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FIRE HAZARDS

Dangers of using substandard cables and wires

FIRST, the Malaysian Cable Manufacturers Association (MCMA) wishes to thank the NST for publishing the article "Fire Hazard" (NST, Feb 17).

Although the article did not specifically mention the issue of household cables or wiring, MCMA would like to offer its views on points highlighted in the article.

Overloading of circuits can also be caused by improper use of substandard cables or wires, besides the extension cord and/or faulty wiring installation.

These "substandard cables" are cables or wires that are illegally produced, under-designed or non-compliant designs, against the globally recognised international standards such as IEC, BS or Malaysian Standards (MS).

MCMA has been involved in disseminating and educating the public and stakeholders on the importance of duly certified and good quality cables and wires. These include:

THE issue of substandard cables. An example was the one-day workshop organised by the Energy Commission with technical support from MCMA last October in Shah Alam to educate local stakeholders and au-

thorities such as the Fire Department, Sirim QAS International Sdn Bhd, Public Works Department, Domestic Trade, Cooperatives and Consumerism Ministry, Customs Department, Construction Industry Development Board, The Electrical and Electronics Association of Malaysia, and Standards Department on the dangers of using substandard cables.

MCMA has also conducted talks and given presentations at exhibitions to share its knowledge on certified cables and the hazards of using substandard cables. The public can visit www.mcma.org.my to find out more about future presentations. Literature on certified versus substandard cables are available at the site.

Suggestions:

IT is recommended that periodic inspections and maintenance be conducted on electrical wiring in public buildings and domestic dwellings, especially for older installations.

Wires and cables have a lifespan and their effectiveness and performance depend on the workload, and whether there is proper installation and maintenance.

WE recommend that all internal

wiring and installation in public buildings and homes be upgraded using the latest cables and housing wire technology to reduce hazardous smoke inhalation and to avoid toxic suffocation.

These include low smoke zero halogen technology cable and wire insulation materials.

WE encourage the use of certified cables and wiring under International Standards and Malaysian Standards with a proven track record, and have been tested by the authorities.

MCMA certifies that its members are governed by authorities such as Energy Commission, Malaysian Communication and Multimedia Commission, Sirim, DSM, Fire Department and JKR.

MCMA welcomes public participation in disseminating and sharing expertise on certified cables.

We accept invitations from the public or institutions to present talks on the advantages of using certified cables and wires produced by our members.

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