

ELECTRICAL CURRENTS

A Newsletter from the Office of L&I Chief Electrical Inspector Wayne Molesworth

April 2024

Question of the Month: In a health care facility's the branch circuits supplied from the Critical Branch are usually found where?

- A. Patient rooms, treatment rooms & operating rooms.
- B. Nurses stations, hallways.
- C. Labs and IT rooms.
- D. All the above

See the answer at the bottom of page 2.

Safety Tip of the Month

Don't make the mistake of treating the grounded (the neutral, generally white or grey) conductor as if it's safe. Do not open it while energized. It is part a circuit under load and can cause shocks, injuries, and data loss, or damage equipment with sensitive electronic controls.

2023 NEC and WAC 296-46B Effective April 1, 2024

The WAC 296-46B revision process with adoption of the 2023 National Electrical Code (NEC) is complete. The director signed the CR-103 rulemaking order on February 21, 2024. The 2023 NEC and revised WAC 296-46B are now effective.

Generally, new codes and rules will apply if the electrical permit is issued on or after the adoption date with two exceptions:

- a. New one- and two-family dwellings or multifamily dwellings where the issue date of building permits for the premises is before the adoption date; or
- b. New installations where plan review is required by WAC 296-46B-900 when plans are received and accepted for review before the adoption date.

You can review or print a copy of the revised rules on the [Electrical Laws & Rules](#) page of our website.

Soon, a special edition of this newsletter will be published which will highlight significant changes. The exam will be updated to the 2023 NEC hopefully at the end of 2024. Stay tuned for further announcements in this newsletter.

2023 Rulemaking Update - Fee Increase Effective July 1, 2024

We adopted a 6.40% fee increase to support operating expenses for electrical inspections and other electrical public safety activities. The increase is the Office of Financial Management's maximum allowable fiscal growth factor rate for fiscal year 2025. See WAC [296-46B-010](#)(1) to find out more how fees apply to new permits.

Sections affected by this rulemaking are WAC [296-46B-906](#), [296-46B-909](#), and [296-46B-911](#). Learn more on our [Rule Development](#) page.

Electronic copies of the laws and rules are available for review or printing on our [Electrical Laws & Rules](#) webpage.

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How Do Emergency Disconnect Requirements Apply to Altered Services?

Article 230.85 of the 2023 NEC has requirements for emergency disconnects for one- and two-family dwellings.

WAC [296-46B-230\(11\)](#) replaces NEC 230.85(C) with: “When service equipment supplying one- and two-family dwellings is replaced, an emergency disconnecting means must be installed whenever the service ampacity is increased or decreased, or when any of the following are relocated: Service disconnects, meter bases, overhead service masts, or underground service risers.”

Factory Assembled Structures (FAS) Rule Update

The FAS Advisory Board is expanding its members and is looking for electricians to join.

The [Washington State Department of Labor & Industries](#) (L&I) is proposing changes to the factory assembled structures rules. The changes affect L&I’s Factory Assembled Structures (FAS) Advisory Board, and distributing inspection insignia to manufacturers of recreational vehicles (RV’s).

A public hearing on the proposed rules will take place **April 29, 2024, at 9 a.m.** Learn more about this rulemaking and how to participate [here](#).

If you have any questions or want to know how to participate in the rule development, please contact us at FAS1@Lni.wa.gov or call 1-800-705-1411, Option 3.

Electrical Training Hour Reconsideration Process Launches in April

If you receive a decision after April 1, 2024 from L&I that denies training hours, you can request reconsideration. Your denial letter will contain the information you need to file a request. There is no fee for filing a request, which must be made within 20 calendar days of the date of the initial denial letter you received. The request must include specific reasons why the denial should be reconsidered along with a copy or photo of the letter you received.

Send the request and questions to HoursReconsideration@Lni.wa.gov.

Answer to the Question of the Month:

The answer is D, All of the above.

Check out *NEC 517.34(A)*. Critical Branch circuits can be found in non patient care areas such as but limited to crash cart alcoves in hallways, nurses stations, labs and IT rooms. This is important to insure that the wiring methods required by *NEC 517.31(C)(3)(1)* are met.

Picture of the Month: *If viewing this document online, click on the picture to open a larger image.* There is so much wrong in this picture. The lack of a conduit system, failure to protect the NMB cable from physical damage by running it outside the framing, and the bonding of the metal parts of the structure are just a few things. What else can you find?



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