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BULLETIN 2004-002 EL

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## PERMITS FOR TEMPORARY POWER SERVICE CONNECTION

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This Bulletin clarifies electrical permits requirements for temporary power service.

### Background:

The Scope of Section 76 of the CE code, Part I covers temporary wiring installations for buildings or projects under construction or demolition.

The City of Vancouver Electrical by-law acknowledges temporary power connection work and provides a fee structure for electrical permits related to temporary power service connection.

Traditionally temporary power service connection permits have been obtained by electrical contractors for demolition or new construction projects that involve commercial, industrial, institutional or multi-family residential buildings and to a lesser degree-projects for single family dwellings.

Electrical inspectors check compliance of these temporary power service equipment installations with relevant provisions of the Electrical By-law and if these installations of temporary service are found to be safe to energize, the City Electrical Inspectors (on behalf of holders of electrical permits) request connection of power from the BC Hydro.

However, when a single detached house or a duplex is intended to be constructed (sometimes with a preceding demolition), an electrical contractor involved in the construction work, does not necessarily obtain a temporary power service connection permit prior to applying for a respective electrical wiring permit for the construction of a house.

Where a temporary power service connection is not installed under a permit, and a temporary construction power is obtained by other means, electrical safety hazards are being created on job sites due to the following:

### (1) UNAUTHORIZED USE OF EXTENSION CORDS

Unauthorized use of extension cords that supply temporary power from adjacent houses has been found on various job sites.

Our inspectors have found these cords being installed in unsafe manner - and not being provided with necessary overcurrent and GFCI protection.

Numerous inspections of these construction sites have consistently demonstrated that such extension cords used as means of "temporary power service connection" have become an obvious source of shock and fire hazard.

*Note: The enforcement approach undertaken by the inspections staff (immediate order to remove these cords and an order to stop work until an acceptable temporary power service connection is provided) often leaves an electrical contractor and a builder with expensive construction delays while applying for a temporary power permit in a middle of a construction project, and trying to obtain temporary service connection.*

## (2) USE OF PERMANENT SERVICE EQUIPMENT FOR CONSTRUCTION PURPOSES

An electrical contractor (who was using unauthorized extension cord or a portable generator, etc. at the outset of his work on a house) often applies to the City with a request for a permanent service connection to the house (although this service is intended to be used for construction purposes, as the house is not completed).

In this case any work on exterior finish (stucco, masonry veneer, etc.) may represent a shock hazard to a person working in a close proximity to the service attachment.

*Note: An electrical inspector may not authorize such a power connection until all exterior work is completed.*

## (3) BC HYDRO CONCERNS

BC Hydro also has various concerns in respect to a point of service attachment.

Some locations of the service attachments selected by contractors may conflict with the BC Hydro workplace safety requirements (i.e. insufficient space between houses to provide for safe laddering). BC hydro staff have prepared a number of customer service options to assist electrical contractors with economical and expedient temporary power connections. These options include but not limited to the following:

- (a) Ability to swing an existing connection from a building being demolished - to a temporary construction service;
- (b) Ability to utilize a new temporary power service drop - for a future permanent connection;
- (c) Ability to effectively coordinate an acceptable location of a permanent service attachment with an electrical contractor.

*Note: BC Hydro should be contacted to discuss the best possible approach for a temporary power connection. (See Bulletin 2007-003-EL)*

### Ruling:

The apparent increase in misuse of temporary construction power requirements necessitates increased enforcement action which will include disconnection of unsafe installations, re-inspection fee and stop work notices being posted on offending job sites.

In order to facilitate safe electrical installations on projects where construction is dependent on a temporary power service, and in order to coordinate service connection requirements with the BC Hydro Power Supply Authority, the following check list must be completed by an applicant for any electrical permit where electrical work is dependent on a temporary power service.

**CHECK LIST FOR TEMPORARY POWER CONNECTION**

(To be completed by an applicant for an electrical permit that involves work dependent on the temporary power for construction or demolition purposes)

Contractor's information:

Name:

Address:

Phone #:

FSR Certificate number:

Project address:

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Temporary power is required for demolition/construction: YES\_\_\_ NO\_\_\_

Type of temporary power source:

(a) Power pole: YES\_\_\_ NO\_\_\_

Temporary power connection permit # EL\_\_\_

(b) Generator: YES\_\_\_ NO\_\_\_

Temporary power connection permit # EL\_\_\_

(c) Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant's signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

A. Z. Tsisserev, P.Eng.  
CHIEF ELECTRICAL INSPECTOR & CITY ELECTRICIAN