

Insulated pins on plug tops

This information sheet explains why pins on electrical plugs must be insulated.

As a general rule, all electrical appliances and equipment being offered for sale or hire must comply with the 'insulated pins' requirement. However, exceptions apply for plugs rated at 20 Amps and above (see AS/NZS 3112).

A number of fatalities and incidents have been recorded in which thin metallic items (for example, slats of metal blinds) have contacted the active pins of plugs that were not fully engaged in socket outlets.

To counter this risk, live pins (active and neutral) on 240 volt plug tops and equipment with integral live pins must be insulated for a prescribed length of the pin in accordance with AS/NZS 3112. This means only the tips of the pins engage with the live parts of sockets.

Implementation of this safety initiative commenced during 2000, with a nationally agreed compliance date of 3 April 2005.

Manufacturers, importers, distributors, agents, retailers and hirers are reminded that it is a breach of the *Electricity Act 1945* if plugs without insulated pins are sold or hired or offered for sale or hire.

Note: Building and Energy inspectors carry out inspections in the marketplace to ensure the requirements are met.

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An example of insulated pins on a plug top.