

Saint Louis
COUNTY
TRANSPORTATION
PUBLIC WORKS

Steven V. Stenger
County Executive

Daniel W. Dreisewerd, P.E., PTOE
Acting Director

Stephanie Leon Streeter, P.E.
Deputy Director

May 1, 2017

To: Licensed Electrical Contractors

RE: Flood damaged/contaminated electrical equipment

As a reminder please know that electrical equipment and wiring that has been submerged must be replaced. There is no approved method of cleaning/restoring the majority of electrical equipment encountered in the areas prone to flooding and the cost of recertification to original specifications can exceed the cost of replacement in some cases. The cleaning process itself can damage the equipment.

Some large electrical equipment (usually medium voltage) may be cleaned and restored according to the manufacturer's instructions and the NEMA standard. Testing by a recognized third party must be the final part of the restoration process before power will be turned on.

Inspections will be required before power is turned on and permits will be required. The permit requirement helps to keep out the storm chasers that often take money from property owners and do poor work if any work is done at all. By the time the owner figures out what happened the storm chaser is long gone. The permit also ensures that work is performed by a company that is licensed, bonded and insured so there is a level of accountability.

Permit fees for work in the flood areas may be waived but that official announcement has not yet been made.

Remember that you should not assume power is off in a building that was flooded. Power is cut to some and not some others. Just because power is currently on in a building does not mean it will stay on. We will be making that decision over the next week or two.

In most cases the owner of property in flood areas will have a letter from my office advising them what is required to be done if anything. Before you start to work on a building or structure in the flood area it would be prudent to ask for the letter from the county. Naturally, everyone won't receive the letter as soon as the water goes down but they will immediately want to start the clean-up/repair process. Delays will frustrate them and we will work toward minimizing delays. Still the recovery process takes some time. The areas flooded during this recent event are generally the same areas that flooded in December of 2015 and January 2016. The property owners in these areas should be familiar with and prepared for the process to restore those properties that meet the guidelines that would allow restoration.

Thank you,

Rick Hill,
Chief Electrical Inspector