



Standing Committee on Environment, Climate Change and Biodiversity

Inquiry into Annual and Financial Reports 2022-2023 **ANSWER TO QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE**

Asked by Mr Ed Cocks MLA on 13 November 2023: Ms Ros Malouf took on notice the following question(s):

Reference: Hansard [uncorrected] proof transcript 13 November 2023 [PAGE 20]]

In relation to: New insulation standards

MR COCKS: Sorry, just a supplementary to that.

I have had concerns raised with me around the electrical aspects. Can you tell me what standard wiring is required for properties with this insulation installed? Is it being installed to current standard or previously houses were required to install, I think, V65, it might be V70, standard wiring, rather than V95, which is current.

Ms Malouf: So the requirement is for current. So if we go into a home that is an older home, and potentially has previously approved wiring, some of that needs to be upgraded. The downlights tend to be the bigger challenge in the insulation, because putting in insulation over the top of downlights is a fire hazard. So they need to be replaced.

There is also requirements often to upgrade a switchboard which would be a safety requirement anyway. It is recognised because of the insulation going in at the time.

MR COCKS: Because the information I have been given is that the wiring itself in a house, the quality of cables insulation, that changed around—it may have been 96, but it may be more recent than that. Before that it required a—what was called a V70 or V65 standard, which is to do with the amount of temperature that it can withstand. That changed much later.

So we are potentially looking at issues with the entire wiring of the house. I am wondering if you are looking at that issue at all? Are you requiring the entire wiring of a house to be upgraded to modern standards?

Ms Malouf: I will have to take that one on notice, just to make sure that we are getting you the exact information—

MR COCKS: Yes.

Ms Malouf: If that is okay?

MR COCKS: Yes, it is.

Ms Malouf: Yes.

Mr Shane Rattenbury MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:—

The *Residential Tenancies Regulation 1998*, under which the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard was introduced, requires that an electrical safety inspection be carried out by a licensed electrician before any insulation is installed, to ensure that the installation of the insulation will not create any electrical safety issues that might endanger the installers, tenants, or the property.

Under the regulation, if there are halogen or other incandescent downlights in an area where ceiling insulation is required to be installed under the minimum standard, they must be removed and replaced with IC-4 rated LED downlights by a licensed electrician to address risk of fire.

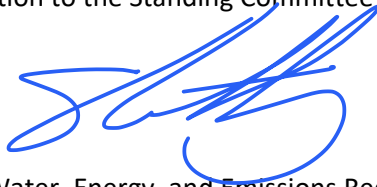
The licenced electrician must also install a Residual Current Device/s (RCDS/s), if not already present, on all circuits impacted by the installer or upgrade of the insulation.

The regulation also stipulates that any other electrical work that is necessary to ensure the electrical safety of an electrical installation affected, or likely to be affected, by the installation of ceiling insulation, must be undertaken.

The regulation for the minimum standard does not require rewiring per se. However, if as part of the electrical safety inspection, the electrician uncovers a dangerous electrical fault in the electrical system of the property (such as age-related deterioration of the wiring or damage by vermin) then, under the *Residential Tenancies Act 1997*, to ensure the safety of the tenant, the landlord is required to treat this as an urgent repair (whether or not it relates to the installation of insulation).

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Environment, Climate Change and Biodiversity

Signature:



Date: 20/11/23

By the Minister for Water, Energy, and Emissions Reduction, Mr Shane Rattenbury MLA.