

Remediating minor deficiencies related to electrical outlets also known as the “gap and setback” in fire-rated walls can be costly. These walls separate units in multi-unit buildings and are mainly a problem for HOA’s which have the responsibility to remediate fire-rated wall issues that have been identified during litigation. The problem is that litigation settlements typically do not include insurance monies for these issues due to the lack of damage which would trigger insurance coverage. The high cost of remediating the issue is due to removing and replacing interior gypsum wallboard or alternatively



How to cost-effectively remediate electrical outlet gap and setback deficiencies at fire-rated walls in multi-unit residences.

applying taping mud at every power outlet, light switch, CAT 5 port, phone jack and cable or satellite hookup in a rated wall. Additionally, providing access for a contractor to all wall areas can be time consuming (and therefore expensive). There is an alternative to taping mud, fire caulking, Lowry pads and mud rings. Just remove the face plate and slip in a box extender which is a simple plastic device that can be easily inserted into an electrical junction box.

AI-BE1 - Single Gang Box Extender



Arlington Industries (AI) manufactures these nifty box extenders which will extend the face of a device or junction box up to 1-1/2”, deliver a maximum two hour fire rating, and can be installed without having to disconnect the wires from the outlets or other fixtures in order to install them (just make sure the power is turned off). These box extenders are available in various gangs for walls as well as ceilings.

BE1X - Adaptable Single Gang



The photos to the left are images (Single-Gang) of the AI plastic outlet box extenders that cover gaps cleanly and sit flush to the face of the wall. The flanges are then concealed behind the outlet cover plate. The box extenders are UL listed for flame retardant plastic and allow contractors to comply with NEC Article 314-20 requiring that junction or electrical boxes be flush with the surface of any flammable wall surface. AI’s BE1 single-gang box also comes in a dual-gang, three-gang and four-gang box configuration. In addition, the BE1X is a single-gang box extender that can have the flanges trimmed to accommodate a smaller face plate.

Contractors who conduct inspections can easily stock these devices in their vehicles and make repairs as necessary while doing the inspections. Gap and setback issues typically don’t cause any damage, but can have major liability implications during a fire if discovered and not addressed. Other features of the AI box extenders include:

First - The extensions have an adjustable depth and a flange which makes them easier to install than a mud ring or goof ring.

Second - There is no mess: no caulking, wall finishing or painting required.

And last, but certainly not least – You can reduce your costs by 1/2 when compared with other standard repair options.