"KEEPING PACE" - #37

TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS:

Mr. John Halferty was Chairman of the circuit breaker manufacturer's task force which was formed to study my recommendation that American circuit breakers be redesigned to have a lower magnetic trip level (be more sensitive to arcing). At a meeting in Washington, D.C., on May 18, 1990 attended by UL™ representatives and electronics industry representatives, Mr. Halferty stated that all 15 and 20 ampere circuit breakers would be redesigned to have a magnetic tripping level of 150 amperes, plus or minus 20%.

My testing of various brands of new circuit breakers in 1996 revealed that this had, indeed, been accomplished for most brands of circuit breakers.

Circuit breakers were improved even more, circa 1997, when a computer chip was placed inside to continuously monitor the sine wave waveform to detect any changes which might indicate arcing. These are called Arcing Fault Circuit Interrupters (AFCI's), and they have been code since 2002. (See issue #7).

Sincerely,

Frederick F. Franklin, P.E.
Forensic Engineer

PROFESSIONAL ANALYTICAL & CONSULTING ENGINEERS, INC
RickFranklin@PaceForensic.com • 3501 Tiffany Ridge Lane • Cincinnati, OH 45241 • 513.793.2771