

## **Council of Construction Associations**

#138 - 5751 Cedarbridge Way,

Richmond, B.C. V6X 2A8

Telephone (604) 241-7667 Fax (604) 241-7678

email: [grantmcmillan@shaw.ca](mailto:grantmcmillan@shaw.ca)

Grant McMillan, President

COCA WCB Update #418 November 3, 2008

### GFCI Issue Resolved with New WorkSafeBC and City of Vancouver Process

For over a year, COCA has been working with Construction Industry experts, WorkSafeBC and the City of Vancouver to resolve a problem created by a change to the Canadian Electrical Code.

Another key element of the solution was put in place today with the publication of a bulletin from the City of Vancouver that sets out the process for securing the use of an approved assured grounding program as an alternative to GFCIs.

The bulletin and explanatory note from the City is enclosed.

Previous COCA updates have described how WorkSafeBC has revised the NOPC form by including a declaration from a general contractor regarding implementation of the "***assured grounding program***" on a specific construction site.

Now the City of Vancouver has published Bulletin 2008-008-EL which clarifies conditions under which an electrical contractor may apply for a special permission to deviate from Rule 76-016 of the CE Code. This Bulletin is posted on the City website.

COCA thanks Graham Trafford of Mott Electric, Hank Paquin of Sasco Systems and John Russell of Bosa Brothers for their expertise and support of this initiative. COCA also thanks Betty Pirs of WorkSafeBC for mobilizing

her staff on this project and Ark Tsisserev, Electrical Safety Manager for the City of Vancouver.

**NOTE:** If any contractor in areas other than Vancouver experiences difficulties with the GFCI issue, please contact Grant McMillan.

BULLETIN 2008-008-EL

October 30, 2008

## APPLICATION OF RULE 76-016 in CONJUNCTION WITH IMPLEMENTATION OF "ASSURED GROUNDING PROGRAM" ON A CONSTRUCTION SITE.

This Bulletin clarifies the City of Vancouver requirements on the referenced subject.

### Background:

GFCI protection for receptacles on construction sites is required by Rule 76-016. Although the City of Vancouver enforces compliance of electrical installations with all applicable provisions of the BC Electrical Code, electrical inspectors of the City of Vancouver appreciate the fact that tripping of a GFCI protecting such receptacles may become a problem in the field for the contractors working on a construction site.

Thus, many electrical contractors apply for a request to relax the requirement of Rule 76-016 for a GFCI protection and base their request on the understanding that the WorkSafeBC administers the "Assured Grounding Program" on the construction site.

However, the "assured grounding program" is beyond electrical inspectors' jurisdictional control, and the City of Vancouver electrical inspectors can not simply accept a request from an electrical contractor (to omit installation of a GFCI protection for the receptacles under Rule 76-016), only because the electrical contractor states that such "assured grounding program" will be implemented by a general contractor during the construction period.

WorkSafeBC, the AHJ that administers all relevant safety aspects of the referenced program under Section 19.15(1) of the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation for the duration of construction, has recognized the problem related to this subject and has amended the "Notice of Project" form (See a sample of this form on Attachment 2 to the Bulletin) by incorporating a declaration from a general contractors stating as follows:

*With respect to electrical safety for portable electrical equipment at this location, it is declared (check one or more boxes):*

- The project will use GFCI protection of installed receptacles in accordance with the requirements of the BC Electrical Code.*
- Where GFCI protection indicated above is not intended to be provided, the electrical contractor(s) will make application(s) to the applicable electrical authority for variance(s) to the BC Electrical Code requirements for the referenced GFCI protection based on a declaration by the prime contractor that an assured grounding program is implemented at the work site. Where the variance(s) is granted, it is the responsibility of the prime contractor to ensure that the assured grounding program at the site is used in accordance with WorkSafeBC published guidelines and practices set out in OHS Guideline 19.15(1) Ground fault circuit interrupters and other acceptable means.*
- Not applicable. No portable electrical equipment, including temporary lighting, will be used on this site.*

**Ruling:**

The City of Vancouver is prepared to consider a request for a special permission - to omit GFCI protection of the referenced receptacles installed at the specific construction site under the following conditions:

1. Request for a special permission is made on the application form (Attachment 1); and
2. Completed WorkSafeBC declaration form ( Attachment 2) is submitted with the application to request a special permission.

**Notes:**

- (a) The WorkSafeBC declaration form (with the ID number provided for each construction address) is available from at [www.worksafebc.ca](http://www.worksafebc.ca) and Attachment 2 demonstrates a sample of such form.
- (b) The WorkSafeBC will be advised about each accepted request for a special permission ;

Original signed by \_\_\_\_\_

A.Z. Tsisserev, P.Eng.

Electrical Safety Manager,

Chief Electrical Inspector and City Electrician.

Attachment 1 (Request for a special permission form);

Attachment 2 (sample of NOPC form)



COMMUNITY SERVICES GROUP  
Licences and Inspections  
Inspections

## Application Form

Request for a special permission to deviate from Rule 76-016 of the BC Electrical Code.

Installation Address \_\_\_\_\_

Electrical Permit #: \_\_\_\_\_

I, \_\_\_\_\_ FSR for the

Company \_\_\_\_\_

Request a special permission to omit a AFCI protection mandated by Rule 76-016 of the BC Electrical Code- for receptacles installed at the above stated construction site.

This request is based on the declaration provided by the general contractor

\_\_\_\_\_(Contractor's Name),

grounding program administered by the WorkSafeBC in accordance with Section 19.15(1) of the BC OH&S regulations implemented at the referenced site.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date (mm/dd/yy)

Accepted by \_\_\_\_\_  
For City Electrician

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date (mm/dd/yy)

A copy of the accepted request for a special permission has been sent to the WorkSafeBC (fax # 604-276-3247; e-mail: [Prevnop@worksafebc.com](mailto:Prevnop@worksafebc.com))

yes\_\_\_ No\_\_\_

**WORK SAFE BC**

WORKING TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

# NOTICE OF PROJECT: Construction, Asbestos, Lead

Notice of project number

**Sequential number assigned**

Please print or type all information in **BLOCK CAPITALS** and press hard — you are making three copies.

To report forestry, aircraft operations, diving, or underground workings projects, please see Notice of Project form 52E48.

- For construction, asbestos, and lead projects, please post the white copy of this completed form at the project site.
- Please fax or mail the remaining copies of this completed form to: WorkSafeBC, PO Box 5350 Stn Terminal, Vancouver BC V6B 5L5  
Telephone 604 276-3100 in the lower mainland, or 1 888 621-7233 toll-free in B.C., Fax 604 276-3247.

### General information (You must complete this part.)

Name of owner	Name of prime contractor or asbestos contractor (if different from owner)	Name of consulting firm (asbestos only)
Address (street, city, postal code)	Address (street, city, postal code)	Name of person in charge of project
Employer account number	Employer account number	Job title
Has the prime contractor agreed in writing with the owner to be the prime contractor? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		Telephone (please include area code)
Project site location (Indicate street address and city. If unavailable, describe general geographic location — road, kilometre, latitude/longitude, etc. — and nearest town. Attach a map if necessary.)		Name of person completing this form
		Telephone (please include area code)
		Project start date (yyyy-mm-dd)
		Anticipated duration of project Hours <input type="checkbox"/> Days <input type="checkbox"/> Month <input type="checkbox"/>

➔ **Only complete the section pertaining to your project.** ⬅

<b>➔ Construction project</b> (OH&S Regulation 20.2) — At least 24 hours' notice required			
<b>General construction</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Institutional <input type="checkbox"/> Residential <input type="checkbox"/> Single family <input type="checkbox"/> Multi-family wood <input type="checkbox"/> Multi-family concrete Number of floors _____ Total square feet _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial (explain)  <input type="checkbox"/> Recreational (explain)	<b>Site preparation</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Pile driving <input type="checkbox"/> Remediation <input type="checkbox"/> Ground preparation  <b>Service construction</b> <input type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Repair <input type="checkbox"/> Sewer line <input type="checkbox"/> Water line <input type="checkbox"/> Gas line <input type="checkbox"/> Power line  <b>Other (explain)</b>	<b>Road construction</b> Length _____ km <input type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Resurfacing <input type="checkbox"/> Alignment  <b>Heavy construction</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Bridge Length _____ m Height _____ m <input type="checkbox"/> Pier, wharf, or dry-dock <input type="checkbox"/> Dam, dyke, or reservoir	<input type="checkbox"/> Project cost > \$100,000 <input type="checkbox"/> Designed by a professional engineer <input type="checkbox"/> Work in a compressed air atmosphere or caisson, tunnel, underground working, or cofferdam <input type="checkbox"/> Ground support drawings available <input type="checkbox"/> Work in an excavation > 1.2 m in depth <input type="checkbox"/> Work in a trench > 1.2 m in depth and > 30 m in length  <b>Construction, demolition, or alteration involving:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Building > 2 storeys or > 6 m in height <input type="checkbox"/> Bridge <input type="checkbox"/> Earth or water retaining structure > 3 m in height <input type="checkbox"/> Silo or chimney > 6 m in height
Estimated project cost (Must enter estimated cost <b>only</b> on copies of the form submitted to WorkSafeBC.) \$ _____		Person responsible for coordinating health and safety activities _____	

With respect to **electrical safety for portable electrical equipment** at this location, it is declared (check one or more boxes):

The project will use GFCI protection of installed receptacles in accordance with the requirements of the *BC Electrical Code*.

Where GFCI protection indicated above is not intended to be provided, the electrical contractor(s) will make application(s) to the applicable electrical authority for variance(s) to the *BC Electrical Code* requirements for the referenced GFCI protection based on a declaration by the prime contractor that an assured grounding program is implemented at the work site. Where the variance(s) is granted, it is the responsibility of the prime contractor to ensure that the assured grounding program at the site is used in accordance with WorkSafeBC published guidelines and practices set out in *OHS Guideline 19.15(1) Ground fault circuit interrupters and other acceptable means*.

Not applicable. No portable electrical equipment, including temporary lighting, will be used on this site.

<b>➔ Asbestos or lead project</b> (OH&S Regulation 20.2(1)(c)) — At least 24 hours' notice required			
Hours of work _____	Number of workers per shift _____	Detailed written work procedures attached to this form? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Asbestos project information</b> Building or structure containing asbestos materials involving: <input type="checkbox"/> Demolition <input type="checkbox"/> Repair/renovation <input type="checkbox"/> Dismantlement	Building materials containing friable asbestos material involving: <input type="checkbox"/> Removal <input type="checkbox"/> Enclosure <input type="checkbox"/> Encapsulation	<b>Asbestos risk level:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/> Moderate <input type="checkbox"/> Low	<b>Lead project information</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Lead abatement <input type="checkbox"/> Significant disturbance of lead coating <input type="checkbox"/> Other risk of occupational disease (explain)

### For WorkSafeBC use only

Officer and number _____	Region _____	Area _____	Date received (yyyy-mm-dd) _____
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WHITE — Project site copy

YELLOW — WorkSafeBC file copy

PINK — WorkSafeBC officer copy

**52E49****WORKERS' COMPENSATION BOARD OF B.C.**

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