

Mad Moose Droppings

It would appear that Queen's Park has unwittingly – huh! good pun! – given many Ontarians a lot more leisure time. "How's that?" you say.

Well, the **Electrical Safety Authority** recently issued a news release to remind us: "All electrical work in Ontario must now be performed by licensed contractors." That's *all* electrical work – everything from new buildings – *well, of course!* – to major renos – *well, maybe* – to wiring for a new garage door opener – *well...what? Pete next door said he'd do that for me, if he could borrow my tent for his camping trip. You mean I've got to pay an electrician?*

In a word, "Yes", thereby lending a whole new meaning to "electrical shock".

So Pete can't do your garage-door opener, and he and all the other neighbourhood handymen get to spend more time on the golf course.

Now, of course, this new regulation is designed to protect home- and camp-owners who might otherwise end up with a less-than-competent installer for their

new Jacuzzi. Hey, we've all watched *Holmes on Homes*. Obviously, we need protection against the unscrupulous contractors who would take our money and leave us without ground wires. We should be grateful.

The legislation is great for contractors – more business, more money, especially if you're a master electrician. It's also great for the government in its fight against the evil underground economy – no more trading off services, so everything gets taxed. And as a consumer, you can sleep well at night knowing the job was done right.

So, being a law-abiding citizen about to add a basement sauna, I went to the ESA website, plugged in the name of my small NWO town, and, big surprise, there is no licensed electrical contractor anywhere near. (Here in NWO we learn to be the Jack and Jill of all trades, master of none.) So, I'll do it myself and risk going to safety-code jail. It's another one-size-fits-all regulation that makes us wonder if the people in Queen's Park have any idea

about life on the other side of the road map.

Of course, the more suspicious among us think that it's a money grab, what with all the permits and inspections, but some believe the government truly has the welfare of Ontario residents at heart, particularly if you happen to be a licensed electrical contractor or the head of Hydro One.

However, the news is not all bad. Pete can still fix your trailer lights, and there *is* an exclusion from this licensing regulation, that is, "work done on electrical equipment or installations within a residential dwelling if done by an owner or occupant of the dwelling". I take it this means you can still change your own light bulbs.

Don't blame me, I'm
just...Mad Moose

P.S. If you cheered when your son introduced his new girlfriend with, "She's an apprentice", you might be from NWO.

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