

LEGISLATION Safety Codes Act (Administrative Items Regulation)

SUBJECT: Reporting of Electrical Incidents/Accidents

REPORTING REQUIRED

The purpose of this Information Bulletin is to remind industry stakeholders and members of the public in Alberta that all electrical incidents are required to be reported to the Chief Electrical Administrator for the Province of Alberta. Inconsistent reporting of incidents for the years 2010 and 2011 has resulted in a lack of reliable information for those years. Reporting compliance in following years has improved, however, it is still insufficient for the purposes of the reporting requirements.

Under the provisions of Section 59 of the Safety Codes Act “if there is an unsafe condition, accident or fire that involves a thing, process or activity to which this Act applies, the owner or person designated in the regulations shall, if required by the regulations, forthwith report it to an Administrator, or to the accredited municipality or accredited regional services commission if the thing, process or activity is under the administration of the accredited municipality or accredited regional services commission.”

Section 15 of the Administrative Items Regulation requires that “any person who knows of:

- (a) an accident to a person, a fatal accident to livestock or a power line contact involving an electrical installation or electrical equipment, or
- (b) a fire of electrical origin or suspected electrical origin must, as soon as practicable, report the accident, contact or fire to an Administrator for the electrical discipline or to a safety codes officer and the safety codes officer must notify an Administrator for the electrical discipline.

What needs to be reported?

The Safety Codes Act (SCA) requires that anyone designated by a regulation under the SCA must report any incident or accident that involves anything governed by the SCA. The Administrative Items Regulation (AIR) defines the “person designated in the regulations” as “any person who knows of” any electrical incident or accident.

The AIR further defines an incident or accident to be any of the following:

- an accident to a person
- a fatal accident to livestock
- a power line contact involving an electrical installation or electrical equipment
- a fire of electrical origin

What is an accident to a person?

In the electrical discipline an accident to a person means any situation where a person has contacted a live electrical part, whether that electrical contact causes death, injury or no damage to the person(s) involved. All contacts between people and any live electrical parts are considered to be a reportable incident under the Safety Codes Act.

What is a fatal accident to livestock?

In the electrical discipline a fatal accident to livestock means any situation where a domesticated animal has been killed as a result of contact with a live electrical part.

What is a powerline contact?

In the electrical discipline a powerline contact is any situation where a person or piece of equipment has contacted any part of an overhead or underground electrical circuit. This contact may involve the conductors, the supporting structures for the conductors or any other piece of electrical equipment involved in transmitting electricity such as (but not limited to): poles, light standards, guy wires, transformers, switching devices and overhead or underground lines.

What is a fire of electrical origin?

In the electrical discipline a fire of electrical origin occurs when the source of the fire is a consequence of the failure of an electrical appliance or circuit.

What does “any person who knows of” actually mean?

The AIR states that anyone who has knowledge of an electrical incident must report that incident, unless that person knows (or has reasonable grounds to believe) that the incident has already been reported by another person. The phrase “any person” means that no person in the Province of Alberta is exempt from this requirement.

Some examples include (but are not limited to):

- a doctor treating a person for electrical burns in an emergency room is required to report the incident which caused the electrical injury
- a police officer investigating a traffic accident where a car has knocked down a wooden power line support is required to report the incident
- a construction worker who witnesses a colleague receive a shock from a hand-held electrical tool is required to report the incident even if the effected worker is not injured

Are there any consequences for not reporting an incident?

Section 67 of the SCA states that “a person who fails to prepare, submit or retain any information that the person is required by this Act to prepare, submit or retain is guilty of an offence.”

The penalties for offences under the SCA have recently increased to a maximum of \$100 000.00 for the first offence and an additional \$1 000.00 per day for a continuing offence. In addition; subsequent offences carry a maximum fine of \$500 000.00 and an additional \$1 000.00 per day for continuing offences.

How are incidents or accidents to be reported?

Municipal Affairs has developed a standard form for use in reporting incidents. This form is available as a fillable pdf document for download at:

<http://www.municipalaffairs.alberta.ca/documents/ss/STANDATA/electrical/IncidentOccurrenceReportFormFillable2012.pdf>

Municipal Affairs staff members are available to assist with the completion of this form. Staff can be reached by telephone at 1-866-421-6929 or by email at safety.services@gov.ab.ca.

What is the purpose of an incident/accident report?

The data from the reports is collected by Municipal Affairs for several reasons.

The data is used to produce an annual report of electrical incidents which is made available to the public. Reports are available online at:

http://www.municipalaffairs.alberta.ca/cp_electrical_forms_and_reports.cfm

The data is also used to review the requirements for electrical installations in Alberta; occasionally changes in the national or provincial Codes and Standards are brought about as a result of incidents that are reported by Albertans.

The data can also be used to warn other provinces of unapproved products that have caused incidents in Alberta.

The data can also be used by training facilities for trades people in order to give students up-to-date information on acceptable practices and problems that result from incorrect installations.

No personally identifying information is ever released to anyone outside of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, unless the release of this information is required by law.