

## Fatal electrical shock

### Purpose

To remind employers, employees and contractors about the potential for fatal electric shock from contact with energised (live) electrical equipment particularly near water.

### Recent incident

A worker received a fatal electrical shock when he touched live wires in an electrical terminal box of a portable electric pond aerator.



Photo used from archives showing examples of residual current devices (RCDs)

### Recommendations

- Do not start work until a pre-start/job meeting and a written risk assessment have been completed on site and all workers understand their roles regarding safety.
  - Implement a practical reporting system to inform workers of the day-to-day hazards of the workplace
  - Ensure regular and timely review of all safety initiatives in consultation with workers at all levels
- Only licensed electricians can carry out electrical work.
- Employers and owners must ensure electrical equipment is maintained so that workers are not exposed to hazards.
  - Do not work on live electrical equipment or appliances
  - Ensure residual current device (RCD) protection is provided to all power outlets to which portable or hand-held electrical equipment is used
  - Test and tag all portable electrical equipment in accordance with [Australian Standard 3760:2003](#)

### Legislative requirements

*Work Health Act*, section 29(1):

*“An employer shall, so far as is practicable –*

- (a) provide and maintain a working environment at a workplace that is safe and without risk to the health or safety of the workers working at the workplace; and*
- (b) ensure that the health and safety of any other person is not adversely affected as a result of the work in which the employer or any worker is engaged.”*

Penalties exist for breaches of *the Act*. **Penalty** In the case of a body corporate - \$125,000  
In the case of a natural person - \$25,000

## Further information

### ***NT WorkSafe Information Bulletins***

[05.01.01 Residual Current Devices \(RCD\) or safety switches](#)

[05.01.03 General safety requirements](#)

### ***Electrical Safety Information Bulletins***

[03.01.01 Connection of New Installations](#)

[03.01.05 Pond Aerator Installations for Aqua Farming](#)

[04.01.01 Unlicensed Electrical Installation Work](#)

Additional information on this or other safety matters is available from:

#### **NT WorkSafe**

GPO Box 4821 Darwin NT 0801

Telephone: 1800 019 115 ♦ Facsimile: (08) 8999 5141

Email: [ntworksafe.deet@nt.gov.au](mailto:ntworksafe.deet@nt.gov.au) ♦ Website: [worksafe.nt.gov.au](http://worksafe.nt.gov.au)

#### **Electrical Safety, Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Environment**

GPO Box 1680 Darwin NT 0801

Telephone: (08) 8924 7477 ♦ Facsimile: (08) 8924 7115

Website: <http://www.ipe.nt.gov.au/whatwedo/electricalsafety/index.html>

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