



*Published by Beverly Area Planning Association  
April 2011 - Vol. 31 - No. 4*

## **Need a Home Electrical Safety Evaluation?**

Whenever I am at a social gathering people ask, "What do you do for a living?" I reply, "I'm a Master Residential Electrician" and usually spend the rest of the night answering questions about the safety and serviceability of their home electrical systems.

The BAPA staff is also concerned about electrical safety and asked for some tips for The Villager. How would you know if your home is not safe or if there were some issues that may need some attention? An electrician looks for different things depending on whether your home is 25 years or older.

Here are some questions to ask about your electrical system if you live in a vintage home:

- Can you NOT remember the last time a qualified electrical technician checked out your home (and not a friend or a friend of a friend)?
- Do you have loose switches or outlets that move when you use them?
- Have you remodeled your kitchen and/ or added any type of high end electronics or appliances (i.e. flat screen TV, washer/dryer, electric water heater).
- Do you have a fuse box?
- Does your service panel look as if it was installed when Harry Truman was president?
- Are you using a space heater that shuts off power in the house?
- Does your breaker trip? An overloaded breaker is a warning sign of a much bigger issue.
- Does the panel have modern flexible metal tubing or old fashioned rubber jacketed cables coming from it?
- Do your lights dim when an appliance turns on?
- Have you seen a spark come out of an outlet, switch or electrical socket?
- Are you using extension cords? (The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission estimates about 4,700 residential fires originate in extension cords each year. Don't be in that statistic!)

If you answered yes to any of these questions, please schedule an appointment with a certified electrician who is serious about your electrical safety.

*By Charles P. Otstott  
General Manager  
SAFE Electrical Service*