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Electrical Contractors Association of Alberta

MEMBER MEMO

US and Canadian Counter-Tariffs

Action Required Before September 8, 2026 | August 26, 2026

From: Electrical Contractors Association of Alberta

Date: August 26, 2026

To: ECAA Members

Subject: Important: US and Canadian Counter-Tariffs, Action Required Before September 8, 2026

THE SHORT VERSION

Canada is placing counter-tariffs on many goods made in the United States. They start on September 8, 2026 at 12:01 a.m.

What matters most is where a product is made, not where you buy it. A product made in Canada is not affected. A product made in the United States is affected even if you buy it from a Canadian supplier.

Steel and aluminum items move to 50 percent. Wire and cable and several other categories move to 25 percent, where those goods are made in the United States. Switchgear, breakers, panels, and transformers are not on the list based on what we have reviewed, which is good news, but you should still verify your own items.

Before September 8, check the origin of your key materials with your suppliers, look at any fixed-price jobs, and talk to a customs broker if you are unsure.

WHAT HAPPENED

On August 22, 2026, the United States put 50 percent tariffs on 27.6 billion dollars of Canadian goods. Canada responded with counter-tariffs on 27.6 billion dollars of goods made in the United States.

The counter-tariff list has 874 items at rates of 15, 25, and 50 percent. It takes effect on September 8, 2026 at 12:01 a.m. Two points are important. First, the tariffs apply only to goods made in the United States. Second, goods already in transit to Canada on September 8 are exempt.

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WHAT THIS MEANS FOR YOUR MATERIALS

The categories below are on the list and are relevant to electrical work. The rates apply where the goods are made in the United States.

Material	Tariff Rate
Steel and aluminum products (conduit, cable trays, enclosures, junction boxes, supports)	50%
Other aluminum articles	50%
Insulated wire and cable (building wire, armoured cable, control cable)	25%
Electric water heaters, space heaters, cooking appliances	25%
Electro-mechanical domestic appliances	25%
Parts for telecom and broadcast apparatus	25%
Parts for lifting and materials-handling machinery	15 to 25%

The full list has 874 items. Treat the categories above as the ones we have confirmed as relevant to electrical work, not a complete list. Check anything you source against the full government list.

SOME GOOD NEWS

Switchgear, circuit breakers, panels, and transformers do not appear on the counter-tariff list based on the data we reviewed. This is good news for core distribution equipment. Please still verify your own specific products against the full government list, because classifications can vary.

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO NOW

- Ask your suppliers where your key materials are made. Origin is what determines whether the counter-tariff applies.
- If you rely on United States made materials, consider placing orders before September 8. Remember that goods already in transit on September 8 are exempt.
- Review your fixed-price jobs. Check whether your contracts let you pass along tariff cost increases.
- Look for Canadian or other non United States suppliers where you can.
- Confirm CUSMA eligibility with your broker. If a United States made product does not qualify under the Canada United States Mexico Agreement, you may face two tariffs stacked on top of each other, the standard rate plus the counter-tariff. Confirm CUSMA eligibility before your next shipment.
- Watch for CBSA Customs Notices for updates.
- When in doubt, talk to a licensed customs broker.

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GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

The federal government has announced a 7.5 billion dollar support package for businesses affected by tariffs. It includes the Regional Tariff Response Initiative, BDC programs, the Canada Strong Diversification Fund, and the Large Enterprise Tariff Loan facility. You can find details through the Business Development Bank of Canada or at canada.ca.

A NOTE ON THIS MEMO

This memo is provided for information and planning only. It is not legal or customs advice. Tariff classification depends on the facts of each product. Please verify your classifications against the full government list and consult a licensed customs broker before acting.

Full government list: https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/programs/international-trade-finance-policy/canadas-response-us-tariffs/complete-list-us-products-subject-to-counter-tariffs.html

Robin Bobocel
Executive Director and Registrar
Electrical Contractors Association of Alberta
P: 780.451.2412
ecaa.ab.ca