

Laws a shock to our system

The Ontario government has implemented a new law making it illegal to do electrical work without a government-issued licence. This legislation is designed to protect the public from the dangers of substandard electrical work and provide peace of mind, knowing that licensed contractors are fully versed in proper safety measures.

If you're planning on converting your basement, remodelling your kitchen or updating a bathroom — any job that requires electrical work — make sure your shopping list also includes finding a licensed electrical contractor.

The new legislation requires all electrical contractors to be licensed by the Electrical Contractor Registration Agency of the **Electrical Safety Authority**. Consumers are now also required by law to hire only licensed electrical contractors.

Wiring and electrical work is complicated, and if performed incorrectly can result in serious injury or fire, points out **Peter Marcucci**, regulatory affairs vice president of the **Electrical Safety Authority**.

The new law ensures consumers are protected against individuals who are not qualified and may perform electrical services that do not meet Ontario's safety standards.

Since 1998, 100 Ontario workers and homeowners have been killed by electrocution, and 2,974 electrical fires have been reported in the **Electrical Safety Authority's** 2006 Ontario Electrical Safety Report.

So while everyone wants to save money, fire officials and electrical safety experts stress that it's just as important to protect the safety of your family and the property in which you've invested so much time and money.

Property owners and managers in search of a licensed electrical contractor to perform electrical work should ask for the contractor's licence number.

The public is being encouraged to visit www.pluginsafely.ca or call 1-877-372-7233 to access a list of licensed electrical contractors by location in Ontario.