



June 19, 2012

**Safety Alert**

**Immediate Release**

**ESA Warning Home Owners of Risk Associated  
with Legacy Antennae Wiring in Older Houses**

**Mississauga, ON** – Responding to a recommendation from a Coroner’s jury , the Electrical Safety Authority is warning homeowners and tradespeople of a rare but dangerous circumstance involving radio antennae wiring that could exist in older homes. In August 2010 a contractor who was insulating duct work in the attic of an older home in St. Catharines was electrocuted when his head came into contact with an energized bare wire that was strung across the attic ceiling. An investigation found that the bare wire was an abandoned radio antenna that had been inadvertently connected to the home’s electrical system thus energizing the wire.

In the 1940s it was common practice to string antenna wire behind walls and into attics to improve radio reception. Constructed with bare or uninsulated wires, these antennas were at times fed behind walls and into attics through or near electrical outlets. As a result, these antennae wires could inadvertently come into contact with a home’s electrical system energizing the antenna and creating an electrical hazard. Any contact with such an energized wire could result in serious injury or death.

Ontario’s Electrical Safety Authority is warning owners of older homes to note any unusual or bare wiring present in their attics. If any is found, homeowners should not touch the wire but contact a licensed electrical contractor to check if the wire is energized. Workers and tradespeople are also advised to check for metal antenna systems and bare electrical wires when undertaking maintenance or renovations in older homes.

“Homeowners and tradespeople who find metal antennae wiring should refrain from touching these and should contact a Licensed Electrical Contractor. Once confirmed that these antenna have not been linked into the electrical system they should be removed to avoid future potential hazards.” says Doug Crawford, Chief Public Safety Officer with the Electrical Safety Authority.

**About the Electrical Safety Authority (ESA)**

The Electrical Safety Authority's mission is to improve electrical safety for the well-being of the people of Ontario. The overall vision of the ESA is to achieve zero electrical accidents, injuries and fatalities across Ontario. More information on the Electrical Safety Authority can be found on their website [www.esasafe.com](http://www.esasafe.com).

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