

REGULATIONS, LINES INSPECTION, ETC.

Part III of the Electricity Act passed in December made certain amendments to the Public Works Act, 1928. These amendments included power to make regulations; to define what may be deemed to be a dangerous electric line or work; to authorize and control the inspection and testing of electrical materials, appliances, apparatus, and accessories; to prohibit the manufacture and sale of appliances, apparatus, and accessories which do not satisfy certain tests or which may be dangerous to life or property. The definition of the term "electric line or work" was extended to provide for present and future uses of electricity. Power was also given to prohibit any person from bringing anything within specified distances of an electric line.

Six licenses were issued to erect electric lines, and two licenses issued to use water-power for the purpose of generating electricity.

Three lines licenses and one water-power license were revoked.

Three permits to use water-power for the purpose of generating electricity were issued.

The Otago Central Electric-power Board took over the electric lines and plant of the Queenstown Borough Council during the year. Upon the merger of the Sumner Borough with Christchurch City the electric lines at Sumner became the property of Christchurch. This city's sphere of control was further extended by the acquisition of the electric lines in the Waimairi County. Another amalgamation was the sale of the Reefton reticulation by the Reefton Electric-power and Light Co., Ltd., to the Grey Electric-power Board.

Seventy-nine permits to carry out electrical wiring in connection with private generating-plants were issued.

The regulations require that electrical supply authorities shall, in the interests of safety, inspect every consumer's installation at five-yearly intervals in congested areas and eight-yearly intervals outside such areas. From various causes these inspections have fallen very much in arrears, although in a few cases the supply authority is up to date. It is anticipated, now more material is available and the man-power position is becoming less acute, that this important work will proceed in accordance with the regulations.

After a lapse of nearly four years due to war conditions the inspection of the electric lines and works of electrical supply authorities recommenced, and the lines and works of twelve supply authorities were inspected.

Forty-five of the electrical supply authorities gave notice of their intention to extend their electric lines.

There were 10,513 broken wires reported by the electrical supply authorities and 444 broken poles.

The principal causes of the broken wires were—snow, 5,528 (52 per cent.); trees, 2,059 (19 per cent.); contact, 993 (9 per cent.); gale, 944 (9 per cent.).

The fires reported by the electrical supply authorities as being of electrical origin are as follows:—

Appliances (refrigerator motor seized)	..	..	..	1
Contact between aerial conductors (radio aerial fell on service-line)	..	..	..	1
Contact between steel conduit and composition gas pipes	..	..	..	3
Defective fuse contact	..	..	..	1
Improper use of appliances (irons left switched on)	..	..	..	2
Lightning	..	..	..	1
Switchboard wiring	..	..	..	8