

Incorrect installation of Bulk Thermal Insulation around electrical equipment and accessories

Incidents

Incident No. 1

The Electrical Safety Office and Workplace Health and Safety Queensland are investigating the fatality of an insulation installer. A second person assisting with the work received an electric shock and burns.

It appears that a staple used to fix foil insulation in the roof space of a home may have pierced an electric cable which energised the foil.

Incident No. 2

Northern Territory Fire Service reported an incident in Alice Springs after bulk thermal insulation was installed over the top of ceiling mounted (recessed) halogen down lights.

Overheating of the down light may have caused insulation to catch fire with potentially deadly results.

Key Issues

Employers, workers and contractors must be aware of the potential for fatal electric shock whilst installing foil insulation within roof spaces, and the fire hazard potential caused by incorrectly installing bulk thermal insulation around electrical accessories.

Recommendations

Australian Standard AS 3999-1992 Thermal insulation of dwellings - bulk installations - installation requirements

Installers must install all bulk insulation in compliance with Australian insulation installation standard, AS 3999-1992. Note:

- Clause 4.2 (e) is replaced with clause 4.5.2.3 of AS/NZS 3000:2007 Wiring Rules;
- Figure 4.5 is replaced with figure 4.7 of AS/NZS 3000:2007;
- The Wiring Rules sets out the minimum clearance distances between bulk insulation and recessed luminaires, including down lights.

Risk assessment

Anyone entering a roof space should conduct a risk assessment to determine possible hazards prior to starting work.

See NT WorkSafe information bulletin [05.02.04](#) Electrical - Construction - Installation of Bulk Thermal Insulation around electrical equipment and accessories.

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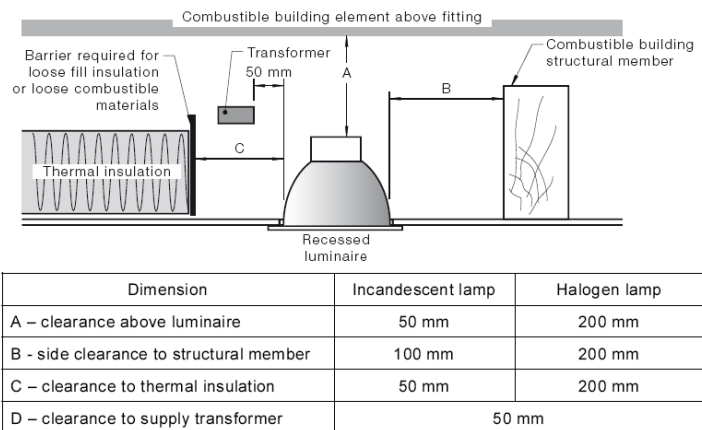


FIGURE 4.7 DEFAULT MINIMUM CLEARANCES FOR RECESSED LUMINAIRES

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