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13 electrical accidents with seven fatalities in Sabah

KENINGAU: Thirteen cases of electrical accidents with seven deaths were recorded in the state last year, according to director of Enforcement and Regional Coordination Department of the Energy Commission, Ir Othman Omar.

Nationwide, there were 46 accidents with 19 fatalities, he disclosed during 'A Day with the Consumer' program organized by the Energy Commission here yesterday.

Othman said from analysis study of electrical accidents occurring from 2006, 55 percent of them happened at utility installations such as substations, overhead lines and underground cables while the others in homes, construction sites and other places.

"This study also showed that most accidents at utility installations involving the public were due to intrusions or lack of knowledge and awareness about the dangers of carrying out activities around the prohibited area.

"The accidents in homes were the result of carrying out illegal wiring and use of unapproved and low quality electrical equipment," he said.

Othman noted that while it is clear that electricity plays an important role in everyday life, many are less sensitive on the need to observe electrical safety.

He hoped that the community will take advantage of this 'A day with the Consumer' program to explore, understand and make inquiries on any concerns regarding the safety of electricity and gas appliances as well as the services provided.

According to him, the program is also a part of a campaign to educate the community and aims to introduce and promote the



Othman (left) looking on as a contractor is presented with a certificate at the 'A Day with the Consumer' program.

role and functions of the Energy Commission to consumers besides providing advice over the counters on applications and complaints.

In addition, he said it was also aimed at spreading awareness and safety of electricity and gas besides promoting energy efficiency.

"The concept of the program today is to introduce touch points as a social contribution and the Energy Commission will continue to involve the community to become part of its electrical safety awareness campaign to protect consumers from the dangers of electric shock due to unsafe wiring," he added.

Othman also said the Energy Commission, a regulatory body established on May 1, 2001 under the Energy Commission Act 2001, was incepted to take over the Department of Electricity and Gas on January 2, 2002.

He said the establishment of the Commission, among others, sought to meet the challenges and rapid development in the areas of energy and focus towards facing new challenges in the energy sector and the development of

the energy sector's drive towards a more rapid and effective implementation of its core activities.

"The industrial and commercial sector in Sabah being very dependent on quality of service wants guaranteed uninterrupted electricity supply for industries in the state.

"In addition to disruptions and unstable supply problem, the state also recorded high incidences of theft or fraudulent use of electrical energy compared to other states in the country. Besides the loss to many industries, it also exposed consumers to unsafe situations as these acts were carried out without considering the safety factors," he said.

Othman added the Energy Commission, in collaboration with suppliers, are now actively taking action and planning for the long term to improve the supply of services in addition to conducting enforcement on irresponsible parties, besides striving to educate the public through awareness campaigns and lectures.