

MEDIA RELEASE

7 February, 2010



Time to remove foil from insulation program

The death of yet another insulation installer working with a foil product must spark the immediate withdrawal of foil from the Federal Government's insulation scheme, Master Electricians Australia said today.

Late on Friday the Queensland Electrical Safety Office revealed the death was most likely due to a metal staple piercing an electrical cable during insulation.

Master Electricians Australia CEO Malcolm Richards said in light of the advice from the ESO, the Federal Government should now withdraw the \$1200 rebate from metal-based insulation products, and expand its previously-announced safety audit program to cover 100 per cent of foil installations.

Businesses that have not yet completed the mandatory safety training introduced late last year should also be stopped from performing further work under the scheme, Mr Richard said.

"After a similar death last year the Federal Government moved very quickly to ban the use of staples with foil insulation under its rebate scheme, and to introduce a range of new safeguards for installers," he said.

"If followed correctly, these procedures should have prevented any further deaths.

"However, it's clear that some operators still believe they can get away with flouting these laws in order to maximise profit.

"After careful consideration, Master Electricians now believes this leaves the government with no alternative but to remove foil insulation products from the rebate scheme altogether."

Mr Richards stressed that Master Electricians continued to support the scheme, and believed it had the potential to make a genuine impact on electricity consumption across Australia.

"However, we cannot accept any further deaths. Queensland usually records only three or four electrical deaths each financial year. We have already reached this number, and the year is only half over.

"This latest death is a tragedy that should never have happened. Last year's fatalities should have been a wake-up call to the insulation industry, but there are clearly businesses who are not interested in doing the right thing.

"If the industry can't stop the deaths, the government must."

Malcolm Richards is available for interviews.

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