

VANCOUVER ELECTRICAL REPAIR

Hiring & Quotes

What a fair electrical quote includes, hourly rates and service calls, comparing quotes, checking a Technical Safety BC licence, and when to get a second opinion in Metro Vancouver

4 Expert Answers from Electric IQ

vancouverelectricalrepair.com/construction-brain

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Q1

Does the electrical contractor licence number belong on my Surrey quote?

Yes, and in Surrey it matters more than most people realise. Surrey runs its own electrical permit and inspection program, not Technical Safety BC, so the contractor you hire needs to be in good standing with both Surrey's building department and Technical Safety BC. A quote that omits the licence number is a yellow flag worth following up on before you sign anything.

Every electrical contractor in BC is licensed by Technical Safety BC, and that licence number should appear on any written quote or contract. The number lets you look the contractor up directly on the Technical Safety BC website to confirm the licence is active and that the company employs a Field Safety Representative (FSR), which is the person legally responsible for the work meeting the BC Electrical Code. No FSR on file means the contractor cannot legally pull a permit.

For a Surrey job specifically, ask two things before you hire:

First, confirm the Technical Safety BC licence number and look it up yourself at the Technical Safety BC public registry. Second, ask whether the contractor is familiar with Surrey's own permit process, because in Surrey the permit application goes to the City of Surrey's building department, not to Technical Safety BC. The inspection at the end of the job is also done by a City of Surrey electrical inspector. A contractor who routinely works in Surrey will know this without hesitation; one who seems confused about where to pull the permit is worth questioning.

A fair Surrey electrical quote should also include the permit fee (typically \$75 to \$300 for most residential jobs, though Surrey's fee schedule sets the exact amount), all materials, labour, and any BC Hydro coordination if the job involves a service upgrade or a new connection. GST at 5% applies to the total. If the quote is suspiciously low and the contractor says the permit is "optional" or "not required for this job" when it clearly is, walk away.

Also ask whether the contractor carries WorkSafeBC coverage. You can verify that independently through the WorkSafeBC clearance letter system. A contractor without coverage leaves you exposed if someone is injured on your property.

Want quotes to compare? Vancouver Electrical Repair can match you with local electricians for free, and you can confirm each one's Technical Safety BC licence before you commit.

Q2

Can a Vancouver electrician handle strata paperwork on my behalf?

Strata paperwork is mostly your job as the unit owner, but a good electrician can make the process much easier by providing the technical documents the strata council needs to say yes.

What the Strata Process Actually Looks Like

Under the Strata Property Act, any work that touches common property (in-wall wiring, the electrical room, parkade conduit, the building's main panel) requires council approval before work starts. For most electrical projects in a strata, that means submitting a written alteration request, often with a scope of work, a load calculation, and sometimes a licensed electrician's letter confirming the work meets code. The council reviews it, may require an alteration agreement, and then gives written approval. Only after that can permits be pulled and work begin.

Your electrician can, and should, prepare the technical side of that package: a written scope of work, a load calculation showing the building's electrical system can handle the new demand, and a letter on their company letterhead confirming the proposed work meets the BC Electrical Code. For EV charger installations, many strata buildings now require an electrical planning report covering the whole parkade, and a licensed electrician or electrical engineer typically authors that document. That is well within what a contractor can do for you.

What the electrician cannot do is submit the alteration request on your behalf as the owner, attend council meetings as your representative, or sign the alteration agreement. Those steps belong to you as the strata lot owner. Some owners hire a strata lawyer or property manager to help draft the formal request letter, but that is outside an electrician's role.

The permit comes after council approval, not before. Once the strata says yes, the electrician pulls the permit. In the City of Vancouver, that goes to the city's own electrical inspection department. In most other Metro Vancouver municipalities (Richmond, Coquitlam, New Westminster, Delta, Langley, and others), the permit comes from Technical Safety BC. The permit fee is typically \$75 to \$300 for residential strata work and should be included in your contractor's quote.

A few practical things to confirm before your electrician starts the paperwork package: ask whether they have done strata EV charger or panel work before (the load calculation and planning report process is specific), ask for their Technical Safety BC licence number, and confirm WorkSafeBC coverage. Verify the licence yourself at the Technical Safety BC website rather than taking their word for it.

For the alteration agreement itself, your strata management company is the right first call. If the project is complex (a parkade EV charging system, a service upgrade affecting the electrical room), some owners bring in a strata lawyer to review the agreement before signing.

Want quotes from local electricians who are familiar with Metro Vancouver strata electrical work? Vancouver Electrical Repair can match you with local ones for free.

Is a written scope of work normal from a Burnaby electrician for small jobs?

For small jobs in Burnaby, a written scope of work is not always standard practice, but it is reasonable to ask for one and a good electrician will not hesitate to provide it.

For a single-outlet repair or a breaker swap, many electricians will quote verbally on-site and follow up with an invoice. That is normal. Where a written scope becomes genuinely useful, and where you should push for it, is any job that involves a permit, multiple circuits, or work that will be hidden inside walls once it is done.

When to insist on something in writing

Burnaby is one of the seven Metro Vancouver municipalities that runs its own electrical permit and inspection program, separate from Technical Safety BC. That means the city's electrical inspector will sign off on the work, and the permit is pulled through the City of Burnaby, not through Technical Safety BC directly. For any job that requires a permit in Burnaby, a written scope protects you in two ways: it records exactly what was quoted, and it gives you something to compare against the permit application if you ask to see it.

For jobs like a panel replacement, an EV charger installation, a new dedicated circuit, or any rewiring, a written scope should include the work to be done, the materials and breaker sizes, whether the permit is included in the price, whether BC Hydro coordination is needed (for a service upgrade, for example), and what happens to the price if the electrician opens the wall and finds aluminum wiring or knob-and-tube behind it. Burnaby has a significant stock of 1960s and 1970s homes with aluminum branch wiring, so that last point is worth spelling out in advance.

For a straightforward service call, a like-for-like fixture replacement, or a GFCI swap, a detailed written scope is less critical. A clear invoice after the fact, showing labour hours and materials, is the minimum you should expect.

Before any job, ask the electrician for their Technical Safety BC licence number and confirm their WorkSafeBC coverage is current. For permitted work in Burnaby, you can also ask which permit number the job will be filed under once it is pulled, so you can verify the inspection was completed before you pay the final invoice.

Want quotes from local Burnaby electricians? Vancouver Electrical Repair can match you for free through the Vancouver Construction Network.

Why does one North Vancouver electrician want a deposit before ordering a charger?

Deposits for EV charger installations are completely normal in Metro Vancouver, and a request for one before ordering hardware is a reasonable business practice, not a red flag on its own.

Why Electricians Ask for a Deposit on EV Charger Jobs

The short answer is that EV charger hardware is a significant, non-returnable special order. A Level 2 home charger (the 240V unit that actually lives on your wall) typically costs **\$600–\$1,000** for the unit alone, before any installation labour. An electrician who orders that on your behalf and then has you cancel the job is left holding inventory they can't easily resell. A deposit, usually 25–50% of the total job cost, protects them against that risk.

There's also a lead-time factor. Some charger models, load management devices and smart panels have supply-chain delays of one to four weeks. Contractors order early to hold your installation date, and they want confirmation you're committed before tying up their purchasing account.

On the labour side, a North Vancouver EV charger job often involves more moving parts than a simple receptacle swap. If your panel is in a detached garage, the run is long, or the job requires a load management device (common in older North Vancouver homes with 100A services and electric baseboard heat), the electrician may also be pre-booking a BC Hydro disconnect or coordinating the electrical permit with the District of North Vancouver or the City of North Vancouver, both of which run their own electrical permit and inspection programs. That coordination takes time and sometimes has its own fees.

What makes a deposit reasonable versus a concern: A legitimate contractor will give you a written quote that itemises the charger hardware separately from labour, permit fees and any load management equipment. The deposit should be tied to that quote. Ask whether it's refundable if the permit is denied or if a load calculation shows your panel can't support the circuit without a service upgrade, that's a real scenario in North Vancouver's older housing stock.

Before handing over any money, confirm the contractor holds a Technical Safety BC electrical contractor licence (you can search the Technical Safety BC licence registry online), carries WorkSafeBC coverage, and has included the permit and inspection in the quoted price. Also ask whether the CleanBC Go Electric rebate has been factored in, for eligible single-family homes and row homes, BC Hydro's home charger rebate covers 50% of purchase and installation up to \$350, and most rebates require the application to go in before work starts.

A deposit on a charger job is industry-standard. What you want to avoid is a contractor who takes a large deposit, goes quiet, and can't produce a permit number or a scheduled inspection date within a reasonable time after the work is done.

Want quotes from a second or third local electrician to compare? Vancouver Electrical Repair can match you with local North Vancouver electricians for free, confirm each one's Technical Safety BC licence before you commit.

Disclaimer: This guide is provided for informational purposes only by Vancouver Electrical Repair. It does not constitute professional advice. Always consult qualified, licensed contractors and your local electrical authority (your municipality or Technical Safety BC) before starting any electrical project. Information is current as of October 4, 2026 and may change. Visit vancouverelectricalrepair.com for the latest answers.