

March 3, 2024

Raymond Zeran
Raymond Electric LLC
2689 130th Circle NW
Coon Rapids, MN 55448
Via email only: raymond@rayelectricmn.com

RE: January 30, 2024, correspondence

Dear Mr. Zeran:

Thank you for your January 30, 2024, correspondence submitted to the Board of Electricity and myself. Your correspondence outlines many issues you have had with several municipalities regarding uniform electrical code enforcement. I have discussed your concerns with the Board of Electricity's Duane Hendricks, and we agreed that the concerns you raise are outside of the Board's jurisdiction and authority. Therefore, Chair Hendricks has requested that the Department respond to your concerns directly.

On behalf of the Department and the Board, I will address the circumstances identified in your correspondence and the actions that were taken by the Department, if any, concluding with a summation of the Department's role moving forward.

Actions:

Sleeving of the 6 AWG Grounding Electrode Conductor:

NEC 250.64(B)(1) Not Exposed to Physical Damage.

A 6 AWG or larger copper, copper-clad aluminum, or aluminum grounding electrode conductor not exposed to physical damage shall be permitted to be run along the surface of the building construction without metal covering or protection.

Comment: The position of Rochester's inspection staff is that #6 AWG grounding electrode conductor installed on the exterior of a building is subject to physical damage and therefore requires protection. The Department's position is that "subject to physical damage" is a subjective call and is up to the discretion of the authority having jurisdiction ("AHJ") and should depend on the facts and specifics of the installation involved.

2" Iron/galvanized vs. a 3" Aluminum service mast:

NEC 230.28 Service Masts as Supports.

(A) Strength.

The service mast shall be of adequate strength or be supported by braces or guy wires to withstand safely the strain imposed by the service-drop or overhead service conductors. Hubs intended for use with a conduit that serves as a service mast shall be identified for use with service-entrance equipment.

Comment: The Rochester inspection team cited that installers need to have a 2" rigid or 3" aluminum conduit for an overhead mast based on a Rochester Public Utility policy. The NEC requires the service mast to be of adequate strength. Again, this requirement for a larger size conduit to meet the NEC would be subjective and dependent upon the particular facts of the installation. In determining the adequate strength of the conduit, it would be determined by the overhead conductor length and size. However, many utilities have requirements for the mast conduit size and treat those requirements as a condition to receive electrical service. The inspector should direct the installer to contact the local utility for resolution of the issue if their requirements are above the NEC required minimum standard.

Romex connector violation:

NEC 312.5 Cabinets, Cutout Boxes, and Meter Socket Enclosures.

Cable assemblies and insulated conductors entering enclosures within the scope of this article shall be protected from abrasion and shall comply with 312.5(A) through (C).

(C) Cables.

Where cable is used, each cable shall be secured to the cabinet, cutout box, or meter socket enclosure.

Comment: The city inspection team noted the violation because the connector being used didn't secure the cable to the enclosure. It was mentioned that the cable connector could have possibly been compromised prior to the cable installation. The Department agrees with the requirement as noted.

General Uniformity in Enforcement of Code Requirements:

A meeting with the electrical authorities in the cities of St. Paul, Bloomington, and Maple Grove was conducted to follow up on your comment "there are other jurisdictions that enforce rules differently". When I asked about the specific compliance problems in these cities, you responded with licensing compliance matters, and a sign listing issue. When I met with these city officials we discussed the ways the Department can assist with licensing compliance and NEC code interpretations. These cities have used our licensing and enforcement teams for licensing and code compliance in the past and will continue to do so. In addition, the city officials agreed that code enforcement between the state and municipal inspection areas are as good as they can be and when issues arise they know they can contact the Department.

Municipal Inspections Areas:

The Board has no authority over whether a municipality can perform electrical inspections or not.

Minnesota Statutes, section 326B.36, subdivision 6 (Powers of political subdivisions) states that "any political subdivision or the University of Minnesota may make provision for inspection of electrical

installations within its jurisdiction, in which case it shall keep on file with the commissioner copies of its current inspection ordinances and codes.” The statutes are changed through the legislative process, not through Board action.

Call Line:

Neither the Board of Electricity nor the Department have authority over the “call line”. As much as we think the procedure is flawed, it is outside of the NEC and our regulatory authority. The utilities can set policies in place to monitor and organize their system interconnections. Although some smaller utilities are not so rigid in what they allow the electrical contractors to do or don’t do, because of sheer volume interconnection to the utility in larger cities can be problematic. I do agree it can be cumbersome, but again, I feel that issue needs to be taken up with the utility involved and isn’t for the Board or Department to manage.

Conclusion:

In summary, the Department is always striving to provide excellent customer service for both our contractors and homeowners, and I believe our municipal inspection authorities are providing the best service possible. That being said, we will continue to work hard to ensure public safety and recognize the challenges faced for all our contractors. As such, the Department will continue to provide support to any jurisdiction that requests assistance.

Again, thank you for your correspondence. The Board of Electricity’s next regular meeting is scheduled for 9:00 a.m. on April 9, 2024. If you wish to address the full board concerning any of the issues discussed above, then please submit a request to be heard and placed on the agenda by contacting Lyndy Logan at (651) 284-5912 or lyndy.logan@state.mn.us.

In safety,



Dean Hunter
Manager, CCLD Electrical Inspections

Cc: MN Board of Electricity
Todd Green, Director (CCLD)
Lyndy Logan, Administrative Assistant