

FINAL BILL REPORT

ESHB 1952

C 240 L 18
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Concerning enforcement of the electrical laws.

Sponsors: House Committee on Labor & Workplace Standards (originally sponsored by Representatives Blake, Walsh, Pellicciotti, Chapman, Stambaugh and Ormsby).

House Committee on Labor & Workplace Standards
Senate Committee on Commerce, Labor & Sports
Senate Committee on Labor & Commerce

Background:

A person who engages in the electrical business must be licensed as an electrical contractor, and similarly, a person engaged in the telecommunications business must be licensed as a telecommunications contractor. An electrician must qualify for and be issued a certificate of competency. Apprentices and other persons learning the electrical trade must obtain a training certificate, and work under supervision of a certified electrician and under a specified ratio of trainees to certified electricians. Each electrical contractor designates a supervisory employee as the master electrician or administrator. Among other responsibilities, this individual ensures that all work of the firm complies with the electrical installation laws.

The Department of Labor and Industries (Department) administers and enforces these licensing and certification requirements and otherwise administers the electrical laws. A person who engages in the electrical business without being licensed is subject to a \$50 to \$10,000 civil penalty. A person who violates the supervision requirements, employs a person without a certificate to perform electrical work, or who performs electrical work without a certificate is subject to a \$50 to \$500 civil penalty. The Department may also issue a penalty of \$100 to \$10,000 to a person who engages in the telecommunications business without a license. Penalties, as well as other monies received, are paid into the Electrical License Fund, which is used for the Department's administration of the state electrical laws.

Electrical installations must comply with the national electrical code, and a permit and inspection is generally required for electrical work. Cities and towns may adopt ordinances with an equal or higher standard than required by the state for electrical work. If a city or town adopts such an ordinance and enforces a standard, inspections are performed by the city

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rather than the Department. About 25 cities have electrical ordinances and perform inspections.

The Electrical Board (Board) advises the Director of the Department on enforcement of the electrical laws. The Board also appeals of proposed decisions on penalties made by the Office of Administrative Hearings and appeals of other decisions.

Summary:

Cities or towns that conduct electrical inspections may enact and enforce, under authority given by law, an ordinance enforcing state electrical laws related to electrical contractor licensing, telecommunications contractor licensing, electrician certification and trainees, and duties of an administrator. Authority is granted to cities and towns to enforce the laws relating to electrical contractor and telecommunications licensing, and electrician certification and trainees. The authority of the Department to enforce these laws is retained.

Penalties imposed by a city or town are to be established within the limits of the state electrical laws. An entity may not be penalized by both a city or town and the Department for the same violation. However, each day an entity violates the electrical laws is a separate violation. Penalties upheld through an appellate process of a city or town may be appealed to the Board. Costs payable from the Electrical License Fund must be reimbursed by the city or town and the process for service and hearings before the Board shall be under rules enacted by the Department.

Votes on Final Passage:

House	97	0	
House	96	0	
Senate	45	4	(Senate amended)
House	96	0	(House concurred)

Effective: June 7, 2018