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ESFI Urges Adoption of New Electrical Code

To make sure your home is electrically safe, The Electrical Safety Foundation International urges consumers to be aware of the electrical codes that apply in their areas. For example, older versions of the National Electrical Code® (NEC®) do not require installation of certain electrical safety devices, such as arc fault circuit interrupters (AFCIs), which can detect electrical arcs that cause fires, or ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs), which protect against electrical shock.

“If every area adopted the most recent version of the NEC® in its entirety, we would expect to see a reduction in deaths and injuries caused by electrical hazards,” noted Brett Brenner, ESFI president.

Because the NEC® is designed to provide electrical safety standards, ESFI supports use of the most current version to help reduce deaths and injuries at home and in the workplace. States and municipalities that have adopted the entire 1999 NEC® or a more recent version include requirements designed to provide additional protection against electrical shock, burns, fires and explosions. If your state or local governing entity has not adopted the 2005 version of the NEC®, or if it has rescinded specific provisions, certain electrical safety features may not apply in your area. To identify the electrical code currently enforced in states and major metropolitan areas, contact your local governing agency, or visit the National Electrical Manufacturers Associations (NEMA) website at www.nema.org/fieldreps/necadoption/.

Electrocutions and electrical fires are responsible for hundreds of deaths and thousands of injuries each year. The National Fire Protection Institute reported that from 1999 through 2002, there were approximately 32,000 home electrical fires associated with electrical systems. Increased use of AFCIs, which detect arcs that are the leading cause of electrical fires, could reduce not only electrical fires, but also the deaths and injuries they cause.

U.S. Department of Labor data reports that approximately 400 people are electrocuted each year at home and in the workplace. Increased use of ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs), which provide protection from lethal current, should be installed on circuits within six feet of water, including bathrooms, kitchens, laundry rooms, garages and outdoor receptacles.

(more)

ESFI URGES ADOPTION OF NEW ELECTRICAL CODE/ADD ONE

Adoption and enforcement of the most recent NEC® is a key to reducing deaths and injuries caused by electricity. ESFI urges consumers to become more aware of electrical safety hazards and precautions. These and other electrical safety tips are available at the Foundation's Web site at www.electrical-safety.org or call 703-841-3229.

Founded in 1994 through a joint effort between Underwriters Laboratories Inc. (UL), the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) and the National Electrical Manufacturers Association (NEMA), the Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI) is North America's only non-profit organization dedicated exclusively to promoting electrical safety in the home and workplace. ESFI is a 501(c)(3) organization funded by electrical manufacturers and distributors, independent testing laboratories, utilities, safety and consumer groups, and trade and labor associations. ESFI sponsors National Electrical Safety Month each May, and engages in public education campaigns and proactive media relations to help reduce property damage, personal injury and death due to electrical accidents. The Foundation does not engage in code or standard writing or lobbying and does not solicit individuals.

For additional electrical safety information, visit the Foundation's web site at www.electrical-safety.org or call 703-841-3229.

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