

**Question of the Month** – Should you renew your electrical license or certificate online or by mail. Why? *See correct answer on Page 2*

## Rule Making Updates

**WAC 296-46B-995 Electrical Board – Appeal Rights and Hearings** - On December 1, 2020, L&I filed a CR-101 to begin the rule making process for amending [WAC 296-46B-995](#) in response to a petition for rule making. The petition seeks to clarify, simplify, and make the procedures for appeals to the board easier to understand and navigate, as well as to help reduce confusion for those that appeal decisions to the board.

### Safety Tip of the Month

We are all facing many challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic. Knowing what is required and following guidelines will help keep everyone safe. Visit L&I's [COVID-19 \(Coronavirus\) webpage](#) for more information.

**Electrical Program is Considering a Proposed Increase to Electrical Fees** – The department is considering increasing fees by 5.79% for the Electrical Program to support increased expenses associated with inspections and licensing. This is the Office of Financial Management's (OFM) maximum allowable fiscal growth rate for fiscal year (FY) 2022. Each November, OFM's Expenditure Limit Committee adjusts the limit for the previous and current fiscal year for fiscal growth factors, and projects a limit for the following two years. The fiscal growth factor of 5.79% is based upon OFM's projections and is subject to revision.

The last fiscal growth factor increase took effect on January 1, 2017. A fee increase enables the program to continue providing quality and timely services to assure safe electrical installations and inspection in homes, businesses, industry and institutions to protect people and property from electrical hazards.

Watch for more information about this rule making in the coming months. You can find more information about these and other rule making activities on the Rule Development tab of our [Electrical Laws, Rules, and Policies](#) web page.

## Schedule a Virtual Electrical Inspection Today

The [Virtual Electrical Inspection](#) (VEI) program has been very successful and is growing in popularity among electrical contractors and their electricians. During the last six months, the VEI program has averaged over 800 inspections per month. During a virtual inspection, an electrician on the jobsite with a mobile device (phone, tablet, etc.) interacts with a virtual inspector in real time. Same day appointments for virtual electrical inspections are available until filled. Here are some important points to keep in mind:

- To use VEI, you will need to download the [Skype Application](#) and create a profile.
- Use VEI for any electrical inspections that will take no longer than 15 minutes, *and* that do not involve service or final approvals.
- On the jobsite, make sure you have at least a 4G, LTE, or Wi-Fi connection on your mobile device.

### Benefits:

- Get quicker follow-up inspections on corrections to get your jobs approved faster.
- Inspections the same day as requested saves time and money.

Use Google Chrome to [schedule](#) your inspection for the day and time you want. You can learn more about VEI by visiting [www.lni.wa.gov](http://www.lni.wa.gov) and search "Virtual."

**Contact us:** Call 360-902-5299 or **Email:** [VirtualElectricalInspection@Lni.wa.gov](mailto:VirtualElectricalInspection@Lni.wa.gov)

## How to Find What You Are Looking For on our Website

About a year ago, L&I went through a major revision to our website – [www.Lni.wa.gov](http://www.Lni.wa.gov). The goal was to make it easier for customers to get the information they are looking for when they visit the site. The electrical program has over 80 separate pages and tabs containing lots of valuable information. Sometimes it can be difficult to locate what you want. We are continually trying to improve our website and we welcome any suggestions you have at [ElectricalProgram@Lni.wa.gov](mailto:ElectricalProgram@Lni.wa.gov).

From the main L&I home page, you can find the electrical program pages by clicking “Licensing & Permits” then “Electrical”.

Probably the best way to narrow down what you are looking for though is to use your web search engine to search for keywords of the specific topic you are looking for. For example, if you want to renew your electrician’s certificate, enter “L&I renew electrician” into your search engine. Once on the electrician page, select the “Renew” tab. Or, if you want to request an electrical inspection, enter “L&I request electrical inspection” in your search engine. Another goal of the website project was to make pages easier to use with a smart phone. Try it out, and let us know if you have ideas to help improve the site.

## Updates and Electronic Copies of WAC 296-46B and RCW 19.28 are Available on our Website

Make sure your copies of WAC 296-46B and RCW 19.28 are up-to-date. You can find our web page containing the latest copies of these electrical laws and rules by searching “L&I electrical laws and rules” using your web search engine. You will also find revised pages to insert into your printed copies. From time to time, changes are made to the laws and rules through the rule making process or by the legislature. We announce these changes in this newsletter in articles containing legislative or rule making updates. We also prepare insert pages containing the revisions and post them on our Electrical Laws and Rules web page.

## Contractors – Be Sure Customers Know Inspections are Coming

We are finding customers not knowing what they need to know about inspections. Too often, we hear customers who claim, “My electrical contractor never told me I needed an inspection”. Some are reluctant to allow access to an inspector.

If everyone knows that an inspection is required and what to expect, inspectors can focus on getting inspections done, which improves response time and reduces delays. We performed over two-hundred forty thousand electrical inspections last year. Probably more inspections will happen this year. Everybody’s time is important. Inspections are about safety and everybody needs to work together to get them done. Ultimately, it is the contractor’s responsibility to make sure inspectors get access. It is our responsibility to get there in a timely fashion. Together, we can help each other by ensuring customers know access is required and inspection requests include clear access instructions that get inspectors access to inspect. Please also include any safety or health concerns the inspector should watch out for on the jobsite.

**Ugly Picture of the Month:** *If viewing this document online, click on the picture to open a larger image.* It may take a while, but you sharp electricians will get a chuckle out of this one.

**Answer to Question of the Month:** Online, of course! Here’s why: It’s easier, cheaper and faster. You can renew your license or certificate by clicking [this link](#). Renewal fees are about 15% higher if you do not renew online, and with L&I offices currently closed, the only other option is snail mail, and that’s slow. Try it! You’ll like it!



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Electrical Section Internet Address: <https://www.lni.wa.gov/> - Select Licensing & Permits, then Electrical

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