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### **COCA Successful with new GFCI Guideline**

The use of an Assured Grounding Program as an alternative to GFCIs has been a long-standing issue with the Construction industry in BC.

The Guideline reads, in part:

Section 19.15(1) requires that portable electrical equipment be protected by a GFCI when used outdoors or in a wet or damp location, unless another acceptable means of protection is provided. An AGP can be another acceptable means of protection when implemented and maintained in accordance with procedures and restrictions in this guideline.

COCA requested WorkSafeBC to revise this Guideline that provides direction on the use of GFCIs and an Assured Grounding Program.

The request was based on the need for improved flexibility while safeguarding the workplace.

The revised Guideline, which provides improved clarity and flexibility, has been produced and is now available at:

[http://www2.worksafebc.com/publications/OHSRegulation/GuidelinePart19.asp#SectionNumber:G19.15\\_1](http://www2.worksafebc.com/publications/OHSRegulation/GuidelinePart19.asp#SectionNumber:G19.15_1)

The key component within the Guideline is that it clarifies when the Contractor may chose to use an Assured Grounding Program (AGP).

The WSBC Guideline notes that:

The *B.C. Electrical Code* specifies that receptacles having CSA configuration 5-15R or 5-20R installed to provide power for buildings or projects under construction or demolition must be protected by GFCIs of the Class A type except by special permission. In the circumstance where special permission is required for the use of an AGP in lieu of GFCIs on construction and demolition sites, the permission is obtained from the electrical authority having jurisdiction.

The WSBC Guideline further notes that:

Although *Code* Rule 76-016 only applies to 5-15R and 5-20R receptacles, *Regulation* section 19.15 applies to all portable electrical equipment used outdoors or in a wet or damp location. The effect of this is that a GFCI or other acceptable means of protection (i.e., AGP) must be used for all portable electrical equipment in these circumstances, regardless of the receptacle type. In other words, all electrical receptacles that are part of portable electrical equipment used outdoors or in a wet or damp location, including locking receptacles, must be used with a GFCI or AGP. This applies regardless of whether the receptacle comes within the scope of *Code* Rule 76-016.

COCA's request was to provide clarity on the use of locking electrical receptacles – those designated L5-15 or L5-20 – and not included within CSA Code Rule 76-016.\*

The Guideline provides this clarity. The effect of the Guideline is that a locking receptacle does not come within the scope of CSA Code Rule 76-016 and therefore does not require a special permission for its use.

But the locking receptacle must still be used with a GFCI or an AGP.

COCA thanks Graham Trafford of Mott Electric, who worked for months with Grant McMillan -- to provide expert advice on how to achieve this WSBC Guideline revision.

\* The locking coupling makes for a more reliable connection in commercial and industrial settings, where vibration or incidental impact could disconnect a non-locking connector.