



NEWSLETTER

The truth about aluminum wiring



Builders started using aluminum wiring in the mid-1960s due to the high cost of copper at the time. Over the years, problems frequently developed, so builders stopped using aluminum wires in the late 1970s. Aluminum wires can cause overheating, and on occasion, fires. Since the 1970s, many houses have been “pigtailed” which is an approved method of dealing with aluminum wires. However, some houses have not been attended to and may present a safety hazard.

During our home inspections we remove the cover to the electrical panels and look at the wires. If we see aluminum wires, we recommend that a licensed electrician perform a more detailed evaluation and suggest the appropriate solution. **Rewiring the house is not necessary.** But an evaluation by an electrician is necessary. If the electrician recommends correction/repairs, it will likely be “pigtailling”. Pigtailling consists of connecting a splice of copper wire to the aluminum wire with a special connector. After the repairs are done, an inspection by an independent electrical inspector should be done.

I recently contacted an independent electrician (HEH Electric), for pricing. They charge approximately \$300 for the initial assessment. The cost for correction is highly variable but a safe range is \$2,000-\$4,000. It can be cheaper if some corrective work has already been done. By the way we never quote pricing during our inspections, rather, we recommend evaluation by a licensed professional.

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