

MEDIA RELEASE



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Foil suspension must prompt full audit

The Federal Government must audit all homes that have had foil insulation installed under its rebate scheme in order to check for electrical dangers, Master Electricians Australia said today.

Master Electricians CEO Malcolm Richards welcomed the decision by Environment Minister Peter Garrett to suspend foil products from the scheme while their safety could be verified.

Mr Richards said in light of recent media reports of concerning levels of electrical dangers uncovered by random inspections, the Minister should order an audit of 100 per cent of homes that had been fitted with foil products under the insulation program.

“Master Electricians is pleased the government listened to our concerns on this issue and has suspended foil from the program,” Mr Richards said.

“What it must do now as an urgent priority is ensure that all existing installations are completely safe. That will require checks by licensed electricians.

“Under no circumstances should home owners go into their ceilings to check the installation for themselves.”

Mr Richards said the difficulties associated with foil should not be seen as a sign that the program was ineffective.

He said Master Electricians was committed improving energy efficiency across Australia, and would continue to support the scheme

“We believe there is a lot of merit in the insulation rebate scheme. It has the potential to drive significant reductions in energy consumption across Australia.

“However three electrical deaths – two of them directly related to the stapling of foil products – are a clear signal that something needed to change.

“We worked with the government and the industry last year to develop new safety guidelines, but it’s clear that some people are determined to flout the law. For this reason, we believe the government had little choice but to take the action it has taken today.

“Master Electricians will work with the government as it considers any further amendments to the Home Insulation Program, and we will make our technical expertise available to assist the Minister’s review.”

Malcolm Richards is available for interviews.

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