



**TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF LICENSING & REGULATION**  
*ARC FLASH NEWSLETTER*  
from the Texas Electrical Safety & Licensing Program

**May 2021 / Issue #23**

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## Welcome to the TDLR Arc Flash!

The **TDLR Arc Flash** is here to keep licensed electricians, city officials and consumers throughout Texas informed about the [Texas Electrical Safety and Licensing Act](#) and TDLR's efforts to enforce the associated requirements. We hope you will find this information useful and informative. Please feel free to **PASS IT ON!**

To subscribe to email news and updates about the Electrician program, or to review your email subscription settings, visit the [TDLR Email Updates](#) page.





## 2020 National Electrical Code Now in Effect in Texas



The [Texas Electrical Safety and Licensing Act](#) requires TDLR to adopt the revised National Electrical Code (NEC) as the electrical code for the state of Texas.

In 2020, the Texas Commission of Licensing and Regulation adopted the 2020 NEC as the electrical code for the state of Texas and established it as the "minimum standard" for all electrical work in Texas covered by the Act, starting Nov. 1, 2020.

Chapter 1305.201 of the Act gives municipalities the authority to make local amendments to the 2020 NEC; however, any proposal to amend these standards should be done in accordance with

NEC 90.4, which stipulates *"the authority having jurisdiction may waive specific requirements in this Code or permit alternative methods where it is assured that equivalent objectives can be achieved by establishing and maintaining effective safety."*

**Any non-exempt electrical work started on or after November 1, 2020 must be installed in accordance with the 2020 NEC.**

To clarify: the "start" of electrical work is the day the electrician begins installing electrical materials or equipment within the residential or commercial building structure. Inside the corporate limits of a municipality, the start date is the permit date. Electricians must abide by city permitting requirements and adhere to any state code amendments by the municipality.

**As of Nov. 1, 2020, all licensing examinations for Texas electrical licenses are based on the 2020 NEC.** Texas electrical licensing exams are available through [PSI](#), the testing vendor selected by TDLR to develop, maintain and administer the examinations.

Licensing candidates should carefully review the [Candidate Information Bulletin \(CIB\)](#) for detailed and helpful information regarding the examinations.

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## Local Governments Can Adopt Amendments to the NEC

A municipality may adopt procedures, for the adoption of local amendments, to the state adopted National Electrical Code and administration and enforcement of that code and amendments. However, Texas licensed electricians regulated by TDLR, shall follow the most current state adopted code in the incorporated and unincorporated areas of Texas. Reference the Texas Electrical Safety & Licensing Act 1305.101(a)(2) and 1305.201(c)(1)&(2) <http://www.license.state.tx.us/electricians/eleclaw.htm>

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## May is Electrical Safety Month

### ***Electrical safety at home and at work begins with you***

Electricity improves our quality of life and when used correctly, electricity safely powers progress. But it's easy to forget that electricity can cause fires or even kill if it's not used safely.

Here are simple precautions you can take to eliminate hazards at home and at work:

- Replace or repair loose or frayed cords on all electrical devices.
- Don't run extension cords across doorways or under carpets.
- Don't overload outlets. Plug in only one high-wattage appliance (i.e. toaster, iron, hair dryer, vacuum) into each outlet.
- Place lamps on level surfaces, away from things that can burn
- Use bulbs that match the lamp's recommended wattage.
- If an outlet or switch feels warm, shut off the circuit and have it checked by an electrician.
- Electrical shocks – even mild ones – are an indication of an electrical hazard. Shut off the circuit and have the electrical system checked by a licensed electrician.
- Hire a licensed electrical contractor to check your home or office electrical wiring and distribution system to reduce the likelihood of electrocution and fires.





***Water and electricity do not mix.***

***That's why you need a licensed electrician.***

Any electrical work on wiring or equipment located within 20 feet of a body of water, including pools, lakes or beaches, should only be performed by licensed electricians who have been specially trained to work around water.

Here's how you can ensure the safety of anyone who'll be playing or relaxing near water:

- Before you use an outdoor receptacle, make sure it's protected with a ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) and that the GFCI is working properly. You can test the GFCI by pushing the test button on the receptacle or on the overcurrent device (breaker) inside the electrical panel. If the GFCI is not performing properly, calling a Texas Licensed Electrical Contractor for service.
- **Any** electrical wiring that is within 20 feet of a swimming pool should have protection from a GFCI, **including** underwater luminaires (pool lights).
- Make sure overhead electrical lines do not pass over the pool. In fact, it's best to keep your pool at least 25 feet away from power lines in all directions.
- Allow at least 18 feet of clearance between overhead power lines and a diving board, deck, platform, slide, or observation area. Never build an in-ground pool or set up an above-ground pool on top of underground electric cables.
- Pools and pool decking should be installed at least five feet away from all underground utility lines.
- Except for specially designed lighting fixtures, don't put electrical fixtures or receptacles within five feet of a pool.

- Comply with any local building codes that may provide more stringent guidelines than the ones that have been listed here.

### **Set a good example for your children**

#### **Electrical safety education is important...It's never too early to learn safe behaviors**

Homes with small children should cover unused wall sockets and extension-cord receptacles with plastic safety covers.

Unplug hair dryers and other electrical devices in bathrooms or areas where children may have access to them near bathtubs or sinks.

The National Fire Protection Association maintains a [child-oriented website](#) with electrical safety information and fun activities, movies and coloring pages.



### **Hiring a licensed electrician matters: here's why and how**



When having electrical work performed on your residence and/or pool, make sure to ask to see the Texas Electrical Contractor License (TECL), or the Residential Appliance Installer Contractor License (TICL), plus the appropriate license(s) that the persons performing the work should have and hold on them

Visit the [TDLR web site](#) to check whether an electrician is licensed to perform electrical work. The license is granted to professionals who have demonstrated the required amount of electrical work experience, successfully completed the Department approved examination, had their criminal history checked and met all other state electrical laws and rules.

If you find a person offering to perform or performing electrical services without a license [file a complaint](#) with TDLR -- help us make Texas a safer place for everyone.

## **Electrical Safety and Licensing Advisory Board Meeting**

The [Electrical Safety and Licensing Advisory Board](#) met **Nov. 10, 2020** via videoconference. The [agenda](#) and [staff reports](#) are available online.



The meeting was archived and is available on [TDLR's YouTube channel](#).

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## Have Questions for TDLR?

- Telephone: **512-463-6599** or toll-free in Texas **800-803-9202**.
- Relay Texas TDD: **800-735-2989**.
- [Email](#)
- File a [Complaint or Report a Violation](#)



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## Closing the Circuit

If you have any questions, concerns, comments, or observations about the TDLR Electricians Program, please contact us – we want to hear from you.

- **Jerry Daniel – Chief Electrical Inspector: (512) 799-1489**  
or [jerry.daniel@tdlr.texas.gov](mailto:jerry.daniel@tdlr.texas.gov)
- **Larry Reichle – Deputy Chief Electrical Inspector: (512) 779-2857**  
or [larry.reichle@tdlr.texas.gov](mailto:larry.reichle@tdlr.texas.gov)

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### **Remember:**

***Many fatal electrical shocks happen to people who should know better -  
think twice and don't take chances.***

***Please be safe out there.***