



The Top Things You Need To Know About Flood-Damaged Electrical Systems

This information is applicable to all private and public electrical infrastructure on the premises side of the electrical connection to the facilities of the serving electrical utility

1) From a dry and safe location, de-energize (and disconnect if necessary) electrical wiring and electrical equipment that is likely to be exposed to or submerged in floodwater. Do not re-energize any electrical wiring and electrical equipment that has been exposed to floodwater. Floodwater often contains raw sewage, pesticides, metals, petroleum products, chemicals and other highly conductive and very corrosive compounds.

2) All electrical equipment, panelboards, switchboards, receptacles, switches, controllers, furnaces, boilers, water heaters, appliances and similar electrical apparatus must be replaced. All electrical wiring, conductors and cables must be replaced. Cables or conductors suitable for direct burial or wet locations may not need to be replaced were the ends of such cables or conductors have not been submerged in floodwater. Despite information to the contrary from otherwise credible sources, electrical wiring, equipment and appliances cannot be cleaned, restored and re-used. It may be possible for original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) to re-condition some industrial equipment. Re-energized flood-damaged electrical equipment and wiring will forever pose a serious fire and life safety hazard. Electrical materials and equipment do not fail to a safe condition; they fail to an unsafe and potentially hazardous condition. For more details go to: www.dli.mn.gov/CCLD/PDF/flood_electrical.pdf

3) The high water marks from contaminated, caustic and electrically conductive floodwater are usually self-evident, as is the resulting damage. If electrical wiring, electrical equipment, appliances, etc. need additional damage assessment, licensed electrical contractors have the experience, training, tools and materials for making the damage assessments. The department's contract electrical inspectors do not go door-to-door making damage assessments – their role is to inspect new electrical wiring (permanent or temporary wiring) as part of the recovery and reconstruction process. For premises electrical systems, your first call for electrical help should be an electrical contractor who is licensed to perform electrical work in Minnesota. All electrical work in Minnesota is required by law to be installed by properly licensed electrical contractors. An electrician who only has a personal electrical license can only perform electrical work under the supervision of the licensed electrical contractor with whom the electrician is employed. For a list of Minnesota-licensed electrical contractors go to: <https://secure.doli.state.mn.us/lookup/licensing.aspx>

4) Homeowners, within strict limitations, are exempt from electrical licensing. Homeowners are not exempt from electrical inspections. An owner (homeowner) is a natural person who physically performs electrical work on premises the person owns and actually occupies as a one-family residence or owns and will occupy as a one-family residence upon completion of construction. It is illegal for an owner to install electrical wiring in rented or leased property (e.g. apartments, condos, rental homes), in manufactured (mobile) home parks and in recreational vehicle parks. Homeowners are essentially limited to one-family dwellings and their accessory buildings. For additional details go to: http://www.dli.mn.gov/CCLD/PDF/eli_inspection_checklist2.pdf

5) At or before commencement of any electrical work that is required by law to be inspected, a Request for Electrical Inspection (REI) form (i.e. permit) must be completed and filed with the Dept. of Labor and Industry along with the appropriate electrical inspection fee. An REI is considered filed when it is deposited in the mail with the accompanying inspection fee or filed online. For additional information go to: http://www.dli.mn.gov/CCLD/etrakit_electrical.asp

6) All electrical work (temporary and permanent) is required by law to be inspected. Where electrical wiring will be concealed, a rough-in inspection must be made before insulation, gypsum board, paneling or other materials cover any wiring. Underground wiring must be inspected before the trench is back-filled. For information go to: http://www.dli.mn.gov/CCLD/etrakit_electrical.asp

7) Flood-damaged electrical wiring, equipment and appliances will not be accepted, permitted or approved to be part of an electrical installation that is required by law to be inspected by the Dept. of Labor and Industry. The state of Minnesota, the Dept. of Labor and Industry and its contract electrical inspectors cannot and will not approve, nor be liable for, any re-energized flood-damaged electrical infrastructure.

8) At such time that an electrical inspection is needed, installers of electrical wiring can request an electrical inspection by contacting the contract electrical inspector in the city, town, or county in which the electrical work is performed. Contract electrical inspectors are generally available by telephone weekday mornings between 7:00 a.m. and 8:30 a.m.. State law requires installers to give sufficient notice to electrical inspectors. Don't wait until the last day or moment to call the inspector – please call ahead of time. For a directory of electrical inspectors go to: www.dli.mn.gov/cclD/PDF/eli_ElectricalInspectorDirectory.pdf

9) The department's Electrical Area Representatives are available to answer electrical licensing questions, electrical inspection questions, electrical code questions and to perform other related tasks on behalf of the department. The electrical area representatives are available to assist local officials and attend community information meetings as needed. For an electrical area representative directory go to: www.dli.mn.gov/cclD/PDF/eli_area_reps.pdf

Go to www.dli.mn.gov/cclD/ElectricalNotices.asp for additional Emergency Management information