

August 20, 2009

OFFICIAL CODE INTERPRETATION

This interpretation supercedes all previous interpretations on this subject and will remain in place until rescinded or the next revision of Comm 16, Electrical

Current Code Section in Question:

National Electrical Code, NFPA 70-2008, Section 410.130 (G) Disconnecting Means.

- (1) General. In indoor locations other than dwellings and associated accessory structures, fluorescent luminaires that utilize double-ended lamps and contain ballast(s) that can be serviced in place shall have a disconnecting means either internal or external to each luminaire. The line side terminals of the disconnecting means shall be guarded.
- (2) Multiwire Branch Circuits. When connected to multiwire branch circuits, the disconnecting means shall simultaneously break all the supply conductors to the ballast including the grounded conductor.

Question:

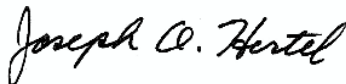
Do these requirements apply to existing luminaire installations where ballast(s) and lamps are replaced?

Answer:

No. Section 16.003 (1) indicates that the rules apply to all new installations, reconstruction, alterations and extensions. The work in question is a repair or replacement. Comm 16.003 (3) states that existing installations shall conform to the electrical code that applied when the installations were installed. Section 16.003 (4) Repairs, adds that repairs to electrical installations shall conform to the electrical code that applied when the installations were installed.

If the installation of the luminaire were being accomplished today it would require the disconnecting means cited in 410.130(G) (1). In addition, the requirement for the disconnecting means to open all conductors of a multiwire branch circuit supplying the fixture and ballast would be required in accordance with 410.130(G) (2). Because the fixture was installed under a previous edition of the electrical code that did not have this additional requirement it may be repaired and parts replaced in compliance with the rules under which it was originally installed.

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