

ELECTRICAL BULLETIN

2011-02

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Provincial Chief Electrical Inspector

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Date: January 13, 2011

Subject: Requirements for the support and installation of communications
and low voltage cables run indoors in free air

The maximum spacing of supports for communications cables or any type of low voltage cables run indoors in free air shall be **1.5 m's**. (see note 1)

Cables shall be independently supported by an approved method (i.e. can not be supported from existing equipment, conduits, pipes, T-bar tie wire supports etc) and cables can not lay directly on the top of a T-bar type ceiling and shall run parallel and perpendicular to building lines.

The T-bar tie wire support may be used for the support of cables by use of an attached J-hook or similar metal support at the point where the cable(s) branch off from the main cable run, which uses independent support, to the point of utilization.

Where open web steel joist exist ,and are not spaced more than 1.5 m's apart, they may be used for the support of communications cables and low voltage cables but the cables must be secured to every joist in order to minimize the cables from drooping below the bottom of the web joist.

In this situation the use of tye wraps is permitted to secure the cables to the joist.

Communications cables are any cables associated with an electrical system whereby voice, sound ,or data may be received and/or transmitted and includes telephone, telegraph, data communications, intercommunications, paging systems, wired music systems, CATV and other systems of similar nature.

The installation of communications cables is typically performed by a certified communications cabling specialist and under a communications cabling permit unless exempt from requiring a permit.

Low voltage cables are any cables associated with ,but not limited to, HVAC control, alarm and security systems(which may include CCTV) or radio and television transmission.

The installation of low voltage cables in many instances is performed by electricians, HVAC contractors and security and alarm companies , security and alarm cabling at present do not require a permit, however cables installed under section 16 or 54 of the Canadian Electrical Code Part 1 (CEC) do require a permit.

Any cables installed in an area that falls within the scope of sections 18 or 20 of the CEC shall be installed by a certified construction electrician ,except within an industrial establishment where an industrial electrician may install the cables, and the work is required to be installed under a separate permit and inspected prior to energization.

Notes:

1. The requirements of this bulletin do not apply to a single dwelling or dwelling unit.
- 2.The requirements of this bulletin apply to the installation of all communications and low voltage cables even where no permit is required.
- 3.Every third support or in short runs a minimum of one, shall be an approved metal type support adequate to support the cables. (i.e. J-hooks or similar type items)
- 4.Cables identified within this bulletin can only run in free air where permitted by the CEC and are approved for such an installation.
- 5.Cables identified within this bulletin are required to be separated at an appropriate distance from power conductors in accordance with the applicable rules of the CEC.
- 6.Tye wraps of any kind are not acceptable as a means of supporting cables.
- 7.Should an installer have any questions or concerns as to the acceptability of their installation they should consult with their local electrical inspector prior to the installation.
- 8.Where an installation fails to comply with this bulletin, the power supply to the installation associated with the installed cables may be ordered disconnected or de-energized and locked off .

*The Provincial Chief Electrical Inspector may amend, revise or delete any of the above requirements at any time in the future.

**Any questions regarding this bulletin may be forwarded to the Provincial Chief Electrical Inspector David MacLeod, P.Eng. at 902-424-8018 or email: macleodd@gov.ns.ca