

SAFETY SENSE

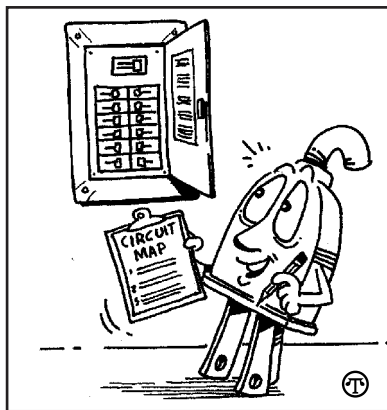
Safe Living Through Safe Wiring

(NAPSA)—Owners of older homes can face a much more alarming problem than peeling paint and loose floorboards. Bad wiring could lurk behind your walls. If your home is more than 40 years old, was renovated recently or had the addition of a major new appliance, such as a refrigerator or electric furnace, you should have your wiring checked.

“Dim or flickering lights, loose receptacles, tripping circuit breakers or popping fuses and hot or discolored outlet cover plates may be your home’s way of saying you have a problem,” warns Michael G. Clendenin, executive director of the Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI).

ESFI also urges owners of homes with aluminum wiring to monitor it more closely. Aluminum wire oxidizes more rapidly than copper wire, creating resistance and heat buildup along the circuit. Aluminum wire also expands and contracts faster than copper wire, potentially creating gaps at connections that can produce hazardous arcs and glowing connections.

However old your home, you should understand the condition of its electrical system and the system’s capacity, limitations, and potential hazards. An electrical inspector or a qualified, licensed electrician can inspect your



An electrical inspection can help keep you safe.

home’s electrical system to ensure the circuits aren’t overloaded and the electrical service can adequately supply the demand.

Electrical inspections can catch problems hidden behind the walls and correct them before they turn tragic. In many cases, ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) and newer arc fault circuit interrupters (AFCIs) can be installed to help prevent a fire and accidental electrocution. GCFIs—the “TEST” and “RESET” buttons on some outlets—should be tested every month and after a fire or electrical storm.

For more electrical safety tips, see www.electrical-safety.org or call the ESFI at 703-841-3229.