

Knob & Tube Wiring

Old houses are filled with character and possibility. Whether you are turning a century home into a thing of beauty or you are a first time [home buyer](#), making your first step into the real estate market can be a real undertaking and sometimes come with unforeseen issues. One issue in particular is knob and tube wiring. Knob and tube wiring was used from the late 1800's to the early 1940's. It consists of single-insulated copper wires (conductors). As the wiring passes through stud cavities and joists, it passes through porcelain insulating tubes bringing dangerous electrical feeds to all of your light fixtures, plugs and switches.



What are the Dangers of Knob & Tube?

Knob and tube wiring is an out dated system. In the 1940's it was recognized as the cheapest way to wire your house and today our standards have changed, our knowledge has grown and we can wire your house more safely than they ever could in the 1940's. Here are a couple of reasons why knob and tube wiring is an antiquated form of wiring and should not be used to power any portion of your home.

- 1) The knob and tube wiring system

permits the use of in-line splices in walls without a junction box. Junction boxes are specifically used for your safety. They offer a protected environment where spliced wires can be reconnected and contained. If wires spark without a junction box, you will be in danger of starting a house fire.

- 2) The knob and tube wiring system never included a safety grounding conductor. Ground conductors provide an alternate route for electricity to flow when encountering an electrical spike which in turn allows the breakers in your panel to trip and stop the flow of electricity. Without them again, could result in electrical fires in your home.

The other major problem is if the knob and tube has become a mix of old and new wiring making it a hazardous combination due to improper modifications. Some people have gone to such lengths as to splice new wiring onto old wiring to get away with replacing the entire system.

How do I know if I have Knob and Tube wiring in my home?

It is quite possible that the knob and tube wiring was missed by your home inspector because it was 100% hidden by the drywall. Now for example, you are in the midst of a renovation that has caused you to open up an existing wall and have found this old wiring system. You can identify knob and tube by its distinct porcelain tubes and thick black wires. But by far the best way to make sure you are not at risk is to acquire an [electrical inspection](#) performed by a [master electrician](#) to ensure the highest of standards are met.



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What are the benefits of updating your electrical system?

Would you step foot in an airplane that had an outdated electrical system? Why should we let our loved ones unknowingly make that choice each night as they go to sleep? Being able to sleep at night knowing that your family is safe is by far the greatest benefit of removing knob and tube from your home. But you can also benefit from attaining buying power during a real estate transaction. If you are aware of knob and tube wiring in your home you will have great difficulty insuring your home and are better off to get a professional to remove it and replace it with new wiring that is up code.

Promax Electric is no stranger to knob and tube wiring, we know how to remove and replace it a timely manner.

Realizing you have knob and tube wiring in your house can be a stressful time and we can help by upgrading your system to one that meets Canadian safety standards. Promax Electric can help.

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