

New Safety Device Interrupts Arc Faults

Arcing is a common cause of electrical fires. An arc occurs when electricity jumps across a gap to another conductor. The arc can be extremely hot and can ignite flammable materials in its vicinity. As of January 1, 2002, arc fault circuit interrupters are required in the bedrooms of new homes. These circuits are designed to shut down as soon as an arcing condition occurs.

Unfortunately, no such safety measure is required in older homes, where arc faults are more likely to occur. Ask your electrician about installing AFCIs at the circuit breaker panel in your home. This is not a

substitute for safe wiring but can provide some protection in a home with older wiring.

If you live in a home that is more than 25 years old, you could have an inadequate and possibly hazardous electrical system – and not even know it. To be safe, call in an electrician for a thorough inspection and, if necessary, bring your home up to today's electrical code standards.

For more information on copper in residential wiring systems, visit <http://buildingwire.copper.org> on the Internet. **HP**