

# Media Release

## Energy Safe Victoria

18th January 2019

### Electrical apprentice fatality prompts safety call

A 19-year-old apprentice electrician has been killed while working on an isolation switch for an air conditioner that was mounted on the roof of a newly built house in Melbourne's west.

ESV and WorkSafe are investigating the incident, which occurred on Tuesday (15<sup>th</sup> January).

Director of Energy Safety Paul Fearon said the fatality was a tragedy.

"This is an awful way to start the New Year, particularly for the friends, family and co-workers of this young man," he said.

"I extend my sympathies and those of ESV to all those who knew and worked with him."

Mr Fearon called on all electrical workers, particularly apprentices, to Never Work Live.

"While the exact details of this incident are not immediately clear, as a general principle, no electrical worker should be working near live parts," he said.

It's almost a year to the day since a 29-year-old licensed electrical worker was killed while installing three phase socket outlet at an industrial site in Melbourne's south-east.

In 2016, a 26-year-old electrical apprentice was electrocuted when working on the electrical wiring in the roof space of a house.

"These incidents were avoidable and would never have happened had proper safety precautions been taken," Mr Fearon said.

All electrical workers should understand the importance of isolation and testing when working on or near live parts. Effective supervision of apprentices must always be maintained.

The law requires that contractors and electricians do not expose themselves to unnecessary risks and must take adequate precautions to prevent electric shock or injury.

#### Electrical workers should always:

- Plan and discuss the job.
- Disconnect the electrical supply before starting work.
- Confirm isolations are correct and test to verify that supply is disconnected.
- Ensure mandated test have been completed prior to energisation as specified in the Wiring Rules (AS/NSZ 3000).

#### Never

- Try to save time by eliminating procedures and risk assessment.
- Allow customers to leave the electricity supply on.
- Work on energised equipment.
- Overlook isolating and verifying all equipment and control circuits are safely isolated.

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