

ELECTRICAL CURRENTS

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

May 2023

Question of the Month: At what amperage rating are overcurrent protection devices required to have arc fault energy reduction? See page 2 for the answer.

Big Change on May 26 – Electrician Exam Candidates Need Exam Unique IDs

We are implementing Exam Unique IDs as a result of SHB [1455](#). The new law prohibits us from sharing Social Security numbers (SSNs) with our exam provider PSI, even with highly secure methods used today. Exam candidates setting up accounts with PSI after May 26 must use their Exam Unique ID, PSI and L&I are no longer using SSNs to identify candidates.

Here is what electrician exam candidates need to know:

- An Exam Unique ID is an 11 character series of numbers and letters that starts with WA.
- Candidates approved for exam on May 26 or after will receive an eligibility notice with their Exam Unique ID and instructions about how to set up an account with PSI.
- Candidates approved for exam in the 365 days prior to May 26 that have not created an account by that date will receive letters with instructions and Exam Unique IDs needed to set up an account with PSI.
- Candidates that have set up PSI accounts in the 365 days prior to May 26 are not affected, PSI is updating Exam Unique IDs information for those accounts.
- PSI will update their [Candidate Information Bulletin](#) to reflect this change on May 26.

Exception to 2020 NEC 230.71(B)(4) Requirements for Metering Centers

Until April 1, 2024, requirements for separate compartments for service disconnects do not apply to 250 volt, single phase metering centers with 1 – 6 service disconnects. We will only extend this allowance if manufacturing capacity does not improve. More information to come in future editions of this newsletter.

Apprenticeship information session May 25, 5 p.m.

Registered apprenticeship programs will host an informational night for employers and trainees to learn more about their training programs. The session will include presentations from union, non-union and individual-employer programs. There will be time for questions.

The session will take place at 5 p.m. over Zoom. To participate click on [this link](#), and use passcode: Meeting1!

By phone: (360)209-5623 ID: 859 7077 6017 Passcode: 694551859

Learn more: www.Lni.wa.gov/ElectricalApprenticeship. Questions? Email: electricalapprenticeship@lni.wa.gov

Safety Tip of the Month

When working on or about energized or potentially energized electrical equipment, be aware that an arc flash/blast event can seriously injure or kill you and anyone nearby.

[NFPA 70E-2021](#), Standard for Electrical Safety in the Workplace, provides assistance in determining the severity of potential exposure, planning safe work practices, and selecting personal protective equipment.

Here is a good [Arc Flash Awareness](#) video from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) that shows what can happen when things go wrong

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Legislative Update

[ESSB 5320](#) , a bill creating additional pathways for trainees, military, and out of state electricians to become certified electricians was signed into law by Gov. Jay Inslee on April 14. Here is what the bill does:

- Until July 1, 2026, Section 2 of the bill allows trainees to work without registering in an apprenticeship if the trainees have 3,000 hours of experience working in the electrical construction trade or completed a two-year training school program before July 1, 2023. Trainees with fewer than 3000 hours worked before July 1, 2026 must be registered apprentices if performing work limited to (01) electricians.

To qualify for an (01) journey level examination under this allowance, the department must receive candidate examination applications and supporting documentation before July 1, 2026.

- Section 1 of the bill makes permanent the temporary provisions in recently amended WAC 296-46B-945 that allow out of state and military electricians to qualify for an (01) journey level examination without completing an apprenticeship.

Learn more: www.lni.wa.gov/ElectricalApprenticeship. Check back if updates related to above have not posted.

Rule Update – Expedited Rulemaking to Enact ESSB 5320

ESSB 5320 amends apprenticeship requirements brought on by 2018’s ESS 6126. Parts of rules just adopted to implement ESS 6126 conflict with allowances made by ESSB 5320.

To avoid having rules that conflict with laws, we filed a CR-105 expedited rule on April 19, 2023 to amend rules so they align with allowances made by ESSB 5320. The new rules are tentatively scheduled to take effect July 3, 2023. To learn more, visit our [“Rule Development”](#) page.

Rule Update – Code Adoption - TAC Members Needed

Last month we started the process to update the WAC to adopt the 2023 NEC. This is your chance to help shape the electrical industry in Washington. We are still accepting applications to the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and WAC change proposals using the [Rule Proposal form](#).

Learn all about it in the [April 2023 Special Edition](#) of this newsletter. You have until May 20th to get involved in this important work.

You can submit your TAC application and WAC proposals to ElectricalWAC@lni.wa.gov

Answer to the Question of the Month: 1200 Amps.

Check out NEC 240.87 for all the requirements.

Picture of the Month:

There is a lot going on in this picture. Some of the corrections the inspector found were: the orientation of the panel, breakers having “off” in the up position, no hubs, no rain tight fittings, no conduit supports, no electrodes installed and the manufactures instructions were not followed.

Click on the picture for a larger image.



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