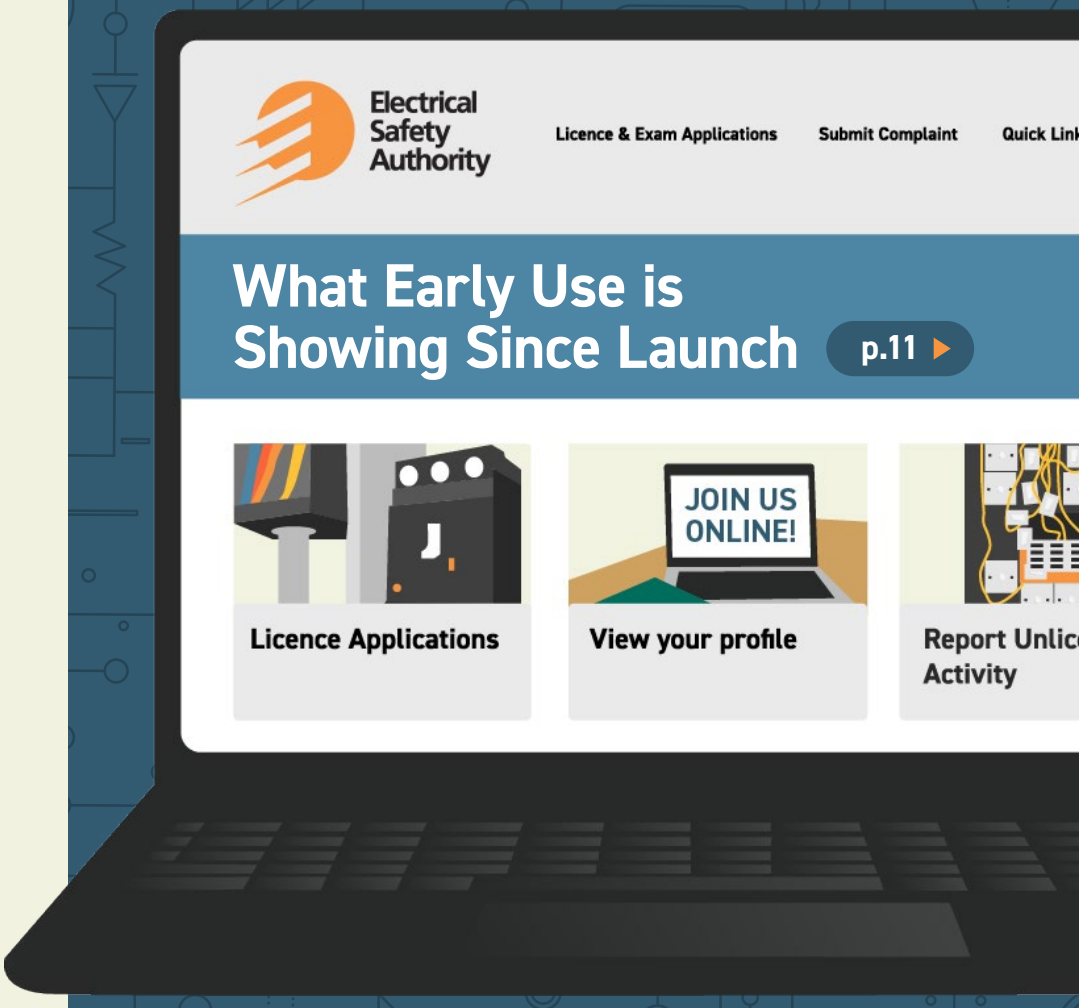
News, Views and Updates from the Electrical Safety Authority

PLUGGED IN

WINTER 2026

Inside ESA's Licensing Platform:



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Think you know the OESC inside out? Take our quiz and find out!

Electrical Safety Authority

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Convictions (October 1, 2025 - February 28, 2026)

The following is a conviction under the Electricity Act, 1998 for violations of the legislation or the Ontario Electrical Safety Code, and have been prosecuted through the Provincial Offences Act.

Breach of Order

Cete Blue Inc. ("CBI") owned and operated **Amir's Motel** on Colborne Street West in **Brantford**. The business had been using the property as a multi-residential rental space. Nasir Mahmood was the company's sole officer and director.

In February 2024, Brantford By-Law Services received a complaint about the property which, in turn, notified the Electrical Safety Authority (ESA). An ESA inspection identified several electrical defects, including one that a risk to life and / or property. More specifically, a pole located on the property, and which was owned by CBI, had been damaged after a storm.

An Order under s.113(11) of the *Electricity Act* was issued in May of 2024 requiring CBI to correct the electrical defects by June; however, despite attempts by the ESA to work with the owner at getting the electrical defects corrected, the required repairs were never completed — including to the pole.

In August of 2024, and so after the ESA had issued it the Order, CBI was dissolved. As the Order had not been complied with, the ESA proceeded to charge Mr. Mahmood with failing to take reasonable care to ensure that CBI complied with the Order. Mr. Mahmood was convicted following a trial in absentia and fined **$20,000**. The court noted that this was a first offence and imposed a reduced fine accordingly.

This conviction reinforces the importance of complying with ESA Orders and ensuring that electrical work is performed safely and legally in Ontario.

Director of Reviews and Appeals Upholds Order on Inherited Defect: What LECs Should Know

Recent appeal ruling confirms homeowners must correct defects even when the issue existed before they bought the home

A recent decision from ESA's Director of Reviews and Appeals (DORA) confirmed that when a defect is found during an inspection, it must be corrected — regardless of when the issue first arose.

In this case, an inspection in 2024 uncovered that a Toronto home's electrical service conduit and meter base were located inside the building envelope, **a contravention of Rule 6-208 of the Ontario Electrical Safety Code** (OESC). A Defect Notice and then an Order were issued when the installation wasn't brought into compliance within the required timelines.

The homeowners appealed, arguing that the installation was already in place when they purchased the property and shouldn't be held to current OESC requirements. They also noted that their utility provider had not raised concerns.

After reviewing the evidence, the DORA confirmed the order.

Two key points emerge from the decision:

1. **Compliance is based on what exists at the time of inspection.**

   Rule 6-208 has been in effect since 1998. Because the condition was present during ESA's inspection, the Order was valid. The focus is whether a contravention exists — not who created it.

2. **Current owners are responsible for remediation.**

   Even when a defect is inherited, the responsibility to correct it rests with the current homeowner. Utility opinions or the absence of past notices do not alter ESA's legislative authority to enforce the OESC.

Note: The appellant filed an appeal of the DORA's decision to the Review Panel.

For Licensed Electrical Contractors, the ruling provides clarity: when non-compliant installations are found, ESA will require correction to ensure safety, even if the issue originated years earlier.

What Happens When Water Enters a Building: A Recent Appeal Decision

When electrical systems are exposed to water, full-building testing may be required to confirm safety in accordance with ESA's Guidelines *(In the Event of Flooding, Water Ingress or Damage)*.

In 2022, ESA inspected a multi-residential apartment building in Sudbury after concerns were again raised about water entering the structure. The property included approximately 47 residential units. During the inspection, ESA identified multiple defects and found evidence that water had reached electrical branch circuit wiring and equipment throughout the building.

As part of the corrective actions — and in order to help ensure electrical safety — ESA issued an **order requiring Insulation Resistance Testing of the entire building's branch circuits for safety to confirm whether hidden damage had occurred.**

The property owner appealed the order, arguing that only a small number of units were affected, and that full-building testing was unnecessary.

What the Evidence Showed

During the appeal, a Review Panel considered multiple sources of evidence, including:

- Photographs showing visible water damage on walls, ceilings and electrical wiring
- An admission that a water pipe had leaked
- Water entry caused by ice buildup on the roof
- A documented history of water leaks dating back several years

While damage was not visible in every unit, the Review Panel concluded that **water had entered the building on multiple occasions**, including behind walls where damage cannot easily be seen.

What Happens When Water Enters a Building: A Recent Appeal Decision

CONTINUED

Why Full Testing Was Required

The Review Panel ultimately agreed with ESA that **testing all circuits throughout the building was reasonable and necessary to protect safety.** Water exposure can degrade wire insulation over time or cause tracking, even when there are no obvious signs of damage. Because it wasn't possible to confirm the full impact of water on the building's circuitry without testing, inspecting only a few units would not have provided confidence that the entire system was safe.

The Outcome

The appeal was dismissed. ESA's original order — including the requirement for full-building electrical testing — was upheld.

You can access the Review Panel's decision here.

When water exposure is confirmed, the expectation for building owners should be comprehensive testing, not partial inspection.

HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT FLOOD SAFETY?

Check out ESA's Toolbox Talks on what LECs should do before entering the scene of a flood site and review our safety guidelines in the event of flooding, water ingress or damage.

Read Toolbox Talks

Lighting Retrofit Update: What's Changing and What LECs Need to Know

Why ESA's lighting retrofit approach is evolving

While the electrical industry was transitioning from older light sources to more energy-efficient technologies, particularly LEDs, lighting retrofit work has played an important role. In the early 2010s, limited availability of new LED luminaires made retrofitting existing fixtures the most practical option for many projects.

Retrofitting luminaries, however, presents regulatory considerations. **When an approved luminaire is retrofitted, its original approval is voided.** In most cases, this requires re-approval through a Field Evaluation (FE) or Certification by an accredited agency — a process that can add time and cost, particularly on large-scale projects.

The Ontario Electrical Safety Code (OESC) provides an alternative pathway. Rule 2-106 5) allows installed equipment retrofitted with a retrofit kit to be deemed approved when ESA requirements are met. In response of this Rule and to support the industry, the Electrical Safety Authority (ESA) introduced the ***Acceptance of Retrofitted Luminaires Program*** in 2014.

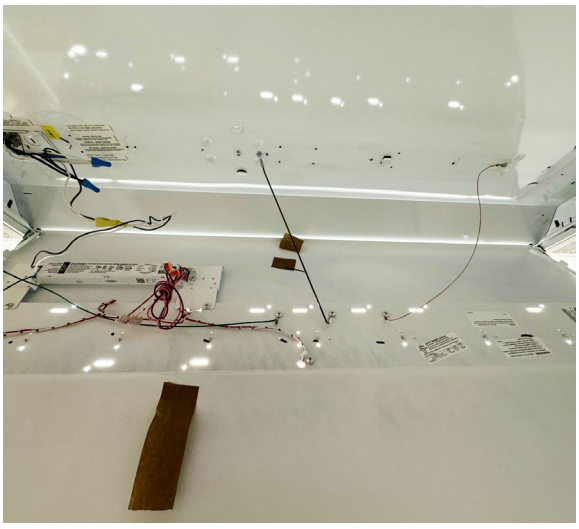
Under this program, ESA inspectors may deem retrofitted luminaires approved when defined criteria are satisfied, reducing the need for FE in certain retrofit scenarios.

The Pre-Assessment Requirement

Part of the current Retrofitted Luminaires Program is the pre-assessment requirement for some projects. The pre-assessment requirement applies to projects when more than 50 luminaires are retrofitted under a single notification. The pre-assessment reviews documentation before installation to identify potential hazards, such as unapproved retrofit kits or altered components, with the goal to reduce defects at inspection stages.

Today, there are significantly more approved LED luminaires available in the market and Licensed Electrical Contractors (LECs) also have access to a wider range of approved retrofit kits designed for different luminaire types and applications.

ESA has observed a steady decline in lighting retrofit notifications, along with a decline in issues identified during the pre-assessment stage. These trends indicate that the risks the pre-assessment was designed to address have greatly diminished.



Lighting Retrofit Update: What's Changing and What LECs Need to Know CONTINUED

Updates to the Retrofit Luminaires Program

What's Changing as of May 4, 2026

Effective **May 4, 2026,** ESA will decommission the **pre-assessment portion** of the Retrofitted Luminaires Program. LECs will no longer be required to submit additional documentation for pre-assessment* or pay pre-assessment fees.

> This change reflects ESA's evidence-based review of the program and is intended to reduce administrative burden while maintaining strong safety outcomes.

WHAT'S CHANGING

- Pre-assessment requirement removed
- No additional documentation for pre-assessment*
- No pre-assessment fees
- Reduced time and cost for retrofit projects

WHAT HASN'T CHANGED

While the pre-assessment requirement is being removed, **safety expectations remain unchanged**.

LECs must continue to:

- **Use an approved retrofit kit**, or
- Ensure all retrofitted luminaires are **field evaluated** in accordance with the ESA Field Evaluation Guideline

If an approved retrofit kit is not used, the luminaire must be re-approved through FE or certification. LECs may also request an **initial consultation or rough-in inspection** if there is uncertainty about kit suitability or acceptance.

**Inspectors may request supporting documentation on site, including specification sheets, installation instructions and evidence of Canadian approval.*

Lighting Retrofit Update: What's Changing and What LECs Need to Know CONTINUED

How the Updated Program Will Work

A **simplified Notification of Work** (Retrofitted Luminaire Notification) is required for each luminaire retrofit project site. Similar to any other Notification of Work, the notification must be submitted before work begins, in accordance with **OESC Rule 2-004 1**). ESA will accept retrofitted luminaires when:

- **An approved retrofit kit is used; or**
- **All fixtures are field evaluated if approved kits are not used**

Streamlined Application and Process Enhancements

ESA has also introduced improvements to make applying for a Notification for Retrofitted Luminaires more straightforward:

- **Multiple intake options**, including Online Services (LEC Portal), phone or application form by email or post
- **A simplified application** form requiring only fixture or device type, quantity and voltage
- Signatures and detailed installation information are no longer required.

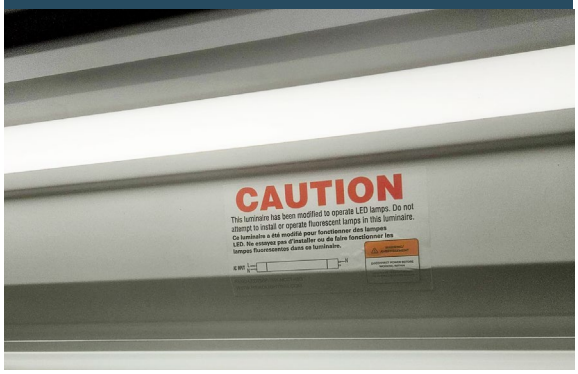
The new, simplified application form will be available on ESA's website in May 2026.

Bottom Line

These updates reflect ESA's commitment to keeping regulatory oversight aligned with current market conditions and industry practice. LECs can expect a more efficient process, fewer administrative steps, reduced costs and continued clarity around safe, compliant lighting retrofit work.

KEY TAKEAWAYS FOR LECS

- Pre-assessments and its fees for lighting retrofit projects are being removed as of **May 4, 2026**
- Using approved retrofit kits remain the simplest path to acceptance
- Field evaluation or certification is still required when approved kits are not used
- Application processes are now more streamlined



Acceptance of Retrofitted Luminaire Program Guide

ESA's updated Program Guide for the Acceptance of Retrofitted Luminaires will be available on ESA's website in **May 2026**.

You can review the current Program Guide for the Acceptance of Retrofitted Luminaires here.

Director's Corner
Message from the Director of Licensing

SARAH KEMPEL
Director of Licensing

It's hard to believe that nearly five months have passed since we launched ESA's new online self-serve licensing platform, an important investment in modernizing our services and strengthening our digital future. I am proud of how far we have come, and I want to extend my sincere appreciation to everyone who has contributed to this milestone.

First and foremost, thank you to our licence holders.

Your patience, adaptability and willingness to embrace a new way of renewing licences and interacting with ESA have been essential to the success of this transition. We recognize that any new process or technology comes with a learning curve, particularly during the one-time initial registration, and we appreciate your partnership. A small number of users have experienced early registration challenges, and we take that seriously. Our IT and Licensing teams are responding quickly: gathering feedback, resolving issues and continually refining the platform to ensure a smooth, efficient experience for everyone. Thank you for your continued patience and trust.

I also want to acknowledge our exceptional Licensing team, the many ESA departments who brought this platform to life and our Advisory Councils for their ongoing support and insight.

Your dedication, expertise and commitment to our stakeholders make a meaningful difference. This platform is a significant step forward in delivering a more modern, transparent and valuable licensing experience in Ontario, and we are energized to continue building on this foundation.

Sincerely,
Sarah Kempel

To learn more about the platform launch, early insights and a few helpful tips, you can jump directly to the article here.

An Update on ESA's Self-Serve Licensing Platform

What we're seeing since launch in October 2025

ESA's self-serve Licensing Platform launched in October 2025 to give Master Electricians (MEs) and Licensed Electrical Contractors (LECs) a simpler, more direct way to manage their licence(s) online. ESA's prospective licence holders can now apply for the ME exam and for an ME or EC licence, and existing licence holders can renew, make licensing payments, and more, all in one convenient place. As adoption continues to grow, here's an update on what we're seeing so far, along with a few helpful tips to support a smooth experience.

Haven't registered yet? Here's what you need to know:

Registration is required to access the new Licensing Platform.

- You **cannot** log in or reset your password through other ESA portals.
- LEC Portal credentials are not connected to the Licensing Platform and cannot be used interchangeably.
- The LEC Portal remains in place for submitting all wiring notifications to ESA. Continue using your existing login credentials, as the permit/notification process is separate from the new Licensing Platform.
- You must **sign up for the new Licensing Platform**, even if you previously held an ESA account through the now-retired ME Portal.
- The ME Portal has been decommissioned, and prior credentials are no longer valid.
- All ME Portal functions have been transitioned to the new Licensing Platform.
- A short how-to video is available to guide you through the registration process, or, follow the instructions on the next page.

For MEs who are also a Designated Master Electrician (DME) or Principal

If you are an ME who is also a DME and/or Principal at a LEC:

- Register using the **email associated with your ME licence**
- Once registered, you'll be able to **access the EC licence** through the same account

IMPORTANT:

Registering with an email address not associated with your ME licence will prevent EC licence information from appearing in your account and may require manual correction. To avoid delays and the need for follow-up support, please ensure you register with the correct email address at the outset.

An Update on ESA's Self-Serve Licensing Platform CONTINUED

HOW TO GET STARTED

If you haven't already, setting up your new account takes just a few steps:

1. Go to Licensing.ESAsafe.com and click **Sign in**.
2. Select **Sign up now** under the login box.
3. **Enter your email address** and **complete the verification step**.
4. **Copy the verification code** sent to your email address.
5. Paste the code, create a password and click **Create**.
6. **Agree to Terms and Conditions** and fill in your Profile information.

You should now be registered and able to view your online Licensing Platform Profile!

Log in today at Licensing.ESAsafe.com.

How licence renewals work now

Licence renewals are now completed annually through the online Licensing Platform only:

- A **renewal application and payment** are required each year for both EC and ME licences (each licence continues to follow its own renewal cycle)
- Because the ME licence is a **personal licence**, the renewal must be submitted by the individual ME licence holder (not office staff or a third-party)
- The platform replaces **previous renewal processes**

Submitting licence updates

All **Notice of Change** application forms are now available directly within the Licensing Platform allowing updates to be submitted online in one place.

Support and resources

As the Licensing Platform rollout continues and more licence holders register and become familiar with the system, higher-than-normal call and email volumes are expected throughout the first year of the platform. As a result, longer wait times for both phone and email support should be anticipated.

An Update on ESA's Self-Serve Licensing Platform CONTINUED

To avoid delays, and to help ensure support remains available for complex or urgent issues, **we strongly encourage licence holders to first use the self-serve resources created by our Licensing team.**

If you experience challenges or error messages during registration or while using the platform, please start with the step-by-step guides and FAQ documents available on our self-serve licensing platform webpage (ESAsafe.com/LicensingPlatform).

These resources are designed to:

- Address the most common registration and navigation questions
- Provide clear, easy-to-follow instructions
- Reduce the need for one-to-one support
- Be updated regularly based on user feedback

Using these tools first helps resolve issues faster and supports shorter wait times for everyone.

If you have reviewed the available resources and are still experiencing an issue that cannot be resolved, please email us at ESA.Licensing@electricalsafety.on.ca or contact us at 1-877-372-7233, option 3.

> We appreciate licence holders' patience and understanding as we continue to enhance the platform and expand support resources during this transition.

PLATFORM ACTIVITY SINCE OCTOBER 2025

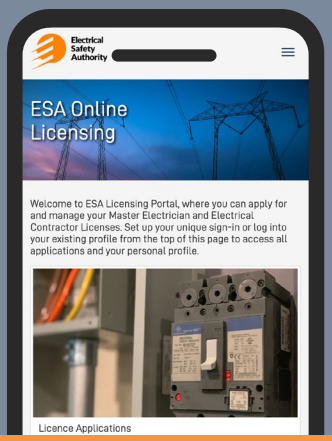
12,006 registered individuals

10,070 licence renewals

609 new licence applications

609 exam applications

538 complaints against unlicensed and licensed contractors



READY TO GET STARTED?

Log in or register today at Licensing.ESAsafe.com to manage your licence, submit an application or make a licensing payment online.

Labour Mobility, Harmonization and What It Means for You

As we enter 2026, labour mobility and regulatory harmonization remain active priorities across Canada. This article is intended to provide clarity for Licensed Electrical Contractor (LECs) and Master Electricians (MEs) on recent legislative changes, and more specifically: what has changed, **what has not, and how ESA is implementing new requirements.**

It is important to recognize that ESA is one part of a broader labour mobility framework. Electrician labour mobility has long existed through the Red Seal Program and continues to be administered by Skilled Trades Ontario (STO). **What is new, however, are expanded "As-of-Right" provisions that apply to certain occupational licences where equivalency has been demonstrated. Ontario's ME licence falls within this scope.**

Between July 1, 2025, and January 1, 2026, ESA implemented changes required under Bill 2, *Protect Ontario Through Free Trade within Canada Act, 2025*, and the *Ontario Labour Mobility Act, 2009*. These changes are part of Ontario's broader effort to reduce interprovincial barriers while maintaining strong public safety and consumer protection standards.

The questions and answers in this article explain how these legislative updates affect licensing within ESA's regulatory mandate.

LABOUR MOBILITY AND HARMONIZATION: LICENSING QUESTION & ANSWERS

Q: Why is labour mobility important?

Across Canada, governments and regulators are working to make it easier for skilled professionals to move and work wherever their expertise is needed most. These efforts support economic growth, help address labour shortages and advance electrification priorities, without compromising public safety or regulatory oversight.

Q: What has changed in Ontario?

Recent legislative amendments under Bill 2, the *Ontario Labour Mobility Act*, and the accompanying Deemed Certification Regulation (O.Reg.199/25), require regulators, including ESA, to establish more timely pathways for individuals who hold equivalent qualifications in other provinces. For ESA, this has resulted in a new approach to ME labour mobility.

Q: What does this mean in practice?

ESA has introduced Provisional ME Licences. These are one-time, six-month licences to eligible applicants who:

- **Hold an equivalent ME credential in Alberta or British Columbia,**
- **Have been assessed as possessing equivalent qualifications and experience, and**

Labour Mobility, Harmonization and What It Means for You CONTINUED

- **Have attested that they have reviewed and understand the requirements for practising as an ME in Ontario, including knowledge of Ontario-specific requirements under the OESC, relevant legislation and regulations.**

Eligible applicants may begin working in Ontario within 10 business days of submitting a complete application.

During the six-month provisional period, the ME:

- **Is subject to the same rules, responsibilities and standards as any Ontario-licensed ME, and**
- **Must fully comply with ESA's oversight, compliance and enforcement requirements.**

More information, including eligibility criteria and application details, is available on ESA's dedicated webpage here.

Q: What is not changing?

To continue working as a ME in Ontario beyond the six-month provisional period, applicants must apply for and pass ESA's Ontario-specific ME Exam.

Ontario's safety and consumer protection expectations have not changed. Provisional ME licence holders are held to the same standards as Ontario MEs and ESA's compliance and enforcement activities remain fully in effect.

Q: Why are only Alberta and British Columbia included?

Alberta and British Columbia are currently the only jurisdictions with ME designations that are considered equivalent to Ontario's in terms of scope, responsibility and competency requirements.

Provisional licences are issued only where equivalency has been clearly demonstrated. This approach protects the integrity of Ontario's ME licence while supporting appropriate labour mobility.

Q: Can I apply for Master Electrician equivalency in BC or Alberta?

Licensing requirements vary by province. To find out whether your Ontario ME qualification is recognized, visit the relevant regulatory body:

British Columbia — Technical Safety BC: To work as an electrical Field Safety Representative (FSR), you must meet specific eligibility requirements and pass a certification exam. Learn more on the Technical Safety BC website.

Alberta — Alberta Safety Codes Council: If you hold a Master Electrician certification from another province, you may be eligible to write Alberta's interprovincial exam. Learn more on the Alberta Safety Code Council's website.

Q: What else is ESA monitoring, and what could come next?

ESA is reviewing additional legislative provisions under the *Ontario Free Trade and Mobility Act, 2025* (OFTMA) to determine whether future labour mobility requirements, specifically automatic mutual recognition, may apply to the Electrical Contractor (EC) Licence. No changes have been implemented at this time, but we continue to assess legislation and potential regulatory impacts.

Labour Mobility, Harmonization and What It Means for You CONTINUED

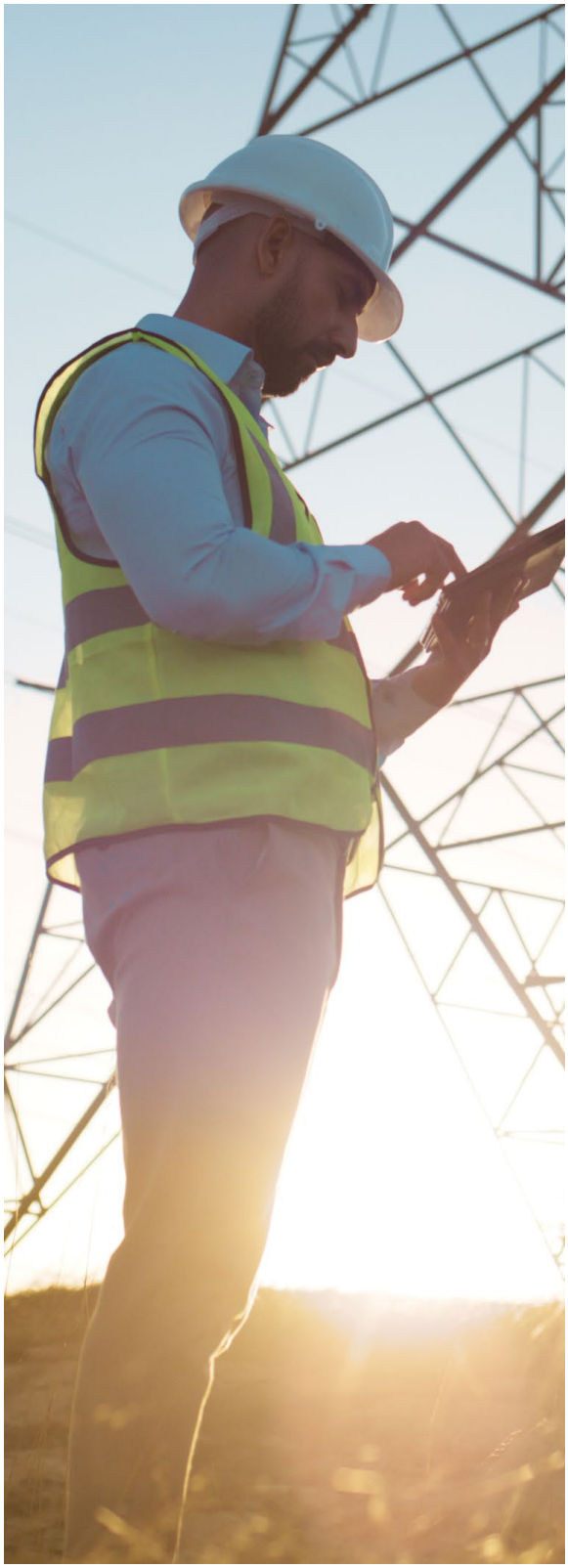
Looking Ahead

Labour mobility and harmonization are not one-time initiatives. They represent a broader evolution in how occupational licensing is administered across Canada. ESA's priorities remain consistent:

- **Improve clarity and efficiency of licensing processes**
- **Maintain strong, risk-based oversight**
- **Uphold Ontario's high electrical safety standards & ESA's consumer protection mandate**

> If you have questions about labour mobility or harmonization as they relate to ESA Licensing, please connect with our Licensing team via email (ESA.Licensing@electricalsafety.on.ca) or visit our Out of Province Master Electrician (ME) Licence webpage for more information.

Thank you for the work you do every day to keep Ontario powered and safe.



ESA Hosts Milestone 20th Annual Licence Holder Meeting

WIRED FOR CHANGE
Connecting Through Digital Innovation

The virtual event brought Ontario's electrical community together to explore how digital innovation is transforming safety, compliance and the customer experience.

ESA hosted its **20th Annual Licence Holder Meeting (LHM)** in November. The milestone event was attended virtually by **465 representatives** from across Ontario's electrical community, including ESA staff, Licensed Electrical Contractors (LECs), Master Electricians (MEs), Board and Electrical Contractor Registration Agency (ECRA), Master Examining Committee (MEC) and Contractor Advisory Council (CoAC) members.

Josie Erzetic, President and CEO at ESA, opened the event and reflected on how dramatically the sector has evolved since ESA began issuing licences in 2005. Ontario is home to more than 10,000 LECs and 17,000 MEs, underscoring the scale and importance of a safe, modern licensing system.

This year's theme — **Wired for Change: Connecting Through Digital Innovation** — highlighted how data and digital tools are reshaping how ESA connects, collaborates and delivers services.

WHAT WE COVERED: HIGHLIGHTS FROM A PACKED AGENDA

HOW DIGITAL TOOLS ARE TRANSFORMING COMPLIANCE AND CUSTOMER SERVICE

Leaders from across ESA shared updates on digital modernization, including how data-driven insights and improved online tools are supporting stronger compliance and a better customer experience for licence holders.

CONSUMER SAFETY & PUBLIC AWARENESS

The meeting showcased ESA's latest consumer-education campaigns designed to help homeowners understand the risks of unlicensed electrical work, reinforcing why hiring an LEC continues to be a critical public safety message.

THE NEW LICENSING PLATFORM: A SELF-SERVE ERA

ESA provided an inside look at the new self-serve Licensing Platform launched in October. Prospective licence holders can now apply for the ME exam and for an ME or EC licence, and existing licence holders can renew, make licensing payments, and more, all in one convenient place. More than **12,000 licence holders** have already signed up — a strong indication of sector readiness for digital modernization.

ESA Hosts Milestone 20th Annual Licence Holder Meeting CONTINUED

WIRED FOR CHANGE
Connecting Through Digital Innovation

WHAT WE COVERED: HIGHLIGHTS FROM A PACKED AGENDA

ENFORCEMENT AND TACKLING THE UNDERGROUND ECONOMY

The meeting also covered ESA's continued work to reduce unlicensed electrical activity, supported by recent enforcement actions and case studies illustrating the impact of compliance and enforcement oversight. In the last fiscal year, **ESA's actions resulted in convictions on 98 charges and 111 Administrative Penalty Orders**, among other administrative actions.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS: CANDICE WHITE, CEO & REGISTRAR AT SKILLED TRADES ONTARIO

Candice White delivered an inspiring keynote on the importance of growing Ontario's skilled trades and supporting the next generation of workers, underscoring why strong training and regulatory pathways matter for the province's economic growth and safety outcomes.

BACK-BY-DEMAND: LIVE Q & A WITH ESA'S EXPERTS

The meeting wrapped with |ESA's widely appreciated Q & A session, where technical, licensing and operations experts answered questions submitted both in advance and through the Zoom chat.

WATCH THE MEETING ON DEMAND

Missed the live session? Watch the full meeting replay — an excellent resource to stay current on compliance and enforcement trends, along with digital changes shaping ESA and the sector.

Watch the Recording

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR LHM GIVEAWAY WINNERS!

Ten prize winners were randomly selected and have already been notified about their prize — a **Hire an LEC travel mug** as a thank you for joining us.

20TH ANNUAL LHM: BY THE NUMBERS

Compliance Update: What We're Seeing — and What It Means for Licence Holders

Key compliance activity and trends from April to November 2025

Strong compliance starts with clarity. ESA's Compliance team* works closely with licence holders to respond to questions, review concerns and address reports of non-compliance. Sharing this snapshot of activity highlights where issues most often arise and reinforces key requirements that support safe, professional electrical work across Ontario.

**ESA's Compliance team operates within the Licensing department and works directly with Licensed Electrical Contractors (LECs) and Master Electricians (MEs) to support compliance with licensing requirements. This work is distinct from ESA's enforcement activities, which focus on addressing unlicensed electrical work and the underground economy.*

Top Compliance Themes: April-November 2025

1. Improper Sub-Contracting

The most common complaints involved allegations of unauthorized individuals performing electrical work under an LEC's licence. This includes unlicensed contractors or non-employees carrying out work, which is not permitted **under s.113.2(1) of the *Electricity Act* and section 3 of Ontario Regulation 570/05**. Anyone working under a licence must be an employee of the licence holder or an LEC.

2. Professional Conduct

Concerns related to honesty and integrity allegations were the second most common complaint. These included **charging for services not provided, failing to complete paid work or not correcting identified defects**. Professional conduct remains a cornerstone of public trust and regulatory compliance.

3. Code Violations

Complaints related to Ontario Electrical Safety Code (OESC) infractions were the third most common complaint. Complaints often involved the **failure to submit a required Notification of Work under Rule 2-004**.

Regulatory Actions

Where warranted, complaints resulted in formal regulatory action:

177	Complaint Records processed
145	Notices of Proposal Issued
71	Notices of Suspension Issued
37	Conditions Issued
36	Notices of Non-Compliance Issued

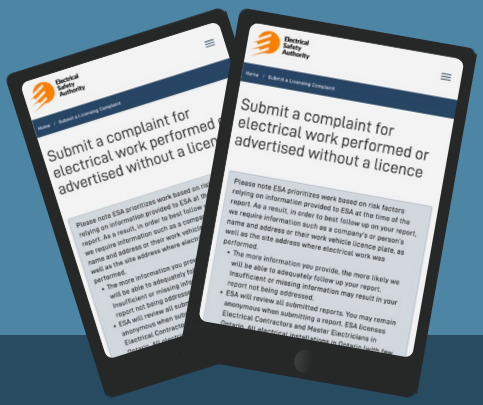
Compliance Update: What We're Seeing — and What It Means for Licence Holders CONTINUED

What this Means for You

The vast majority of licence holders operate with professionalism and maintain strong compliance practices. This is reflected in overall compliance activity, which remained relatively stable through the reporting period with no unusual spikes. ESA takes a progressive, education-first approach to helping licence holders understand and correct issues when they arise. At the same time, repeat or deliberate non-compliance is taken seriously and may result in escalated compliance actions. You can learn more about ESA's compliance approach on our website.

As we move further into 2026 — and a spring construction season fast approaching — licence holders are encouraged to review available resources on duties and responsibilities, and to reach out early if clarification is needed.

If you have any questions about the reported numbers or ESA's compliance processes, please don't hesitate to reach out to the Compliance Team: LicensingMatters@electricalsafety.on.ca



HOW TO SUBMIT A LICENSING COMPLAINT

Have a concern? We want to know.

ESA Licensing's Compliance and Enforcement teams review complaints related to LECs, MEs and unlicensed electrical contracting activity.

Submit online:
Compliance.ESAsafe.com

Include if available:

- Company or individual name
- Work address or location
- Vehicle licence plate

Important considerations:

- Complaints may be submitted anonymously
- All complaints are reviewed by ESA
- ESA will provide an update on the outcome of its review

Reporting concerns helps protect public safety and the integrity of the profession.

Markham Building Permit Blitz Shows Continued Compliance Gains

The Markham safety blitz is the latest in a series of targeted inspections focused on unpermitted electrical work

As part of our ongoing **Building Permit Initiative**, ESA regularly reviews residential building permit data to identify locations where electrical work may be occurring without an ESA permit. The **Markham blitz** is the latest in a series of targeted reviews carried out in communities across Ontario.

Between **July and August 2025**, ESA cross-referenced residential building permit data in the city of Markham and visited **94 locations** where electrical was suspected to be performed without an ESA permit.

Of the 94 locations visited:

- **22 locations** confirmed that electrical work had been performed
- **1 location** involved a **Licensed Electrical Contractor (LEC)**
- **21 locations** involved **unknown installers**

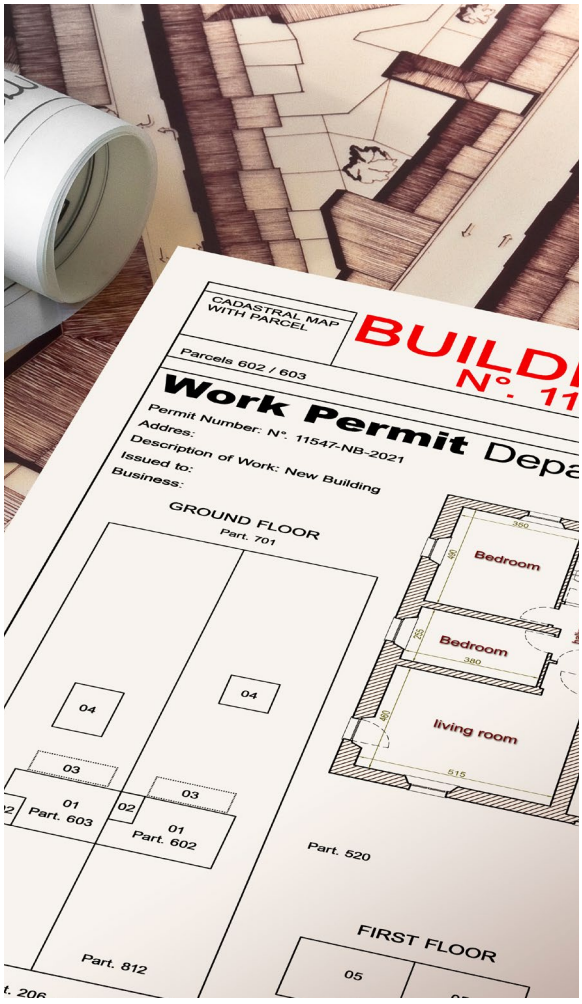
Follow-up inspections produced strong compliance outcomes: **18 of the 22 locations (82%) have since obtained an ESA permit:**

- 15 filed by an LEC
- 3 filed by homeowners

In addition, **2 locations** were found to have **technical defects** during inspection, allowing ESA inspectors to address safety issues directly.

Why ESA Conducts Building Permit Blitzes

Building permit blitzes are one of the proactive tools ESA uses to promote compliance, discourage unpermitted work and help protect electrical safety across Ontario.



ESA ON Mobile: New Photo Upload Feature Now Live

Making photo submissions easier for you and your team

A Small Update That Makes a Big Impact

Thanks to feedback from the licence holder community, the ESA ON Mobile app now allows you to **upload photos directly from your phone's camera roll**. This enhancement makes it easier for you — and anyone on your team — to submit accurate photos as part of your inspection process.

What's New

Here are three improvements you'll notice right away:

More Flexibility:
Upload photos straight from your camera roll — including images captured earlier or by other authorized team members.

Smoother Workflow:
No need to take photos only "in the moment". Use the best image available to clearly show the work being submitted.

Built-In Verification:
The app will still prompt you to confirm that each photo accurately represents the work being documented, helping ensure the integrity of each submission.

No Action Required
The update installs automatically. You should see the new photo-upload option the next time you open the app.

LEARN MORE

To explore the full set of ESA ON Mobile features, visit our website.

Revised Pool Perimeter Bonding Requirements: Bulletin 68-8-*

Updated direction on concrete collars, alternative bonding methods and non-conductive surfaces

A revised version of Bulletin **68-8-* (Bulletin)** was published in February 2026. The update responds to challenges observed in pool and patio construction practices, as well as ongoing questions from the field regarding the application of perimeter bonding requirement in different installation scenarios.

The intent of the revision is to ensure people using pools, hot tubs and spas are protected from electric shock hazards, while providing installers with clear, practical methods for achieving compliance. The sections below outline three key elements addressed in the revised Bulletin.

1 Concrete collars in contact with the patio infrastructure

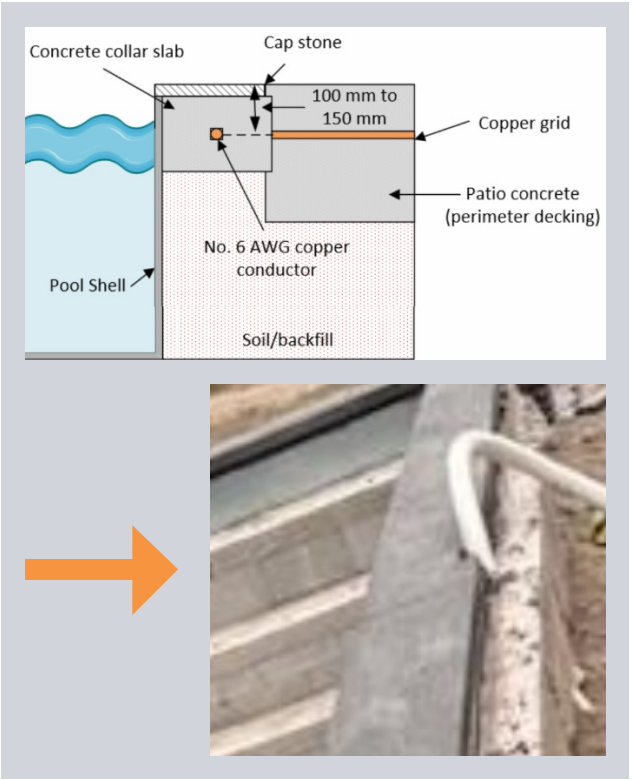
Perimeter bonding requirements apply to a concrete collar (concrete poured around the pool to provide structural support for the pool shell) when the collar is in contact with, or coupled to, the patio (perimeter decking) surface.

Bonding may be achieved using one of the following methods:

- **A No. 6 AWG copper conductor** installed as a continuous loop embedded in the concrete collar around the perimeter of the pool, with a minimum of four equally spaced connection points left accessible to bond to the remainder of the decking infrastructure (or for the full extent of the collar); **or**
- Where **unencapsulated reinforcing steel** is used in the concrete collar, bonding the steel at a minimum of four equally spaced points, with leads connected to the remainder of the decking using **No. 6 AWG copper conductors.**

Both methods establish an equipotential plane between the pool, the concrete collar and surrounding surfaces, reducing the risk of users being exposed to voltage differences.

Image B1 — Example of concrete collar in contact with the patio (perimeter decking)



Revised Pool Perimeter Bonding Requirements: Bulletin 68-8-* CONTINUED

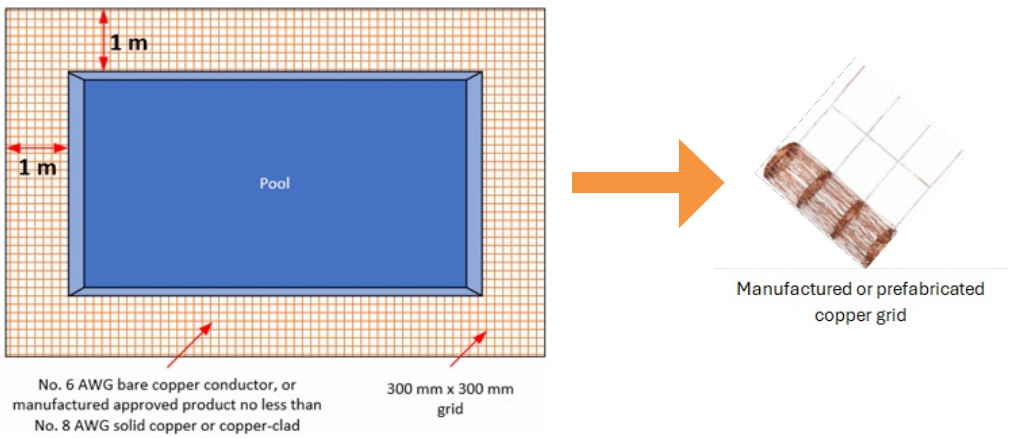
2 Alternative bonding methods for perimeter (decking) bonding

The revised Bulletin permits the bonding grid required by **Rule 68-058 3) b)** to extend a minimum of **1 m horizontally from the edge of the pool**, rather than 1.5 m.

The revision also permits the use of manufactured or prefabricated bonding products, provided all of the following criteria are met:

- Minimum conductor size of **No. 8 solid copper or 40% copper-clad**
- Installed in a grid pattern of approximately **300 mm x 300 mm** (±100 mm tolerance)
- Installed below grade at a depth between **100 mm and 150 mm**
- Extends at least **1 m horizontally from the pool edge**

Diagram B3 — Bonding a pool deck with encapsulated structural reinforcing steel



3 Non-conductive surfaces

The revised Bulletin clarifies circumstances in which permitter bonding is not required because users are isolated from conductive surfaces.

Where a pool, hot tub or spa is surrounded by non-conductive materials that extend no less than **1 m from the edge of the pool**, and meet the minimum thicknesses below, the surface is considered insulated:

- **Wood or composite decking:** minimum 13 mm (½") thick
- **Rubber matting:** minimum 27 mm (1") thick
- **Other products** demonstrated to provide sufficient insulating characteristics under all conditions.

In these cases, perimeter bonding is not required, as users are not in contact with a conductive plane that may be at a different electrical potential than the pool water.

For more information on ESA Bulletins, please visit: ESAsafe.com/Bulletins

Ontario Electrical Safety Awards

NOMINATION WINDOW NOW OPEN!

Help Celebrate Leaders Who Drive Electrical Safety in Ontario

ESA is officially accepting nominations for the 17th Annual Ontario Electrical Safety Awards.

We're calling on our valued licence holder community to help us spotlight champions of safety in our sector.

DO YOU KNOW A DESERVING LEADER IN ELECTRICAL SAFETY?

The Awards recognize individuals, teams and organizations whose contributions reduce harm, in the areas that matter most to Ontarians:

Powerline Safety

Worker Safety

Consumer and Home Safety

WHY SUBMIT A NOMINATION?

Showcase the great work happening across our province and help raise the profile of safety leadership in our industry:

- Be recognized as a safety leader
- Empower your team & strengthen your safety culture
- Showcase proven safety practices that others can learn from
- Earn industry & government recognition
- Promote your win with ESA's crystal award & materials

NOMINATE A SAFETY LEADER TODAY

Submissions are open now at:

ESAsafe.com/SafetyAwards

Deadline: May 4, 2026

HIGHLIGHT REEL: SEE LAST YEAR'S WINNERS IN ACTION

Catch the energy, the stories and the moments that made last year's ceremony unforgettable.

Watch the Highlight Reel

Power Your Potential: ESA Training Updates

Pre-Master Electrician Training: Available Online

Registration is now open for ESA's Pre-Master Electrician Online course, designed to support experienced electrical professionals preparing for the Master Electrician exam* and the responsibilities that come with this designation.

This in-depth online program helps learners strengthen both technical and professional knowledge needed to succeed. The updated course reflects the latest 2024 Ontario Electrical Safety Code (OESC) changes and provides practical insight into licensing, safety leadership, and business responsibilities, key areas for anyone looking to advance their career in Ontario's electrical industry.

What you'll learn:

The course is structured into focused modules that guide learners through exam preparation and real-world expectations of a Master Electrician, including but not limited to:

- Exam preparation strategies and licensing requirements
- A comprehensive overview of the OESC, including residential, commercial, industrial and high-voltage installations
- Internal responsibility systems and controlling workplace hazards
- Consumer protection, business management and regulatory responsibilities

Delivered in a self-paced online format, this training allows you to learn on your own schedule while benefiting from ESA-developed content grounded in current codes, safety standards and industry practices.

Learn more about the Pre-Master Electrician Online course

Register today and take the next step in your professional journey

*Please note: This course is not a prerequisite for the Master Electrician exam, but it provides essential knowledge to help learners successfully navigate both the exam and the responsibilities of the role.

INTERESTED IN MORE TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES?

Discover ESA's full range of safety and technical course offerings here or scan the QR code below by using your smartphone or tablet to view all available training.

Looking to train a group or team? Group rates are available. E-mail your Client Safety Specialist at CSS.ContactUs@electricalsafety.on.ca for details.

Power Your Potential: ESA Training Updates

CONTINUED

STILL TIME TO GET YOUR 2024 OESC TRAINING

Ensure you're current on the latest Code updates with ESA's expert-led course. Join one of our in-person offerings or complete the training online when it works for you.

Register In-Person Here

Register Online Here

STAY CONNECTED. STAY INFORMED.

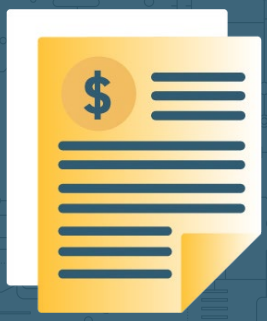
From new training opportunities to timely safety and technical updates, our emails keep you informed and ahead of what's next. Subscribe to ESA Training Solutions updates and follow us on LinkedIn for the latest.

Subscribe Here

Follow Us on LinkedIn

Training is a non-regulatory service offered by the Electrical Safety Authority (ESA). Electrical safety and technical courses may be offered by other providers. View more information about ESA's non-regulatory activities here.

Notice of ESA 2026 Fee Changes



To respond to ongoing inflationary pressures, the ESA will be implementing a 1.9% increase to wiring and licensing fees, effective April 1, 2026.

WHY FEES ARE CHANGING

The increase reflects the inflationary pressures that the ESA, and many organizations, are facing, while continuing to deliver on the ESA's public safety mandate, investing in digital services and improving operational efficiency.

Recognizing the Impact on Licence Holders

The ESA recognizes the impact that fee changes have on our stakeholder community and ESA will continue to drive value, through the **ESA ON Mobile App** and the **Licensing Technology Platform**, by strengthening service delivery to stakeholders and the sector.

WHAT TO EXPECT NEXT

The **ESA Fee Guide** is currently being updated and will be available prior to **April 1, 2026**.

View Fees and Forms

CODE CONUNDRUM

How well do you know the Ontario Electrical Safety Code? Take our quiz and test your technical knowledge.

Q1

Which of the following terms defines the potential difference between two points on the earth's surface separated by a distance of one pace, assumed to be 1 m, in the direction of maximum voltage gradient?

a. Potential rise of ground grid

b. Station voltage

c. Step voltage

d. Touch voltage

Q2

What is the maximum distance between an outlet box and the first strap used for supporting NMD90 cable?

a. 300 mm

b. 500 mm

c. 750 mm

d. 1,500 mm

Q3

Where pole-mounted luminaires are installed on customer owned poles carrying primary line conductors, what is the minimum distance between the primary conductors and the luminaires?

a. 4 m below the primary conductors

b. 3 m below the primary conductors

c. 2 m above the primary conductors

d. 1 m above the primary conductors

Answers

Question 1: **c.** step voltage *Ref Rule 36-002*

Question 2: **a.** 300 mm *Ref Rule 12-560 1) b)*

Question 3: **b.** 3 m *Ref Rule 30-1007 1)*

Understanding Rule 2-007: Mandatory Incident Reporting in Ontario

Rule 2-007 of the Ontario Electrical Safety Code (OESC) establishes the **requirement for reporting serious electrical incidents to the ESA**. The purpose of this rule is to ensure that electrical hazards are promptly identified, investigated and addressed to reduce the risk of injury, fire and damage to property. **For facility owners, contractors and operators, understanding this rule is not just about compliance — it is about public safety and legal responsibility.**

Compliance with Rule 2-007 is mandatory for all electrical installations and equipment regulated under the OESC. Any serious incident that is reported is used to inform the *Ontario Electrical Safety Report* to identify industry trends, support safety improvements and reduce electrical harm in Ontario. This data may also be used to support potential changes to the OESC to address safety gaps.

WHAT IS A SERIOUS ELECTRICAL INCIDENT?

The OESC defines a serious electrical incident as any event in which electricity is a cause or contributing factor resulting in:

- **Fatalities or Critical Injuries:** Any electrical contact resulting in death or critical injury (e.g., injury that places life in jeopardy, major loss of blood, loss of limb, produces unconsciousness, fracture or amputation of arm or leg, but not fingers or toes, burns to major parts of the body, loss of an eye regardless of voltage).
- **Fire or Explosion:** Any fire, explosion or condition suspected to be electrical in origin that had the potential to cause death, critical injury or significant property damage regardless of voltage.
- **High-Voltage Contact:** Any accidental electrical contact with equipment operating at over **750 volts**.
- **High-Voltage Equipment Failure or Damage:** Any fire or explosion involving equipment operating at over **750 volts**.

The Rule also applies to failures, malfunctions or damage to electrical equipment that create unsafe conditions or could reasonably have resulted in injury, fire or significant property damage.

Understanding Rule 2-007: Mandatory Incident Reporting in Ontario CONTINUED

In some cases, serious electrical near-miss events may also require reporting where they indicate an underlying safety hazard.

Bottom Line: If you are unsure — REPORT IT!

WHO MUST REPORT?

Responsibility for reporting an electrical incident may rest with one or more parties, depending on the circumstances. This can include the owner or operator of the electrical installation, the employer in the case of a workplace incident and the Licensed Electrical Contractor involved with the installation or equipment. **The obligation to report exists regardless of fault or liability and multiple parties may be required to notify ESA**.

WHERE TO REPORT

All serious electrical incidents involving injury, fatality, fire or explosion must be reported to ESA immediately at **1-877-372-7233 or 1-877-ESA-SAFE** as soon as they become aware of the event, with a strict deadline of **48 hours** following the occurrence.

WHAT TO DO AT THE SCENE

A vital, often overlooked component of Rule 2-007 is the preservation of the incident site. **Following an incident, electrical equipment involved must not be disturbed except where necessary to prevent further danger, assist injured persons or make the area safe.**

ESA may require the equipment to remain available for inspection or investigation as part of its review. The electrical incident notification form can be found on ESA's website.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER REPORTING OBLIGATIONS

Reporting an electrical incident to ESA under Rule 2-007 does not replace other legal reporting obligations. **Depending on the nature of the event, additional notifications may be required to other agencies such as the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development (MLITSD), the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board, the local fire department or other Authorities Having Jurisdiction** — each has its own reporting thresholds and timelines. If it is a workplace injury, you must also call the MLITSD at 1-800-531-5551.

KEY SAFETY MESSAGE

From an OESC compliance standpoint, the guiding principle is straightforward: **if electricity may have contributed to an injury, fire, explosion or equipment failure as defined above, the incident must be reported to ESA within 48 hours.** Prompt reporting supports regulatory compliance, improves electrical safety and helps prevent similar incidents from occurring in the future.