

# RCW/WAC Update for Electricians

## Chapter 19.28 RCW

### Electricians and Electrical Installations

#### 19.28.006

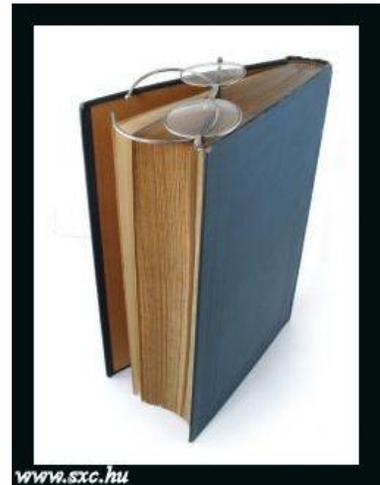
##### Definitions.

The definitions in this section apply throughout this subchapter.

(1) "Administrator" means a person designated by an electrical contractor to supervise electrical work and electricians in accordance with the rules adopted under this chapter.

(2) "Basic electrical work" means the work classified in (a) and (b) of this subsection as class A and class B basic electrical work:

(a) "Class A basic electrical work" means the like-in-kind replacement of a: Contactor, relay, timer, starter, circuit board, or similar control component; household appliance; circuit breaker; fuse; residential luminaire; lamp; snap switch; dimmer; receptacle outlet; thermostat; heating element; luminaire ballast with an exact same ballast; ten horsepower or smaller motor; or wiring, appliances, devices, or equipment as specified by rule.



(b) "Class B basic electrical work" means work other than class A basic electrical work that requires minimal electrical circuit modifications and has limited exposure hazards. Class B basic electrical work includes the following:

(i) Extension of not more than one branch electrical circuit limited to one hundred twenty volts and twenty amps each where:

(A) No cover inspection is necessary; and

(B) The extension does not supply more than two outlets;

(ii) Like-in-kind replacement of a single luminaire not exceeding two hundred seventy-seven volts and twenty amps;

(iii) Like-in-kind replacement of a motor larger than ten horsepower;

(iv) The following low voltage systems:

(A) Repair and replacement of devices not exceeding one hundred volt-amperes in Class 2, Class 3, or power limited low voltage systems in one and two-family dwellings;

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(B) Repair and replacement of the following devices not exceeding one hundred volt-amperes in Class 2, Class 3, or power limited low voltage systems in other

buildings, provided the equipment is not for fire alarm or nurse call systems and is not located in an area classified as hazardous by the national electrical code; or

(v) Wiring, appliances, devices, or equipment as specified by rule.

(3) "Board" means the electrical board under RCW 19.28.311.

(4) "Chapter" or "subchapter" means the subchapter, if no chapter number is referenced.

(5) "Department" means the department of labor and industries.

(6) "Director" means the director of the department or the director's designee.

(7) "Electrical construction trade" includes but is not limited to installing or maintaining electrical wires and equipment that are used for light, heat, or power and installing and maintaining remote control, signaling, power limited, or communication circuits or systems.

(8) "Electrical contractor" means a person, firm, partnership, corporation, or other entity that offers to undertake, undertakes, submits a bid for, or does the work of installing



or maintaining wires or equipment that convey electrical current.

- (9) "Equipment" means any equipment or apparatus that directly uses, conducts, insulates, or is operated by electricity but does not mean: Plug-in appliances; or plug-in equipment as determined by the department by rule.
- (10) "Industrial control panel" means a factory-wired or user-wired assembly of industrial control equipment such as motor controllers, switches, relays, power supplies, computers, cathode ray tubes, transducers, and auxiliary devices. The panel may include disconnect means and motor branch circuit protective devices.
- (11) "Journeyman electrician" means a person who has been issued a journeyman electrician certificate of competency by the department.
- (12) "Like-in-kind" means having similar characteristics such as voltage requirements, current draw, and function, and being in the same location.
- (13) "Master electrician" means either a master journeyman electrician or master specialty electrician.
- (14) "Master journeyman electrician" means a person who has been issued a master journeyman electrician certificate of competency by the department and who may be designated by an electrical contractor to supervise electrical work and electricians in accordance with rules adopted under this chapter.

(15) "Master specialty electrician" means a person who has been issued a specialty electrician certificate of competency by the department and who may be designated by an electrical contractor to supervise electrical work and electricians in accordance with rules adopted under this chapter.

(16) "Specialty electrician" means a person who has been issued a specialty electrician certificate of competency by the department.

**19.28.010**

**Electrical wiring requirements — General — Exceptions.**

(1) All wires and equipment, and installations thereof, that convey electric current and installations of equipment to be operated by electric current, in, on, or about buildings or structures, except for telephone, telegraph, radio, and television wires and equipment, and television antenna installations, signal strength amplifiers, and coaxial installations pertaining thereto shall be in strict conformity with this chapter, the statutes of the state of Washington, and the rules issued by the department, and shall be in conformity with approved methods of construction for safety to life and property. All wires and equipment that fall within section



90.2(b)(5) of the National Electrical Code, 1981 edition, are exempt from the requirements of this chapter. The regulations and articles in the National Electrical Code, the national electrical safety code, and other installation and safety regulations approved by the national fire protection association, as modified or supplemented by rules issued by the department in furtherance of safety to life and property under authority hereby granted, shall be prima

facie evidence of the approved methods of construction. All materials, devices, appliances, and equipment used in such installations shall be of a type that conforms to applicable standards or be indicated as acceptable by the established standards of any electrical product testing laboratory which is accredited by the department. Industrial control panels, utilization equipment, and their components do not need to be listed, labeled, or otherwise indicated as acceptable by an accredited electrical product testing laboratory unless specifically required by the National Electrical Code, 1993 edition.

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(2) Residential buildings or structures moved into or within a county, city, or town are not required to comply with all of the requirements of this chapter, if the original occupancy classification of the building or structure is not changed as a result of the move. This subsection shall not apply to residential buildings or structures that are substantially remodeled or rehabilitated.

(3) This chapter shall not limit the authority or power of any city or town to enact and enforce under authority given by law, any ordinance, rule, or regulation requiring an equal, higher, or better standard of construction and an equal, higher, or better standard of materials, devices, appliances, and equipment than that required by this chapter. A city or town shall require that its electrical inspectors meet the qualifications provided for state electrical inspectors in



accordance with RCW 19.28.321. In a city or town having an equal, higher, or better standard the installations, materials, devices, appliances, and equipment shall be in accordance with the ordinance, rule, or regulation of the city or town. Electrical equipment associated with spas, hot tubs, swimming pools, and hydromassage bathtubs shall not be offered for sale or exchange unless the electrical equipment is certified as being in compliance with the applicable product safety standard by bearing the certification mark of an approved electrical products testing laboratory.

(4) Nothing in this chapter may be construed as permitting the connection of any conductor of any electric circuit with a pipe that is connected with or designed to be connected with a waterworks piping system, without the consent of the person or persons legally responsible for the operation and maintenance of the waterworks piping system.

#### **19.28.021**

##### **Disputes regarding local regulations — Arbitration — Appeal.**

Disputes arising under RCW 19.28.010(3) regarding whether the city or town's electrical rules, regulations, or ordinances are equal to the rules adopted by the department shall be resolved by arbitration. The department shall appoint two members of the board to serve on the arbitration panel, and the city or town shall appoint two persons to serve on the arbitration panel. These four persons shall choose a fifth person to serve. If the four persons cannot agree on a fifth person, the presiding judge of the superior court of the county in which the city or town is located shall choose a fifth person. A decision of the arbitration panel may be appealed to the superior court of the county in which the city or town is located within thirty days after the date the panel issues its final decision.

#### **19.28.031**

##### **Rules, regulations, and standards.**

(1) Prior to January 1st of each year, the director shall obtain an authentic copy of the national electrical code, latest revision. The department, after consulting with the board and receiving the board's recommendations, shall adopt reasonable rules in furtherance of safety to life and

property. All rules shall be kept on file by the department. Compliance with the rules shall be prima facie evidence of compliance with this chapter. The department upon request shall deliver to all persons, firms, partnerships, corporations, or other entities licensed under this chapter a copy of the rules.

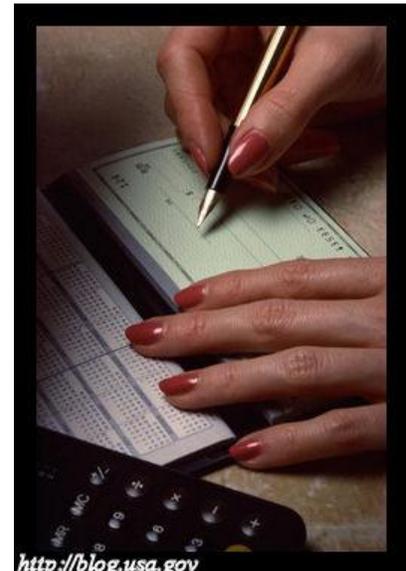
- (2) The department shall also obtain and keep on file an authentic copy of any applicable regulations and standards of any electrical product testing laboratory which is accredited by the department prescribing rules, regulations, and standards for electrical materials, devices, appliances, and equipment, including any modifications and changes that have been made during the previous year.

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#### 19.28.041

**License required — General or specialty licenses — Fees —  
Application — Bond or cash deposit.**

- (1) It is unlawful for any person, firm, partnership, corporation, or other entity to advertise, offer to do work, submit a bid, engage in, conduct, or carry on the business of installing or maintaining wires or equipment to convey electric current, or installing or maintaining equipment to be operated by electric current as it pertains to the electrical industry, without having an unrevoked, unsuspended, and unexpired electrical contractor license, issued by the department in accordance with this chapter. All electrical



contractor licenses expire twenty-four calendar months following the day of their issue. The department may issue an electrical contractors license for a period of less than twenty-four months only for the purpose of equalizing the number of electrical contractor licenses that expire each month. Application for an electrical contractor license shall be made in writing to the department, accompanied by the required fee. The application shall state:

(a) The name and address of the applicant; in case of firms or partnerships, the names of the individuals composing the firm or partnership; in case of corporations, the names of the managing officials thereof;

(b) The location of the place of business of the applicant and the name under which the business is conducted;



(c) Employer social security number;

(d) Evidence of workers' compensation coverage for the applicant's employees working in Washington, as follows:

(i) The applicant's industrial insurance account number issued by the department;

(ii) The applicant's self-insurer number issued by the department; or

(iii) For applicants domiciled in a state or province of Canada subject to an agreement entered into under RCW 51.12.120(7), as permitted by the agreement, filing a certificate of coverage issued by the agency that administers the workers'

- compensation law in the applicant's state or province of domicile certifying that the applicant has secured the payment of compensation under the other state's or province's workers' compensation law;
- (e) Employment security department number;
  - (f) State excise tax registration number;
  - (g) Unified business identifier (UBI) account number may be substituted for the information required by (d) of this subsection if the applicant will not employ employees in Washington, and by (e) and (f) of this subsection; and
  - (h) Whether a general or specialty electrical contractor license is sought and, if the latter, the type of specialty. Electrical contractor specialties include, but are not limited to: Residential, pump and irrigation, limited energy system, signs, nonresidential maintenance, restricted nonresidential maintenance, appliance repair, and a combination specialty. A general electrical contractor license shall grant to the holder the right to engage in, conduct, or carry on the business of installing or maintaining wires or equipment to carry electric current, and installing or maintaining equipment, or installing or maintaining material to fasten or



insulate such wires or equipment to be operated by electric current, in the state of Washington. A specialty electrical contractor license shall grant to the holder a limited right to engage in, conduct, or carry on the business of installing or maintaining wires or equipment to carry electrical current, and installing or maintaining equipment; or installing or maintaining material to fasten or insulate such wires or equipment to be operated by electric current in the state of Washington as expressly allowed by the license.

- (2) The department may verify the workers' compensation coverage information provided by the applicant under subsection (1)(d) of this section, including but not limited to information regarding the coverage of an individual employee of the applicant. If coverage is provided under the laws of another state, the department may notify the other state that the applicant is employing employees in Washington.

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- (3) The application for an electrical contractor license shall be accompanied by a bond in the sum of four thousand dollars with the state of Washington named as obligee in the bond, with good and sufficient surety, to be approved by the department. The bond shall at all times be kept in full force and effect, and any cancellation or revocation thereof, or withdrawal of the surety therefrom, suspends the license issued to the principal until a new bond has been filed and approved as provided in this section. Upon approval of a bond, the department shall on the next business day deposit the fee accompanying the application in the electrical license fund and shall file the bond in the office. The department shall upon request furnish to any

person, firm, partnership, corporation, or other entity a certified copy of the bond upon the payment of a fee that the department shall set by rule. The fee shall cover but not exceed the cost of furnishing the certified copy. The bond shall be conditioned that in any installation or maintenance of wires or equipment to convey electrical current, and equipment to be operated by electrical current, the principal will comply with the provisions of this chapter and with any electrical ordinance, building code, or regulation of a city or town adopted pursuant to RCW 19.28.010(3) that is in effect at the time of entering into a contract. The bond shall be conditioned further that the principal will pay for all labor, including employee benefits, and material furnished or used upon the work, taxes and contributions to the state of Washington, and all damages that may be sustained by any person, firm, partnership, corporation, or other entity due to a failure of the principal to make the installation or maintenance in accordance with this chapter or any applicable ordinance, building code, or regulation of a city or town adopted pursuant to RCW 19.28.010(3). In lieu of the surety bond required by this section the license applicant may file with the department a cash deposit or other negotiable security acceptable to the department. If the license applicant has filed a cash deposit, the department shall deposit the funds in a special trust savings account in a commercial bank, mutual savings bank, or savings and loan association and shall pay annually to the depositor the interest derived from the account.

(4) The department shall issue general or specialty electrical contractor licenses to applicants meeting all of the requirements of this chapter. The provisions of this chapter relating to the licensing of any person, firm, partnership, corporation, or other entity including the requirement of a bond with the state of Washington named as obligee therein and the collection of a fee therefor, are exclusive, and no political subdivision of the state of Washington may require or issue any licenses or bonds or charge any fee for the same or a similar purpose. No person, firm, partnership, corporation, or other entity holding more than one specialty contractor license under this chapter may be required to pay an annual fee for more than one such license or to post more than one four thousand dollar bond, equivalent cash deposit, or other negotiable security.



(5) To obtain a general or specialty electrical contractor license the applicant must designate an individual who currently possesses a valid master journeyman electrician's certificate of competency, master specialty electrician's certificate of competency in the specialty for which application has been made, or administrator's certificate as a general electrical contractor administrator or as a specialty electrical contractor administrator in the specialty for which application has been made.

(6) Administrator certificate specialties include but are not limited to: Residential, pump and irrigation or domestic pump, limited energy system, signs, nonresidential maintenance, restricted nonresidential maintenance, appliance repair, and combination specialty. To obtain an administrator's certificate an individual must pass an examination as set forth in RCW 19.28.051 unless the applicant was a licensed electrical contractor at any time during 1974. Applicants who were electrical contractors licensed by the state of Washington at any time during 1974 are entitled to receive a general electrical contractor administrator's certificate without examination if the applicants apply prior to January 1, 1984. The board of electrical examiners shall certify to the department the names of all persons who are entitled to either a general or specialty electrical contractor administrator's certificate.

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(7) For a contractor doing domestic water pumping system work as defined by RCW 18.106.010(10)(c), the department shall consider the requirements of subsections (1)(a) through (h), (2), and (3) of this section to have been met to be a pump and irrigation or



domestic pump licensed electrical contractor if the contractor has met the contractor registration requirements of chapter 18.27 RCW. The department shall establish a single registration/licensing document for those who qualify for both general contractor registration

as defined in chapter 18.27 RCW and a pump and irrigation or domestic pump electrical contractor license as defined by this chapter.

#### **19.28.051**

#### **Examinations — Fees.**

It shall be the purpose and function of the board to establish, in addition to a general electrical contractors' license, such classifications of specialty electrical contractors' licenses as it deems



appropriate with regard to individual sections pertaining to state adopted codes in this chapter. In addition, it shall be the purpose and function of the board to establish and administer written examinations for general electrical administrators' certificates and the various specialty electrical administrators' certificates.

Examinations shall be designed to reasonably ensure that general and specialty electrical administrators' certificate holders are competent to engage in and supervise the work covered by this statute and their respective licenses. The examinations shall include questions from the following categories to ensure proper safety and protection for the general public: (1) Safety, (2) state electrical code, and (3) electrical theory. The department with the consent of the board shall be permitted to enter into a contract with a professional testing agency to develop, administer, and score these examinations, or accept certifications or other appropriate demonstrations established by independent entities that otherwise fulfill the examination requirements of this section. Individuals who can provide evidence to the department, prior to January 1, 2007, that they have been employed as a pump installer in the pump and irrigation or domestic pump business by an appropriately licensed electrical contractor, registered general contractor defined by chapter 18.27 RCW, or appropriate general specialty contractor defined by chapter 18.27 RCW for not less than eight thousand hours in the most recent six calendar years shall be issued the appropriate administrator's certificate by the department upon receiving such documentation

and applicable fees. The fee for the examination may be set by the department in its contract with the professional testing agency. The department may direct that the applicant pay the fee to the professional testing agency. The fee shall cover but not exceed the costs of preparing and administering the examination. It shall be the further purpose and function of this board to advise the director as to the need of additional electrical inspectors and compliance officers to be utilized by the director on either a full-time or part-time employment basis and to carry out the duties enumerated in RCW 19.28.161 through 19.28.271 as well as generally advise the department on all matters relative to RCW 19.28.161 through 19.28.271.

#### **19.28.061**

**Electrical contractors — Designee of firm to take master electrician or administrator's examination — Administrator's certificate — Fee — Certificate duration, denial, renewal, nontransferable — Master electrician or administrator's duties.**

(1) Each applicant for an electrical contractor's license, other than an individual, shall designate a supervisory employee or member of the firm to take the required master electrician's or administrator's examination. Effective July 1, 1987, a supervisory employee designated as the electrical contractor's master electrician or administrator shall be a full-time supervisory employee. This person shall be designated as master electrician or administrator under the license. No person may concurrently qualify as master electrician or administrator for more than one contractor. If the relationship of the master electrician or administrator with the electrical contractor is terminated, the contractor's license is void within ninety days unless another master electrician or administrator is qualified by the board. However, if the master

electrician or administrator dies or is otherwise incapacitated, the contractor's license is void within one hundred eighty days unless another master electrician or administrator is qualified by the board. The contractor must notify the department in writing within ten days if the master electrician's or administrator's relationship with the contractor terminates due to the master electrician's or administrator's death or incapacitation.



(2) The department must issue an administrator's certificate to all applicants who have passed the examination as provided in RCW 19.28.051 and this section, and who have complied with the rules adopted under this chapter. The administrator's certificate must bear the date of issuance, expires on the holder's birthday, and is nontransferable. The certificate must be renewed every three years, upon application, on or before the holder's birthday.

(a) If the certificate holder demonstrates to the department that he or she has satisfactorily completed an annual eight-hour continuing education course, the certificate may be renewed by appropriate application without examination unless the certificate has been revoked, suspended, or not renewed within ninety days after the expiration date. For holders of pump and irrigation or domestic pump specialty administrator certificates, the continuing education may comprise both electrical and plumbing education.

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(b) The contents and requirements for satisfactory completion of the continuing education course must be determined by the director and approved by the board.

(c) The department must accept proof of a certificate holder's satisfactory completion of a continuing education course offered in another state as meeting the requirements for maintaining a current Washington state certificate if the department is satisfied the course is comparable in nature to that required in Washington state for maintaining a current certificate.

(3) A fee must be assessed for each administrator's certificate and for each renewal. An individual holding more than one administrator's certificate under this chapter is not required to pay fees for more than one certificate. The department must set the fees by rule for issuance and renewal of a certificate. The fees must cover, but not exceed, the costs of issuing the certificates and of administering and enforcing the administrator certification requirements of this chapter.



(4) The department may deny an application for an administrator's certificate for up to two years if the applicant's previous administrator's certificate has been revoked for a serious violation and all appeals concerning the revocation have been exhausted. For the purposes of this section only, a serious violation is a violation that presents imminent danger to the public. The certificate may be renewed for a three-year period without examination by appropriate application unless the certificate has been revoked, suspended, or not renewed within ninety days after the expiration date. If the certificate is not renewed before the expiration date, the

individual shall pay twice the usual fee. A person may take the administrator's examination as many times as necessary to pass without limit.

(5) The designated master electrician or administrator shall:

(a) Be a member of the firm or a supervisory employee and shall be available during working hours to carry out the duties of an administrator under this section;

(b) Ensure that all electrical work complies with the electrical installation laws and rules of the state;

(c) Ensure that the proper electrical safety procedures are used;

(d) Ensure that all electrical labels, permits, and licenses required to perform electrical work are used;

(e) See that corrective notices issued by an inspecting authority are complied with; and

(f) Notify the department in writing within ten days if the master electrician or administrator terminates the relationship with the electrical contractor.

(6) The department shall not by rule change the administrator's duties under subsection (5) of this section.