

Inspectors of Wires FAQs

What are my electrical inspection duties?

An inspector must remember he or she is a licensed electrician and is expected to follow the state laws and regulations of the Board of Examiners of Electricians, city/town bylaws, and rules of local utility. A Wiring Inspector is responsible for all wires above and below the municipality therefore must respond to requests, complaints, concerns of consumers, electricians, security installers, the general public, and others.

What is my role in enforcing electrical state laws?

The future of electricians is in YOUR hands! Review the state laws with your electrician or the foreman on the first day at the job site. (i.e.: ratio, overseeing apprentices, etc.)

What should I know about electrical politics?

Pay attention to your surroundings and the people around you! Know what is happening in your town or city. Go to your municipal electrical inspector meetings. Join IAEI. Be a Team player!

How can I demonstrate exceptional professionalism as an inspector?

The Electrical Board expects you to demonstrate professionalism. Follow your State Laws and Regulations. Attend the State Board of Electrician state hearings which occur on the fourth Monday of every month.

What should I know about consumer protection?

You are the consumer protection for your town or city. Consumers need your help. Call 617-727-7406 for consumer help on state laws.

What about unlicensed work?

Obviously, unlicensed electrical work is illegal. As a wire inspector you are the eyes and ears of the industry for job security, as well as, consumer protection. Insurance companies disapprove of unlicensed electrical installations. If you have the proper facts, evidence, (i.e. photos of unlicensed installer and his work, etc.) you can file a complaint at your local county court house.

What are my continuing education requirements?

Inspectors must participate in 27 hours of continuing education every three years. Inspectors are required to complete 15 hours of MCE within the first 12 months of a license renewal cycle. Continuing education hours can be attained through meetings and classes.

How do I handle Renter's complaints?

Inspectors should bring all renter's complaints, such as the common complaint about paying for a neighbor's electricity, to the Board of Health to be handled.

What should I know about fire investigation?

Talk with your State Fire Marshall for guidance on fire investigation. A fire investigation course is available for every inspector.

What is the difference between a code violation and a fire hazard?

A code violation happens during an inspection of new installation, while a fire hazard can occur either during *or* after an inspection. Neglecting to report a hazard, a missing junction cover, for instance, could result in a fire. Notify the homeowner *in writing* of the hazard if you see a potential fire hazard during an electrical inspection,

How do I enforce the electrical code?

Any Code violation must be recorded in writing along with the section of the Code that has been violated. Have a professional discussion with the electrician and explain where the violation exist and allow him/her to explain his view on the potential citation. If the electrician disagrees with your interpretation, ask him/her to show you the electrical code to support the claim. Avoid getting into a dispute. Bring to State Appeals if the disagreement cannot be solved professionally.

When do I inspect an installation?

Inspect an outdoor installation within 24 hours, not including weekends and holidays. Inspect an interior installation within 72 hours, not including weekends and holidays. Existing installations do not need to be brought up to Code unless the consumer asks the electrician to do so.

What happens when the homeowner is not home?

Leave a tag/note, and ask them to call you within the next 24 or 72 hours.

What should I do about partial inspections?

Always keep a log of jobs and partial inspections. Nothing is worse than not recalling what you last inspected.

How are inspection fees and requests for inspections made?

Inspection fees are determined by the town/city. As state law requires, always have request inspections in writing, and have a fax number available to accept written requests for installation. This protects the electrician as well as the inspector by having written verification of the process.

What is the difference between a state application and a permit?

An electrician fills out a state application in order to obtain a permit

When does an inspector need to be available?

An inspector must be available twenty-four hours per day to respond to customer requests for help

What should I know about local utility help?

Know your electrical overhead and underground service location. Each local utility has its own engineering rules, which you are responsible for learning.

How to *Cancel* an electrical permit?

A homeowner or electrician can write a letter to the Town or City stating they want to have their electrical permit closed/cancelled

Can a homeowner do his or her own electrical installation?-

The owner of a single family occupied dwelling is allowed, by law, to do his or her own electrical work. However, it is up to each individual inspector to decide if he or she wants to give the homeowner a permit for occupancy. In addition, some towns/cities give the homeowner an electrical test.

Can an electrician design his or her own work?

State Law allows an electrician to do his own design, and the electrician is not required to submit plans to the town or city. Buildings over 35,000 cubic feet, however, require input from a licensed professional engineer and/or registered architect.

How do I enforce the Electrical Code?

The Inspector of Wires should look up and verify the MA Electrical Code before writing an electrical violation, making sure to include Section and Article of the electrical code, when citing an electrical is violation

What is a security license and an S license

Every security technician needs an S-license issued by the Department of Public Safety
No exceptions!

What role does an insurance company play in determining the extent of repair for a claim?

Let the insurance company make the call for what will be covered under insurance! The inspector can assist in the decision-making process.

We Are Electricians

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