
Electrical Distribution Safety

GENERAL:

This bulletin summarizes the results of Utility Regulation's assessment to date of Due Diligence Inspections (DDIs) carried out between 2006 and March 31, 2009. As a result of this assessment future approaches to DDIs have been evaluated and changes implemented.

CURRENT ASSESSMENT AND FINDINGS:

Due Diligence Inspections have been fully implemented for over two years. The DDIs have primarily served to reinforce the regulatory obligations of Ontario Regulation 22/04 with Local Distribution Company (LDC) staff. The DDI Reports, in many instances, have highlighted for the LDC management the need to reinforce adherence to their Construction Verification Program (CVP) and the need to resolve internal issues between engineering and construction staff.

With over 600 DDIs performed to date, the majority of DDI Reports document some areas of improvement required by the LDC. Typical examples of non-compliance were related to; on site changes not being recorded, guying (structural integrity), and grounding (electrical integrity). With respect to guying and grounding, there were instances of work instructions that did not include instructions on guying and grounding. In other cases approved standards and/or work instructions were not being followed.

It is important to note that generalizations could not be made based on LDC size, geographic location or urban vs. rural installations. Each LDC has unique challenges and advantages and as such no trending due to LDC characteristics could be made.

CURRENT AND FUTURE IMPLEMENTATION OF DDIs:

This year, the implementation of DDIs will follow a similar format as previous years. The process is supplying the ESA with valuable information and LDCs are familiar with the process. DDIs results have been assessed for all LDCs and adjustments have been made to the number of inspection for the current fiscal year. Adjustments were based on the previous year's DDI results and other compliance assessment measures. The overall provincial number of DDIs will remain the same as previous years.

Some DDI inspections will focus on temporary services and 3rd Party Attacher installations. Experience has shown that these installations often pose challenges in meeting safety standards and therefore do not comply with Regulation 22/04.

For DDI Reports that document little or no progress towards compliance with Regulation 22/04, enforcement action will be taken, along with increased inspections. DDI's will continue to evolve as needed.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

If you can provide additional information on this Bulletin or any other Utility issue, please contact ESA to share your experiences. Additional information requests, and follow-up information, may be directed to ESA. Please be prepared to quote Bulletin "DIB-06/09".