

SAFETY ALERT

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November 2004



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Safety Alert For Immediate Release

Schneider Electric and The Electrical Safety Authority Is Notifying The Public That Schneider Electric Is Voluntarily Recalling About 100,000 AFI Circuit Breakers

MISSISSAUGA, ON – The Electrical Safety Authority has joined forces with Schneider Electric to issue a product safety notice to members of the public who have purchased and installed an Arc Fault Circuit Interrupter between March 2004 and September 2004 manufactured by Schneider Electric under the brand names Federal Pioneer and Square D. These breakers may be further identified by a blue push-to-test button. Replacement breakers will have a round green sticker or a green push-to-test button. This new technology has been developed to offer homeowners a circuit breaker option that will detect and react to arc faults that could lead to electrical fires in your home. Unfortunately, it has been identified that these products are not functioning to plan and will not detect an arc fault. **However, the short circuit and overload protection functions of these circuit breakers continue to function properly.** This means that the circuit breakers will continue to provide the same level of protection offered by a standard circuit breaker.

The manufacturer is re-issuing the product and would like to ask homeowners who have purchased and installed these products to contact them at 1(800) 565-6699 or visit www.schneider-electric.ca to arrange for their existing product to be replaced. Consumers should push the test button on their AFI devices in their electrical panel. If the test does not interrupt the power to the circuit, a qualified electrical contractor should be called to determine if the breaker is affected and if required, replace the breaker. Schneider Electric apologizes for the inconvenience and would like to let the public know that “the new Arc Fault Circuit Interrupter will be provided and installed by a licensed Electrician at no cost to the homeowner.”

The 2002 edition of the Ontario Electrical Safety Code recognizes the safety importance of this technology and introduced a requirement to install Arc Fault Circuit Interrupters on bedroom circuits in newly constructed homes and bedroom additions to existing homes starting January 2002. “This technology responds to potential hazards that may occur to electrical wiring in your home and we expect installation requirements to be extended in future editions of the Code” states Peter Marcucci, VP Regulatory Affairs at the Electrical Safety Authority.

Please note that Schneider Electric has worked to identify all applications of the Arc Fault Circuit Interrupters associated with new home construction through the builders. If you have a new home with one of the suspect Arc Fault Circuit Interrupters arrangements are currently underway to replace these breakers and there is no need to report on this recall.



For more information call:

The Customer Information Centre, Schneider Electric at (800) 565-6699

Ted Olechna, Electrical Safety Authority at (905) 712-5366