

240V POWER SUPPLY & SAFETY

Caravans, motor homes, camper trailers and other recreational vehicles permanently fitted with 240V power are hardwired with a 15amp circuit to an Australian Standard.

The only readily visible difference between a 15amp circuit in a caravan and the 10amp wiring found in a domestic house is the larger 15amp earth pin on the power inlet on the outside of the body of the unit.

The lights and power points then fitted to the circuit in your recreational vehicle however has "double pole" switching which your house does not have. Only a qualified electrician should ever do any alterations to the 240V installation in your RV.

If you wish to plug in your RV at home you would need to have a 15amp power outlet installed by an electrician. You should never file down the larger earth pin on a 15amp lead to fit your home 10amp outlet. Neither should you enlarge the slot for the earth pin in a 10amp lead socket to the size of a 15amp earth pin. Neither should a 10amp plug be fitted at one end and a 15amp socket at the other end of the one lead.

All of these actions are illegal, potentially dangerous and contrary to the Australian Standard.

A caravan park operator has the right and, in fact, a duty to refuse permission for any guest to plug a lead into the park's 15amp power supply if he believes the lead is unsafe.

If you have accommodation which is not hardwired, eg. a panel van, tent, small tent trailer, etc., a caravan park owner cannot legally supply you with 240V power unless the circuit is RCD protected. RCD stands for Residual Current Device and is also commonly called "earth leakage or safety switch". A circuit breaker is not an RCD.

If you regularly travel with accommodation which is non-hardwired, we recommend that you carry a small RCD with you. They are readily available from caravan/camping accessories outlets, lighting and electrical distributors and many hardware stores.

The annual testing and tagging of leads owned by private individuals is not required in law at this point, however, it is advisable and can be done by any licensed electrical contractor.