulletin 2-9-\*

These kinds of defects are easy to fix and should be easy to prevent from recurring. Correction of defects requires time, money and resources. Both the contractor and inspector benefit from defect-free installations.

# The Move to Province-wide Licensing

An interview with Lucy Impera



A province-wide standard and system of licensing electrical contractors (contractors) and master electricians (m-electrician) is being introduced to support safety compliance, consistency in licensing requirements, and a standard for enforcement in Ontario. Lucy Impera, ESA's General Manager, Registrar of Licensing & Certification provides answers to your frequently asked questions.

## What's changing with the existing Licensing requirements?

- Effective January 1/07 **all** contractors and m-electricians working in Ontario will require a provincial ECRA/ESA license even if they have a valid municipal licence.
- Municipal licensing will transition into the new ECRA/ESA licensing system under the Ontario Licensing Regulation 570/05.
- The regulation was built on the ECRA licensing standards, which includes a requirement for a contractor to employ at least one designated m-electrician.
- If a contractor meets the provisional licensing requirements, they may be issued a Provisional Electrical Contractor licence, allowing up to 5 years to meet the m-electrician requirement.

## When do I need to apply for my provincial Licence?

- ECRA/ESA will begin accepting applications on July 3/06.
- **All** electrical contractors and m-electricians working in Ontario must apply for a licence between July 3 and November 30/06 to ensure they meet the January 1/07 deadline.

## What should I do with my existing municipal licence?

- Municipalities will continue to issue and renew licences until June 30/06.
- **Do not allow your current Municipal Licence to expire or you will have to re-write and pass the qualifying exam.**
- If your municipality stops issuing licences prior to June 30/06, you should register with ESA.

- Your ECRA/ESA licence and municipal licence numbers will differ. The deadline to make signage and administrative changes to reflect new licence numbers is December 31/07.

## How can I become a Master Electrician?

A Construction and Maintenance, Domestic and Rural, or Industrial Electrician; or a Certified Engineering Technician, Certified Engineering Technologist, or Professional Engineer who has worked for an electrical contractor for a minimum of three years and passed the qualifying Master's exam, may apply for a Master's licence prior to July 1/06 by submitting a licence application to the local municipality, and after July 1/06 by submitting a licence application to ECRA/ESA.

Visit [www.esaecra.info](http://www.esaecra.info) to view the Pre-master Training and Exam schedule.

## How can I get up-to-date information on licensing?

- Register with ESA's distribution list at [www.esaecra.info](http://www.esaecra.info) or 905-712-5385 to receive licensing updates.
- Information will also be provided through municipalities, industry associations, and ESA regional contractor and OEL chapter meetings.

## What are the annual provincial licensing fees?

An Electrical Contractor licence or a Provisional Electrical Contractor licence fee is \$365 and the Master Electrician licence fee is \$75. If you still have a valid municipal licence when you apply for a new provincial licence, ECRA/ESA will pro-rate your fee based on the number of months remaining on your municipal licence.

## Will ESA enforce licensing requirements?

ESA is currently developing an enforcement policy. We are considering introducing consumer awareness initiatives encouraging the use of licensed electrical contractors, making a licence a requirement for notifications for inspection, and modifying business operations to include marketplace monitoring.

## Stakeholders Support

For their assistance in moving this initiative forward, ESA wishes to recognize and thank the Ministry of Government Services, the ECAO, and the OEL.

# Authorized Contractor Program Key Points



ESA's Authorized Contractor Program (ACP) has established a process to recognize electrical contractors who have consistently performed Ontario Electrical Safety Code-compliant work. This program, which has been supported by the industry, covers a broad spectrum of work. Originally launched to cover residential installations in 1998, the program has grown to include HVAC and small commercial/industrial work, and most recently, pole line maintenance and substation maintenance verticals were added.

The program applies an audit-based approach and closely monitors the work of participating contractors so full inspections may not be required. Audit ratios are established based on the associated risk for the specific wiring work, and differs between the various program verticals (residential, HVAC, C&I, pole line and substation maintenance).

ACP offers a number of benefits to participating contractors, including:

- Uninterrupted workflow. Contractors are required to advise ESA when they are ready for inspection, and may continue with the work if not contacted by the inspector by 2:00 p.m. on the following business day.
- A 20% fee discount for Residential contractors and flat fee permit prices for those doing HVAC and Commercial/Industrial work.
- Pre-authorized connections are very advantageous and are offered on all verticals except HVAC (some conditions and restrictions apply).
- The program invites contractors to co-advertise with ESA, and we list all ACP contractors in the ACP section of our website.

Electrical contractors interested in participating in this program must meet on-going performance requirements, as well as the following eligibility requirements:

- A valid Certificate of Qualification as required by the Trades Qualification and Apprenticeship Act for the work being performed
- \$2M in liability insurance
- Current ESA account balance

Participating contractors are monitored by their "defect ratio" - the calculation divides defective sites by site visits. A contractor's defect ratio must remain below 4%, and if it exceeds 4% the contractor may be warned and suspended from the program. These requirements allow ESA to provide assurance to the Ontario public that participating contractors are performing safe, Code-compliant work.

ESA is proud of our safety partnership with ACP contractors. By participating in the ACP program, contractors not only build strong ties with ESA, they also receive industry recognition, a competitive edge, and a relationship with their local inspector built on trust.

To learn more about the ACP program, view the ACP Newsletter and the ACP manual on the ACP page of ESA's website at [www.esasafe.com](http://www.esasafe.com), or contact the ACP office at 1-800-249-4583.



**We'd like your input.**  
Please send us your comments to:  
[Plugged.In@electricalsafety.on.ca](mailto:Plugged.In@electricalsafety.on.ca)

**ESA'S Key to Quality**  
**1-800-249-4583**