

The New 2012 Edition of NFPA 70E is on the Way!

Out with the old and in with the new! A new cycle is beginning for the NFPA 70E document and by the time you read this, proposals will have been submitted and the Report on Proposals (ROP) meeting should be completed. There are over 500 proposals for change to the 2012 Edition of the 70E, and there should be many new and relevant points of discussion and clarity when the review process is complete. Stayed tuned and we will keep you up to date with many of them, as this is an important part of daily work with electrical power equipment.

While not all of the dates below have been finalized at the time this column was written, we will pass information along in future columns. Right now, the schedule for the revision, review, and approval of the 2012 NFPA 70E is:

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| • Proposal closing date | 1/5/2010 |
| • ROP meeting | 2/8 through 2/12/2010 |
| • ROP mailing | 6/25/2010 |
| • Comment on proposal closing date | 9/3/2010 |
| • ROC meeting | TBD |
| • NITMAM* closing date | 4/8/2011 |
| • Posting of certified NITMAM | 5/6/2011 |
| • 2012 Edition of 70E available | 10/2011 |

*A NITMAM is a Notice of Intent to Make A Motion, and is used when there are issues with either the 70E Technical Committee action or the Technical Correlating Committee (TCC) action. The TCC has oversight of the 70E Technical Committee and can make last-minute changes if the TCC thinks a 70E change is in conflict with other standards or is inconsistent with its goals. NITMAMs are pretty rare on 70E committee actions.

Anyone with an interest in electrical safety needs to be involved in the 70E process. Anyone can make a proposal and the 70E Committee will consider it, accept it, accept it with changes, accept the principle it brings forth, but change

the wording or reject it. Proposers will have an opportunity to comment on the committee action and those comments will then be considered as well. Often the proposer can present new information or present the facts in a different way that makes their intent clearer and the committee will reverse their action. 70E committee meetings are open to the public, although you should make a request if you want to present at one of the meetings.

Once the ROP meeting is concluded the committee can accept no new proposals and cannot propose any. Sometimes people within the committee or from the public will read a proposal and think of a better way to word it or think of a new proposal that needs to be submitted. The 70E committee will accept proposals at that point and table them for consideration in the next cycle.

There is an increased emphasis on making the arc-flash tables in the 70E more user friendly and to reverify the limits given in Table 130.7(C)(9) for short-circuit current and operating time of the overcurrent protective device. New tasks will no doubt be added, and the structure of the tables is being reviewed by several task groups. A wide variety of formats for Table 130.7(C)(9) is being discussed, including listing tasks as groups (racking of

circuit breakers, low- and medium-voltage) to having several tables, much like the NEC, based on available short-circuit current or transformer size. The tables will no doubt be much different than their present format and should be much easier for the average field technician to use.

Each edition of the NFPA 70E brings heightened awareness of electrical safety within the industry. The NFPA states that the 70E is the second-most purchased document they produce, with the NEC being number one. As OSHA increases enforcement of its electrical regulations, the 70E will be used more frequently to meet OSHA's requirements and its use will gain wider acceptance.

And in case you were wondering — now is the time to implement the 70E, not after an accident.



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