

The

# Open Circuit

A monthly publication of the Independent Electrical Contractors Association, Inc.

Volume 10 Issue 3

March, 2010

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Show that you belong. Purchase a hat or jacket with the IECA logo. Contact Everett Slater at 610-287-2526 for information.

**Help the IECA grow into the future!** Our building fund continues to grow thanks to your efforts. Join us and share our vision and investment into the future of the Electrical Industry through education. Donations are being accepted at all General Meetings and by mail. Your contribution form is found on the back page of this newsletter. Please contact Bruce D'Agostino at 215-467-3197 for information on how you can become involved with this project.

## March General Meeting

Location:	Torresdale-Frankford Country Club 3801 Grant Ave. (Frankford and Grant Ave.) Philadelphia, PA 19114
Date:	Tuesday, March 23, 2010 (Always the 4th Tuesday of the month)
Time:	7:00 pm
Cost:	\$25 to members registered by 3/20/2010 \$30 to members not pre-registered and guests. Includes dinner with cash bar and PA Dept. of L&I approved CEU Certificates
Topic:	Tools a Contractor can use to get paid!
Reservations:	Voice Mail: 215-698-0750 Fax: 215-638-8554 Email: <a href="mailto:Mlenherr@comcast.net">Mlenherr@comcast.net</a>

## This Month

Our March general meeting will be with our friend Gaetano Piccirilli of the Law Firm White and Williams LLP. Mr. Piccirilli's law practice centers on the construction industry with mechanics lien claims and construction defect litigation. Topics to be discussed: Pennsylvania Mechanics Liens, Contract Language, Bonds, Contract Provisions and the Contractor and Subcontractor Act (CASPA). This business meeting should prove to gain some valuable insight into ways to protect your business.

Please come out to learn and ask the questions that help you with your business!  
CEU Certifications will be issued for this meeting.

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**CODE CORNER®**

**Volume 10, Number 20**

By: Michal Hofkin, Middle Atlantic Inspections, Inc.  
IECA, IAEI, EAP, NFPA

*Please note the following correction from the February Code Corner. On the last page, please replace the first paragraph to read as follows:*

*In section 700.12(F) we are given the parameters for what an emergency illumination unit must consist of. It must have a rechargeable battery charger, provisions for one or more lamps or terminals for remote lamps (or both), and a relaying device that turns on if the normal power fails. The unit must supply at least 87.5 percent of the battery voltage for the total lamp load for at least 1.5 hours. Alternately, the unit can provide "60 percent of the initial emergency illumination for a period of 1.5 hours".*

*The editor apologizes for this misprint.*

**Emergency Lighting Unit Equipment – Part II**

Welcome back to the Code Corner®. In the process of digging myself out from the onslaught of snow that we have endured this winter, I found my computer next to a squirrel's nest within a snowdrift. After picking the acorns out of the keyboard I found myself able to once again deliver an article on time to the editor of The Open Circuit.

This month we will continue our trek through the world of emergency lighting systems. Our discussion is focused on Article 700 of the 2008 NEC, specifically the requirements for unit equipment.

As we read further into Section 700.12(F), we find that unit equipment must be permanently installed and wired with a Chapter 3 wiring method. This includes the wiring between a battery unit and any remote heads that are connected to it. Cord-and-plug connections are permitted provided the cord does not exceed 3 feet in length. The unit equipment shall be wired to the same branch circuit, ahead of any switches, as the normal lighting in the area being served, thus ensuring emergency illumination even if only a single branch circuit becomes de-energized. "The branch circuit that feeds unit equipment shall be clearly identified at the distribution panel."

There is an exception to the "local branch circuit rule" that allows for the unit equipment to be connected to a separate branch circuit. There are two conditions that must be met in order to use this exception. The first requires the area served to be separate, uninterrupted, and served by a minimum of three normal lighting circuits. The second condition is that branch circuit that feeds the unit equipment must originate in the same panel as the normal lighting circuits, and it must have a lock-on feature.

Sometimes, the use of this exception is not clearly understood. Often, the normal lighting circuits are 277-volt, and the installer mistakenly connects the

**Upcoming Events**

*Mark Your Calendars Today*

**03/23/2010**

March General Meeting

7:00 PM @ Torresdale-Frankford Country Club

Tools a contractor can use to get paid with Gaetano Piccirelli

**04/06/2010**

April Executive Board Meeting

6:00 PM @ Eddington House

**04/27/2010**

April General Meeting

7:00 PM @ Torresdale-Frankford Country Club

Details to be announced

**05/04/2010**

May Executive Board Meeting

6:00 PM @ Eddington House

**05/25/2010**

May General Meeting

7:00 PM @ Torresdale-Frankford Country Club

Details to be announced

**06/01/2010**

June Executive Board Meeting

6:00 PM @ Eddington House

**07/07/2010**

IECA with the Phillies

7:00 PM @ Citizen Park

Phillies vs. the Atlanta Braves

\$33 per ticket. Limited seating available.

Money and reservations MUST be in by May 3rd. Contact Sharon Rice for information now! 215-673-4434.

**07/17/2010**

IECA Pool Party

Details to be announced

**08/23/2010**

IECA Annual Golf Outing

Torresdale-Frankford Country Club

Details to be announced

emergency unit equipment to a 120-volt panel. This violates the "same panel" rule above. Warehouses also present challenges to compliance where the normal lighting is 480-volt. Unless specially made 480-volt unit equipment is obtained, it is very difficult, if not impossible, to supply the unit equipment from the same panel as the normal lighting. In these cases it is advisable to ask the AHJ what would be acceptable. A relay system or a shunt trip circuit breaker may be acceptable to the AHJ in order to ensure that the emergency illumination operates in the event of a normal lighting outage.

*(continued on page 4)*

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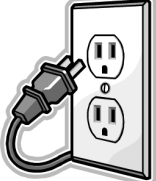
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(continued from page 2)

In the case of emergency luminaires that receive power from unit equipment, such as an EXIT sign, we are required to follow the rules in 700.9 and use a Chapter 3 wiring method to bring the power from the unit equipment to the luminaire being served.

In Section 700.4 the requirements for Tests and Maintenance are given. The AHJ must "conduct or witness a test of the complete system upon installation and periodically afterward," as per 700.4(A). In 700.4(B), (C), and (D) are the requirements for periodic testing, battery systems maintenance, and the mandate for a WRITTEN RECORD of this testing and maintenance.

This series of articles has highlighted the NEC requirements for unit equipment, presented the possible legal ramifications of non-compliance, and provided examples of possibly challenging installations. It is vital that the installer understand how to safely and legally install this equipment. These installations go beyond standard wiring for general purpose lighting and power; they are a Life Safety System and must be treated with the due regard afforded these specialized systems provided specifically to ensure that *people* can safely exit a structure during an emergency.

The above is not a formal interpretation of the National Electrical Code. All references, duplicated code language, and paraphrasing is from the National Electrical Code (NFPA-70) 2008 edition.

About the author: Michal Hofkin is an Electrical Inspector for Middle Atlantic Inspections, Inc. He is a Past President of the Benjamin Franklin Chapter of the IAEI and is currently the Chapter Secretary. In 2009 he was appointed to UL Standards Technical Panel 719. Mr. Hofkin has been teaching NEC and electrical courses for over 19 years and is a seminar leader/instructor for several professional and educational organizations. To schedule training or to ask questions please contact him at 215-679-5883 or [theowl88@aol.com](mailto:theowl88@aol.com).

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### 2010 Mandatory Lead-Safety Training and Certification Impacts Home Renovation and Repair Industry

Does your business involve the renovation, repair or painting of structures built before 1978? If so, there are new federal regulations that must be followed in order to protect children from lead-based paint hazards that can result from this type of work. The EPA issued a new Lead Renovation, Repair and Painting Rule last April that requires firms and individuals involved in interior and exterior renovation or repair and painting to be certified by April 2010 and that they follow specific lead-based work practices to minimize exposure to lead-based paint dust. As a contractor, you play an important part in protecting public health by helping to prevent lead exposure. Ordinary renovation and maintenance activities in older structures can create dust that contains lead – even small amounts of lead can harm children and adults.

EPA's RRP rule impacts many construction trades, including general contractors and special trade contractors including painters, plumbers, carpenters and electricians. Under the rule, contractors working in homes built before 1978 must be certified and must follow specific work practices to prevent lead contamination. For most individuals, eight hours of training is required. For more information on the requirements, please visit the EPA's web site at [www.epa.gov/lead](http://www.epa.gov/lead) or contact the National Lead Information Center (NLIC) at 1(800)424-LEAD.

If you are interested in attending the training class to become certified, please email Mike Silberman with your information and request at [mike@msmarketingsales.com](mailto:mike@msmarketingsales.com).

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