

Historic Statement of Position on Electrical Work and Licensure

Prior to current Wisconsin State Statutes below, the Midwest Rural Energy Council's precursor organization (the Wisconsin Farm Electric Council) offered a Statement of Position regarding licensing of electricians and electrical contractors in Wisconsin.

Here are the current Wisconsin State Statutes:

[WSPS 305.41](#) Electrical contractors.

(1) General.

(a) Pursuant to s. 101.862, Stats., no person or entity, as of April 1, 2013, may engage in the business or offer to engage in the business of installing, repairing, or maintaining electrical wiring unless the person or entity holds a license or certification issued by the department as a licensed electrical contractor, except as provided under s. 101.862 (4), Stats.

Here is the Wisconsin Farm Electric Council's prior statement from the 1980's:

**Wisconsin Farm Electric Council
Statement of Position
Regarding Certification of Electricians
and Electrical Contractors in Wisconsin**

Background:

In the rural areas of Wisconsin, few townships have developed specific rules governing the qualifications of electricians and/or electrical contractors. As a result, any individual who desires to perform electrical work, regardless of knowledge level, formal education, or training, can sell his/her services as an electrician or an electrical contractor. Presently, the Wisconsin Department of Industry Labor and Human Relations (DILHR) has a program that provides the appropriate testing to certify these individuals as knowledgeable. Unfortunately, certification is a voluntary process. The absence of mandatory certification requirements for electricians in rural areas has resulted in the proliferation of sub-standard and often unsafe electrical wiring in homes and on farms. The customers paying for electrical services from unqualified individuals are, for the most part, unaware of the safety implications associated with wiring practices in violation of electrical codes. The rapidly growing population in rural areas, the electrical complexity of today's farms, and the inherent dangers of improper secondary wiring has resulted in a need for mandatory certification and inspection of electricians and/or electrical contractors. Mandatory certification will help to ensure the safe and efficient use of electricity in the homes and agricultural businesses of rural Wisconsin.

Statement of Position:

The member organizations of the Wisconsin Farm Electric Council (WFEC) believe that the individuals and/or contractors performing electrical wiring in areas of Wisconsin that presently do not have specific certification requirements should be certified by the state as knowledgeable and experienced. This certification should be mandatory and should only be awarded following the successful completion of appropriate tests. Certification should be provided in three increasingly difficult stages that reflect the knowledge and experience of the individual.

Stage 1: Prior to performance of any electrical work a “Beginning Electrician” should be required to pass an entry level exam. Individuals who pass the exam should be allowed to perform electrical work only under job site supervision of a certified “Journeyman Electrician.”

Stage 2: Following five (5) years of work related experience, a “Beginning Electrician” should be required to successfully complete an exam that would certify him/her as a “Journeyman Electrician.” This certification would allow the “Journeyman Electrician” to provide electrical services as an electrician at his/her discretion.

Stage 3: Following a total of seven (7) years of work related experience, a “Journeyman Electrician” should be allowed to voluntarily take an exam that, if successfully completed, would lead to certification as a “Master Electrician.” Before an electrician can provide services as a contractor, he/she must be certified as a “Master Electrician” or, have a “Master Electrician” on staff who must approve all contracted work.

The member organizations of the Wisconsin Farm Electric Council also believe, that in the rural areas of Wisconsin, where electrical inspection is not mandated, electricians and/or electrical contractors should be required to inform their customers that, upon request, a state certified electrical inspector will inspect the electrical work that has been performed. This requirement should exist whether or not certification becomes mandatory as proposed by this position statement.

Wisconsin Farm Electric Council:

The Wisconsin Farm Electric Council was founded in 1954 as a cooperative program between the investor-owned utilities, rural electric cooperatives, and University of Wisconsin Extension.

The WFEC is dedicated to serving a variety of groups including:

- agriculture and other rural energy consumers,
- youth and farm organizations,
- the electrical equipment industry,
- regulatory agencies, and
- education and research institutions.

Services provided to members include: educational programs, information and expertise on rural electric issues, an open forum for discussion on rural electric issues, coordination of utility communication efforts with the electric equipment industry, product information and testing,

research and education programs, response to critical rural electric issues and challenges, and participation in the state electrical code revision process.

Wisconsin Farm Electric Council (Now the [Midwest Rural Energy Council](#))

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