

TRADE SAFETY ADVISORY

MANUAL MOTOR CONTROLLERS FOR HVAC/R UNITS

Workers can be exposed to electric shock from manual motor controllers installed as disconnect switches on rooftop-type air-conditioning units and other applications, even when the controllers are marked “Suitable for Motor Disconnect.”

These non knife-type switches have been found installed backwards, causing the power to be ON when the switch enclosure indicates OFF. If dirt and moisture accumulates on the arc shield, tracking might occur across the phases, causing a hazardous condition. In addition, some controllers may be susceptible to having a contact weld closed, leaving a live phase when turned off. Therefore, please ensure proper lockout procedures are used prior to servicing.

We recommend that manual motor controllers installed as disconnect switches on HVAC/R units be replaced with an approved disconnect device, such as a knife-style switch certified to CSA Standards, that is appropriately rated under Rule 14-012 of the Ontario Electrical Safety Code and marked as such.

ACTION

If you come across a manual motor controller that shows evidence of failure, have it removed from service. Please contact the Electrical Safety Authority at 905-712-7881 to report the failed device.



Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Trade Labour-Management Health and Safety Committee and the ECAO/IBEW Trade Labour-Management Health and Safety Committee



Electrical Safety Authority (ESA): www.esainspection.net



www.labour.gov.on.ca



Construction Safety Association of Ontario (CSAO):
www.csao.org