The electrical distribution box in front of the door is obstructed



Overview

A common violation is storing items in front of the electrical panel, such as furniture, boxes, or cleaning supplies. This not only blocks access to the panel but also creates a fire hazard.

Key Takeaways

Electrical panels must have a clear, unobstructed working space of at least 3 feet in front to ensure safety and compliance.

Clearance Requirements

According to the National Electrical Code (NEC), electrical panels must be installed in a readily accessible area with a minimum clearance of 30 inches wide, 36 inches deep, and 6. 5 feet high in front of the panel, and the panel door must open fully to 90°.

OSH

A regulations also require a minimum of 3 feet of unobstructed working space in front of panels for systems up to 600 volts, with greater distances for higher voltages or more hazardous configurations. Any obstruction, including doors, furniture, or equipment, violates these requirements and can create serious safety hazards.

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Safety Hazards

Obstructed access to an electrical panel increases the risk of: Electrical shock or electrocution when operating or maintaining the panel Arc flash incidents, which can cause burns or explosive injuries Delayed emergency response, potentially worsening electrical faults or fires Maintaining proper clearance ensures that personnel can safely inspect, operate, and repair the panel without risk.

Compliance and Best Practices

Remove any obstruction immediately to restore the required working space Mark and label the panel area to prevent future blockages Ensure proper lighting in the panel workspace for safe operation Conduct regular inspections to verify that the clearance remains unobstructed Use personal protective equipment (PPE) when working near the panel, including insulated gloves and flame-resistant clothing Failure to maintain proper clearance can result in fines, penalties, and increased liability in case of accidents.

Recommended Action

Since the panel is obstructed by a door, it is critical to relocate the door swing or remove the obstruction to comply with NEC and OSHA standards. Ensure that the panel remains fully accessible at all times, especially for emergency situations. Consulting a licensed electrician may be necessary to verify compliance and implement safe modifications.

Article Content

Electrical Panel Location Rules | Angi

AccessibleReachableAvailable to All OccupantsSafe from DamageAway from Flammable MaterialsMake sure the area around your electrical panel is clutter-free. There must be 3 feet of clearance in front of your electrical panels, and the door must be able to open at least 90 degrees. Move any boxes or objects that obstruct your view. 1. Ensure a washer or dryer doesn''t block your electrical panel. 2. Place your panel box in a large, walkable...See more on angi Reviews: 93Author: Elisa Greenbergstarneselectricllc

NEC Panel Clearance: Why Small Spaces Lead Big Problems

A common violation is storing items in front of the electrical panel, such as furniture, boxes, or cleaning supplies. This not only blocks access to the panel but also creates a fire hazard.

Electrical Panel & Gear Clearance Guide | NEC 2023

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The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) requires at least a 30-inch clearance in front of electrical panels located in the home. This should be measured from the door of the panel and there

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The National Electric Code does allow for the placement of breaker boxes behind doors. However, the code states that there should be adequate working space, and nothing should be

Your Guide To NEC Electrical Panel Clearance Requirements

There must be at least 78 inches (6′ 6″) of vertical clearance in front of the panel from the floor up to the ceiling or any obstruction. This is to allow someone to stand and work safely.

The installation requirements for the distribution box

Learn how to install a distribution box safely and correctly. Covers wiring, placement, standards, and expert tips for a compliant setup.

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Insufficient clearance around electrical panels is a serious workplace hazard. Blocked or obstructed access to panelboards can prevent workers from shutting off the power source during an emergency,

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