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RELAY

A newsletter for Electrical Contractors

June 2011, No. 10

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

Timely reminder to installers of Inverter Energy Systems (IES)

Under no circumstances should an IES be installed without network approval as this could present a risk to the network, the customer's premises and potentially to other customers' premises on the network.

Customers requesting an IES have an obligation under the Electricity Regulation 2006 to have network approval prior to installing an IES. Please make sure your customers are aware of this requirement before installing their IES to avoid unnecessary delays.

If we receive a Form A for a system we have not approved, we will contact the customer to arrange completion of an application. We will then conduct an assessment before the meter is changed. If we identify an adverse impact to the network, the system will need to be disconnected until alternative solutions are explored. In some cases, the connection may be refused, or in the case of serious breaches, legal action taken.

If a customer has an account with an electricity retailer other than Ergon Energy, they will need to contact that retailer to discuss the type of installation and their intentions to enter the Queensland Government Solar Bonus Scheme.



Lodging Form As during natural disasters

During this past summer of cyclones and record flooding, Ergon Energy allowed electrical contractors in the affected areas to leave their completed Form As in meter boxes. This temporary measure was allowed to expedite the restoration of supply to our customers whose installation sustained structural damage or was inundated by flood waters.

Now that the emergency is over, the normal procedure of submitting this paperwork on-line or by fax has been re-instated.

Removing or relocating meters

Ergon Energy is once again reminding electrical contractors that they are not permitted to remove or relocate revenue meters.

Any attempt to work on the meter by anyone other than the appointed metering provider for that installation is in clear breach of the National Electricity Rules (NER). Breaches of the NER requirements can attract civil penalties with considerable fines and are being enforced.

Please phone the National Contact Centre on 13 10 46 to obtain a quote for work on revenue meters or other services listed on the *Price List for Alternative Control Services*.

Special metering for larger customer connections

If a large customer's retail electricity account is not with Ergon Energy, they must have special metering installed so their usage can be recorded and sent to their retailer. Large customers are customers who use more than 100,000 kWhrs per year.

Their retailer can choose a meter provider other than Ergon Energy to install and maintain the meter. There is a number of different meter providers operating in Ergon Energy's distribution area. The meter provider's name should be on the meter.

We recommend that you discuss the special meter requirements with these large customers before doing any work.

New laws for pool pump Tariff 33 connections

Licensed electrical contractors should familiarise themselves with new state-wide laws to take effect from 1 July, 2011, which allow pool filtration and sanitation systems to be connected to Tariff 33 via a standard power point socket, removing the requirement for hardwiring.

All other pool equipment on the same circuit will still need to be hardwired to Tariff 33.

Licensed electrical contractors should read the updated version of the *Queensland Electricity Connection and Metering Manual* for more details.

To learn more about the State Government's new pool pump reforms visit cleanenergy.qld.gov.au



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Installation of generator changeover switches

There is still confusion amongst some electrical contractors relating to compliance with relevant Australian Standards when generator changeover switches are installed on a customer's installation.

It is the electrical contractor's responsibility to comply with the *Wiring Rules* with specific reference to AS 3010:2005. When examining these switches, Ergon Energy officers will check to make sure the installation is "Electrically Safe" at the time of their inspection as well as compliant with the *Queensland Electricity Connection and Metering Manual* in relation to metering. Supply will be left connected if these conditions have been met.

Ergon Energy officers may note or point out a minor defect if they believe it is not compliant with the relevant Australian Standard. However, the decision to rectify these minor defects lies solely with the electrical contractor.

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 *Price List for Alternative Control Services*.

For the Price List go to ergon.com.au, select the 'Contractors & Suppliers' link and follow the prompts.

New connections

Before a new connection can be energised by Ergon Energy, the customer must have an electricity account for that connection. It is important that you check with the customer to make sure they have an account before submitting the Form A to avoid unnecessary delays. The customer's electricity retailer is a mandatory field on the form. It lets Ergon Energy know you have confirmed with the customer that they do have an electricity account, regardless if it is with us or another retailer.

Revisions to the QECMM

The first revision of the *Queensland Electricity Connection and Metering Manual (QECMM)* will apply from 1 July and will soon be available on the Ergon Energy website.

For the manual go to ergon.com.au, select the 'Contractors & Suppliers' link and follow the prompts.

Changes to the Price List

The *Price List for Alternative Control Services* sets out the prices and product codes that apply in Ergon Energy's supply area in relation to Alternative Control Services. The Price List has recently been updated and renamed. The updated Price List will apply from the 1 July 2011 and will soon be available on the Ergon Energy website.

Electrical contractors should familiarise themselves with the updated Price List as a number of the prices have changed following approval of rates by the Australian Energy Regulator. As with last year's Price List, many of the services, which were previously a 'fixed charge', are now 'as quoted'.

For the Price List go to ergon.com.au, select the 'Contractors & Suppliers' link and follow the prompts.

Have your say

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

Central: crm.central@ergon.com.au

Northern: vince.prasser@ergon.com.au

Far North: david.dehnen@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.

Go to the Contractors site at ergon.com.au to access information, download forms, register for Alerts, and much, much more.