

RE: ELECTRICAL SAFETY SERVICES EQUIPMENT APPROVAL

MUNICIPAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT the recommendation of the Director Planning & Building Inspection be adopted.

* * * * *

ITEM	4
MANAGER'S REPORT NO.	74
COUNCIL MEETING	89/11/14

TO: MUNICIPAL MANAGER 1989 NOVEMBER 06

FROM: DIRECTOR PLANNING &
BUILDING INSPECTION

SUBJECT: ELECTRICAL SAFETY SERVICES - EQUIPMENT APPROVAL

PURPOSE: TO RESPOND TO A LETTER FROM THE MINISTER OF MUNICIPAL
AFFAIRS ASKING THAT BURNABY CONSIDER PROVIDING AN
ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT APPROVAL SERVICE.

= = = = =

RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT a letter be sent to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs advising the Minister that Burnaby is not interested in expanding its electrical safety service at this time to include equipment approval.

REPORT

The Honorable Rita Johnston, Minister of Municipal Affairs, Recreation and Culture, has written to Mayor W.J. Copeland stating that effective 1989 September 01, the Ministry will restrict its equipment approval services offered through the Electrical Safety Branch in the Lower Mainland. The Minister is asking the Municipality of Burnaby to consider expanding its electrical safety services to include equipment approval (attachment).

Background

According to the Electrical Safety Act and Regulations, it is unlawful to advertise, offer for sale, sell, dispose of, use, or install electrical equipment in the Province of British Columbia, unless such equipment has been approved. Approval is obtained from a recognized testing agency and a label is affixed to the equipment by the manufacturer indicating that the equipment meets the applicable manufacturing standards. When a piece of equipment does not bear the necessary approval stamp, the Canadian Standards Association (C.S.A.) or the Provincial Electrical Safety Branch provide field inspection and approval services.

Section 3.(3) of Electrical Safety General Regulation (B.C. Reg. 542/75) prohibits municipalities from providing equipment approval programs. In October 1988, the Electrical Safety Branch of B.C. introduced a draft proposal of major changes to the regulation including a provision to allow

certain municipalities to start approving equipment and an option for the Electrical Safety Branch to reduce its equipment approval service. Several meetings to discuss the proposed changes have taken place between the Safety Branch officials and representatives from the nine municipalities providing integrated electrical inspection services. So far most of the municipalities are opposed to providing electrical equipment approval services.

In March 1989, a joint municipal summary of comments on the proposed changes to the regulations was prepared by the nine municipalities and a letter was sent to the Minister expressing specific concerns including the following:

"13. Electrical Equipment Approval Permits

Although this Section in conjunction with Section 3.(2) makes municipal involvement optional, it also appears that there is now an option for the Branch to no longer perform electrical equipment approval which is presently done where equipment does not bear evidence of C.S.A. (Canadian Standards Association) approval.

If all branch involvement should cease, there is concern that municipalities may receive pressure to provide the additional service. However, most municipalities are opposed to offering an electrical equipment approval program within their jurisdiction. Concerns include the major liability attraction, resource limitations, increased overhead and bureaucracy, uniformity of service, lack of specific training, a perceived conflict of interest by the general public; and with free trade coming, there is a possibility that any approval program could greatly escalate in the future."

Conclusion

The concerns expressed in the letter sent to the Minister have not changed. While the revenue from such an approval program might offset the expense, the lack of uniformity and the liability associated with such a program still remain as major drawbacks to offering equipment approval services.

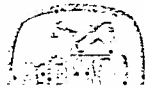
The electrical manufacturing industry and the electrical contracting industry have both voiced their opposition to dealing with nine different municipalities to obtain equipment approval.

The Canadian Standards Association (C.S.A.) currently provides certification services to manufacturers of electrical equipment across Canada and throughout the world. The C.S.A. also provides a field certification service through a special inspection program in provinces where an equipment approval service is not offered by any other approval agency. It is understood that C.S.A. is prepared to expand its services to fill any gap created by a diminished provincial program in British Columbia.

Staff are of the opinion that the implementation of an electrical equipment approval service at the municipal level cannot be supported for the reasons noted above.

FRM:lm
Attachment


A.L. Parr
DIRECTOR PLANNING &
BUILDING INSPECTION



Province of
British Columbia

Ministry of
Municipal Affairs,
Recreation and Culture

Parliament Buildings
Victoria
British Columbia
V8V 1X4

OFFICE OF THE
MINISTER



ITEM 4
MANAGER'S REPORT NO. 74
COUNCIL MEETING 89/11/14

SEP 29 1989

September 15, 1989

File: 1000.4.2

MAYOR'S OFFICE

His Worship Mayor William Copeland
District of Burnaby
4949 Canada Way
Burnaby, British Columbia
V5G 1M2

Dear Mayor Copeland:

Re: Electrical Safety Services

I wish to advise you of a change in our electrical safety services that may affect electrical businesses active within your municipality. I am doing this in order that you and your Council may consider expanding the electrical safety services currently provided by the District of Burnaby.


Because of competing priorities, our Electrical Safety Branch is restricting its electrical equipment approval service in the lower mainland area commencing September 1, 1989. The Branch will continue to offer this service but only when staff time is available.

This safety service could be offered as part of the electrical safety functions presently provided by your municipality. It would be entirely your Council's decision as to what level of approval fees would be charged for this service.

May I encourage you and your Council to seriously consider undertaking this function, particularly since it would provide an efficient way for the electrical industry in your municipality to access a complete range of safety services from a single inspection authority.

If you have any questions concerning this equipment approval service please contact our Director of Electrical Safety, Dr. James Hill, at 660-6260.

Sincerely,


Rita M. Johnston
Minister

cc: Dr. James Hill

