



ELECTRICAL SAFETY IN RENTAL PROPERTIES

Protecting your investment and your tenants

Last week I watched a webinar produced by the Electrical Safety Office (ESO) for property owners and agents regarding electrical safety in rental properties.

The webinar explained how property owners are responsible for ensuring the electrical system meets strict safety standards.

The ESO explained that seemingly innocuous signs such as small 'shocks' when lights are switched on or a 'tingling' feeling from touching water running from a tap, should be regarded as signs of electrical faults that must be attended to as a matter of urgency.

We heard terrible stories of how tenants have been electrocuted by performing simple household tasks due to faulty or illegal electrical equipment at the property such as safety switches not being installed correctly.

For these reasons, the ESO sets out strict guidelines for safety, and both property owners as well as agents face severe penalties for not adhering to these guidelines.

In fact, placing a tenant at risk of injury from electrical faults can cost the owner up to \$300,000 in fines or five years' imprisonment. Agencies are also liable for hefty fines.

Note that these penalties will apply even if nothing happens to the tenant - they merely have to be put at risk.



Make sure all electrical appliances you purchase for tenants' use bear the ESO Regulatory Compliance Mark.

Our owner clients are all aware that the safety of our tenants is top priority when it comes to maintaining our properties. Not only does this meet our Duty of Care to tenants, it also protects our clients by reducing liability risk and of course protects their investment.

This is why we have set up strict procedures on how to deal with repairs. And with no room for error when it comes to electrical issues, we regard these as emergencies to be acted upon as soon as we become aware of them.

We will of course advise the owner after we send out the contractor, but we do not wait for approval as even one hour's delay could cost the owner dearly - and worse, could cost a life.

You can watch the webinar via the link: <https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/electrical-safety/electrical-safety-in-rental-properties-webinar>

The lasting message from the ESO is sobering and prophetic:

'Electricity is a silent killer - and rarely gives a second chance.'



Article by Caroline Duxfield, Team Leader, Property Management Team

With a stellar 20-year career in property management, Caroline joined Solutions Property Management in 2014 and provides mentoring, training and support to our growing team of portfolio managers.

Caroline also plays an integral role in formulating policy on risk assessment.

