

ELECTRICITY ON THE FARM

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The Electrical Inspection Department of the Hydro-Electric Power Commission receives many applications for the inspection of farm buildings. Since electrical inspection has been in operation considerable attention has been devoted to the proper wiring of these buildings.

Some barns were wired up before the Inspection Department became active, and the district inspectors in whose territory these barns are located are instructed to go over them now and make sure that the work has been maintained in a safe condition. Before long complete inspections will be made of each of these farm installations, and owners will be given written reports showing what is necessary to be done to remove any possible danger which has been introduced either through original faulty work or subsequent inherent defects which may have developed.

Safety in the Use of Electric Light

The Commission considers that the greatest care should be exercised in electrical installations in barns. It is generally conceded by authorities that electric light is infinitely safer around a barn than coal oil lamps, or any other form of artificial lighting. The Inspection Department has examined many very fine barn installations. In some cases where the expense is not seriously considered by the farmer the entire farm buildings have been wired throughout in the very best form of conduit wiring. There is nothing which can be adopted which will give more permanent and lasting satisfaction, both as to convenience and safety, than a first-class installation of rigid galvanized conduit.

The Commission's Regulations require that conduit be installed always in the upper portion of the barn, i.e., the hay mow, as it would be impossible to properly protect open wiring in such a place if any other form of construction were adopted.

Switch May Cause Fire or Explosion if Improperly Located

Care should always be exercised in locating switches and cutouts. The wires in an electrical installation are probably the least dangerous part of the installation. It is at the point of issue and control where the chief danger lies. In every-day language this means that the points where switches are located, where there is more or less arcing or sparking produced during the operation of the switch, are dangerous, and under no condition should these switches be located in the immediate vicinity of highly inflammable material, such as hay or in very dusty places, or where gasoline is used.

Switches in Iron-Clad Box

Around the barn all switches should be in iron-clad boxes, externally operated, and kept tightly closed at all times. This not only effectually encloses any sparking of the switch, but it lessens the danger from mechanical injury or short circuit which would, no doubt, be the inevitable result if the knife switch were placed in the open.

To the owners of farm buildings a warning is therefore issued not to permit open switches, and if any of them are in barns they should take prompt steps to have them replaced with the standard box switch.