



November 11, 2020

## Temporary measures for electrical equipment shortages (AFCI breakers) due to Covid-19

The COVID-19 virus and the global pandemic has affected the manufacturing of some electrical equipment, impacting the completion of some projects. The Electrical Safety Authority (ESA) is committed to working with the industry to find solutions to minimize the effect.

When shortages are related to combination-type-arc-fault circuit interrupter (AFCI) breakers please report to Electro Federation Canada. Electro Federation Canada (EFC) AFCI breaker shortage, <https://www.electrofed.com/businesssections/afci/afci-report/>.

EFC Process will be as follows:

1. Once EFC receives a notification from the contractor, EFC will acknowledge receipt of their complaint. And simultaneously forward the form to the respective manufacturer.
2. Manufacturer, based on the situation, they will contact the complainant to advise the status of their products and provide information from where they can get the supplies, if available.

For these scenarios, ESA Process will be as follow:

1. Final inspections will be delayed until the required electrical equipment is available and installed.
2. For municipalities who require a certificate from ESA prior to occupancy, the contractor has the option of requesting a Letter from ESA(\$78 fee) for the site(s) involved that can be submitted to municipalities as part of their occupancy granting process.
  - If the wiring in the dwelling is compliant with the exception of the electrical equipment that is unavailable the Letter can be issued.
  - For tracking purposes, an administrative defect will be added in the notification to indicate that the final electrical inspection has been delayed until the required electrical equipment is available and installed.(Note: this defect will not impact contractor's defect ratios)
3. For panel replacements, AFCI breakers are not required to be installed as per Bulletin 26-29-\*. The current Code requirement for AFCI protection does not



retroactively apply to the existing branch circuit wiring unless the branch circuit is being extended with additional receptacles. However, for panel replacement that already included AFCI breakers the finale inspection will be delayed until the required equipment is available.

Please be aware of this shortage issue, consider other options, e.g. AFCI receptacles and plan your projects accordingly, where possible.