

# Electrical Panel Safety and Replacement Guide

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Your electrical panel is the brain of your home's electrical system. It distributes power throughout your house and keeps your home safe by shutting off power when there's a problem. Understanding how your panel works and when it needs attention is crucial for safety and reliability.

## Basic Safety Around Electrical Panels

Many homeowners believe that simply touching an electrical panel will shock you. In reality, if the outer cover is in place, you can safely reset breakers without risk of shock. The danger comes when the interior cover (dead front) is removed, exposing live wires.

Here are some basic safety tips:

- You can safely reset a tripped breaker by flipping it fully off, then back on.
- Never remove the interior cover yourself — this should only be done by a licensed electrician.
- If you see burn marks, smell burning, or hear buzzing from the panel, call a professional immediately.

## How Long Do Panels Last?

The average lifespan of an electrical panel is about 30 years. If your home is over 30 years old and the panel has never been replaced or upgraded, it's time to have it inspected. Outdated panels can lead to reliability issues, fire hazards, and difficulty supporting modern electrical demands such as EV chargers, backup generators, and solar systems.

## Federal Pacific & Zinsco Panels: Why They're Dangerous

Certain older panel brands are known to be unsafe and should be replaced immediately. Two of the most common are Federal Pacific Electric (FPE) and Zinsco panels.

- **Federal Pacific Electric (FPE)** – These breakers often fail to trip when there's a problem, allowing wires and connections to overheat. This can lead to electrical fires.
- **Zinsco** – These panels are notorious for breakers that either never trip or trip randomly. When they fail to trip, overheating can occur. When they nuisance trip, you may lose power without a clear reason.

If you see one of these brands on your panel, it's strongly recommended to replace it as soon as possible.

[Insert image of Federal Pacific panel here]

[Insert image of Zinsco panel here]

## When to Call for Help

Breakers are designed to trip when there's an electrical problem. Here's a simple guide to know when it's time to call Power Surge Electric:

- •\*\*First trip:\*\* Reset the breaker. If it holds, you're likely okay.
- •\*\*Second trip:\*\* Check what's plugged into the circuit. Unplug devices and try again.
- •\*\*Third trip or immediate trip:\*\* Call us. This usually indicates a wiring issue or failing breaker.

## Your Safety is Our Priority

If you suspect your panel is outdated, unsafe, or giving you trouble, don't wait. Contact Power Surge Electric at 281-221-9395 for a professional inspection. We'll make sure your home is safe and ready to handle today's electrical needs.