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RELAY

A newsletter for Electrical Contractors

June 2009, No. 6

Welcome to another edition of our RELAY newsletter, which has been produced to provide information to Electrical Contractors across Ergon Energy's distribution area.

Stability of Builders' Temporary Supply (BTS) poles

Before a service line is attached to a BTS, it is necessary for an Ergon Energy Electrical Connection Officer to:

- check the BTS pole to ensure compliance with the design requirements; and
- undertake a rope test to ensure the BTS is safe to climb.

Many poles are found to be failing the rope test due to inadequate installation of the pole and associated supporting struts. As a result, the poles will not be connected and fees will be incurred for a later re-visit.

The **Electricity Connection and Metering Manual (ECMM)** drawings 887933-01 and 887934-01 provide typical construction and installation requirements.

Regardless of who installs the BTS pole, it is the responsibility of the Electrical Contractor who submits the Form A to ensure design and installation requirements are met.

Grouping of Main Switches

Contractors are urged to review the below ruling from the Electrical Safety Office in relation to identification of main switches in accordance with the requirements of SAA 3000/2007 Clause 2.3.3.4:

An arrangement with the "main switch light and power" mounted on the left hand end of the DIN rail, with the "main switch hot water" mounted on the right hand end of the DIN rail would not meet the requirements of Clause 2.3.3.4 (a) as the switches do not comply with "shall be readily distinguishable by means of grouping, colouring" etc. Clause 2.9.5.2 also requires the relationship of switches to the various sections of the installation to be marked.

If the prohibited arrangement detailed above is performed Ergon Energy Inspectorial staff have been directed to record a "minor defect" on a Form B unless:

- The "main switch light and power" and "main switch hot water" are grouped / mounted on the DIN rail adjacent to each other, AND
- The "main switch light and power" and "main switch hot water" are marked and readily distinguishable from other switchgear OR
- A double pole main switch is used to isolate the "light and power" and "hot water" and are marked accordingly.

Installations where Inverter Energy Systems (IES) are installed will require the Solar Supply Main Switch to adhere to the above requirements.

Energy Advice

Ergon Energy has an Energy Advisory Group which forms an integral part of the company's National Contact Centre. The Energy Advisory Group has been established to provide advice to both Electrical Contractors and customers in relation to:

- Tariff selection;
- Running costs;
- Installation layout;
- Ergon Energy supply;
- Metering; and
- The Electricity Connection and Metering Manual.

Members of the group are electrically qualified, very approachable and can be contacted on **13 10 46**.

Tariff for Solar Water Heater

When an electric storage hot water system is replaced with a solar system, the customer must be consulted to determine which eligible tariff they want the booster element connected to.

Why? Ergon Energy is receiving a high volume of complaints from customers after they have been billed for service fees on a controlled tariff for the solar booster, which has not been used in the billing period. Investigations have found that the contractor has connected the solar booster to the same tariff as the old storage heater without giving the customer the option to have the booster connected to the principal tariff for domestic customers (in most cases this will be tariff 11).

In many instances, the customer may prefer to have the booster connected to the principal tariff meter unless there are other loads connected to the controlled tariff.

If a customer advises that they do not require controlled tariff metering, the meter wiring shall be disconnected and terminated by the contractor and a Form A should be submitted to Ergon Energy to recover the metering equipment.

Standard charges may apply as per the Ergon Energy Distribution Service Price List.

http://www.ergon.com.au/resources/EECL_Services%20Price%20List_Website_08-09_Govt%20Cap.pdf



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Fees for cold water complaints

Electrical Contractors are asked to invoice Ergon Energy directly after attending to cold water supply complaints and restoring hot water when the relay is found to be faulty.

Please quote the Ergon Energy Service Order number and the customer's meter number on your invoice and send to:

**Customer Service, Ergon Energy,
PO Box 4444, Rockhampton QLD 4700.**

Electrical Contractors removing primary fuse (pole/pillar fuse)

Electrical Contractors and their electrical workers are permitted to remove and replace primary fuses in specific circumstances, such as when they need to work on consumers' mains and switchboard. This is provided they meet the requirements of the electrical safety legislation.

The contractor and electrical workers involved need to comply with the **Code of Practice for Electrical Work** in such things as risk management, PPE and equipment, as well as being an "Authorised Person" in order to reduce the general 3m exclusion zone around exposed live parts such as internals of Ergon Energy's pillar boxes, overhead services, LV and HV lines.

Electrical contractors are not permitted to replace a blown primary fuse after loss of supply to consumer's installation. Electrical Contractors, or customers, should report the problem to Ergon Energy at 13 22 96 [24hr Faults].

Are you an "Authorised Person" for an electrical part?

An "Authorised Person" for an electrical part, means a person who:

- has enough technical knowledge and experience to do work that involves contact with, or being near to, the electrical part; and
- has been approved by the person in control of the electrical part to do work that involves contact with, or being near to, the electrical part, or is authorised to act for the person in control of the electrical part.

Note: If you have not been approved by the "person in control" (Ergon Energy), you are not an "Authorised Person". Therefore you are not permitted to carry out any work or operate any plant within an exclusion zone of 3 metres from any Ergon Energy assets unless you have consulted Ergon Energy and received written safety advice before commencing work.

More detailed information is available in the **Electrical Safety Regulation 2002** and **Code of Practice - "Working near Exposed Live Parts"** which can be found on the ESO website.

How does an Electrical Contractor become an "Authorised Person" so the reduced exclusion zones apply?

Ergon Energy requires a letter from the employer stating "that the persons nominated possess an appropriate level of technical knowledge and experience to do the work, including the operation of plant or vehicle and have demonstrated competencies in:

- identifying communication, low voltage and high voltage cables (including ways of ascertaining the voltages present);
- distinguishing between insulated and bare conductors;
- understanding the possible causes and risks of insulated conductors being damaged and demonstrate skills and knowledge necessary to implement a safe system of work;
- demonstrating familiarity with the exclusion zones and requirements for the different categories of lines, conductors, and authorisation of persons, and;
- applying emergency procedures in the event of an incident."

Other detail necessary includes –

- Name of Employer/Self Employed Person
- Name of Company
- Name/names of nominees
- Nature of work (e.g. operate crane or excavator, drive a garbage truck, erect scaffolding, perform electrical contracting work)

Recognised training courses are available to assist applicants to meet the above requirements if required.

Adequate systems to monitor ongoing competency and identification of persons authorised to work near electric lines should be in place by the employer.

Applications for approval as "Authorised Person", or requests for further detail should be directed to:

Ergon Energy Technical Regulatory Group
PO Box 358 Cairns Qld. 4870
Phones - 07 4080 4960 / 07 4080 4953
Fax - 07 4080 4518
Email - esoreporting@ergon.com.au

Have your say

With regard to inquiries on information in the RELAY newsletter, or issues you may like to have considered for inclusion in future editions, contact your regional representative:

Central:	matthew.vanderwerff@ergon.com.au
Central:	travis.boyle@ergon.com.au
Northern:	vince.prasser@ergon.com.au
Northern:	ian.tindall@ergon.com.au
Southern:	robert.rafter@ergon.com.au

Or telephone them through our National Contact Centre on 13 10 46. When asked for information about your call, say CONTRACTOR ENQUIRY and your call will be directed to the appropriate person.

You can check out more about
Ergon Energy at www.ergon.com.au