

What's the Risk?

Cover Plates, Fillers and Knock Outs

Introduction

Electrical Code compliance for equipment installations requires the use of cover plates, fillers and knock-outs where changes have been made to existing electrical equipment. The removal of breakers, wiring and fittings from the front or sides of breaker panels, junction boxes, switches and receptacle boxes leave openings that expose live electrical equipment. Breaker fillers are rectangular plastic inserts that snap into an opening in the dead front of a breaker panel where a breaker has been removed. Knock out hole fillers are metal or plastic discs that have spring teeth used to hold the knock out hole filler in place. These fillers come in various sizes to suit the size of the opening. Cover plates are metal or plastic plates that cover the opening of a junction box.



What's the Risk?

An opening in electrical equipment creates entry points for rodents, bugs and dust. The possibility also exists for someone to inadvertently touch or insert something into a piece of electrical equipment and come in contact with live electrical components.

Energy released from events such as an electrical parts failure, surge, lightning strike or arc flash, will not be contained within the electrical equipment cabinet when hole fillers, knockout fillers and cover plates are not installed. This could lead to a fire or personal injury.



What can be done?

Installing fillers and cover plates where breakers or wiring has been removed from electrical equipment is a simple and inexpensive repair to be completed by a qualified electrician. All dead fronts must be reinstalled after electrical work is complete.

Always remember that a qualified electrician should be consulted to repair or replace any defective electrical equipment.

