

## What is Circuit Protection?

Circuit protection is a crucial element of industrial machine and electrical desians, providina the utmost safety for both svstem personnel and become overloaded when its equipment. A circuit can current exceeds the load it was designed to handle. There are many reasons why an electrical circuit may become overloaded and potentially cause damage to equipment, as well as fires and injury to personnel. In the U.S., all construction and equipment design and installation must adhere to rules and regulations developed by agencies such as the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), who publishes NFPA70, the National Electrical Code (NEC). There may also be local requirements that must be followed as well. For every code and regulation, there are easily obtained devices that have been specifically designed to make meeting these requirements and ensuring the safety of systems and personnel as easy as possible.

#### **Common Causes of Electrical Problems**

When designing, updating, or modifying a system or industrial machine, it is extremely important to understand the overall electrical system. You may want to add equipment and assume that all you need is to have the electrical power source available and simply add wiring to connect to this addition. However, it is critical to know if adding this load will overtax the system and create problems. Knowing the voltage, amperage and any other requirements ensures that your new design or modification can handle the load and operate efficiently.

Many common issues in electrical systems can be addressed with practical measures:

- Power Surge: Power surges cost U.S. companies more than \$80B yearly in equipment losses, downtime, and other damages. There is a tendency to associate a power surge with lightning strikes; however, about 80% of surges are generated within a power system. This can be solved by installing industrial surge protection devices, which will protect branch and/or individual equipment.
- Overloading: When adding new equipment or devices, it is important to ensure that the power source can handle the additional load required. A higher amperage breaker or fuse may be adequate, but sometimes a new circuit may be required to ensure safe and reliable operation.

- Exposed Wiring: Exposed wiring is a serious potential hazard for various reasons. A careless
  or temporary installation may leave wires exposed, or a damaged wire jacket might go unnoticed.
  Exposed wires could cause a short resulting in equipment damage, fire, and even serious injury to
  personnel. Correct exposed wiring, add wire ducts or conduit, or replace wire with a wire/cable that
  meets the specifications for the installation.
- Incorrect Wire/Cable: All cable and wire are designed to meet specific voltage, amperage, and even environmental conditions. The wire gauge size, material, sleeve material and jacket material all have an application purpose. It is important to select the wire that meets all requirements for your installation.
- Improperly Sized Circuit Breakers or Fuses: Circuit breakers and fuses are available in many sizes, shapes, ratings and configurations. A circuit breaker or fuse whose capacity has been undersized will cause service interruption and failure, while an oversized capacity circuit breaker or fuse will not protect the downstream system, causing system failure, equipment damage and even fire. Make sure all circuit breakers or fuses are properly sized for their loads.
- Inadequate Control or Disconnect Switches and Devices: Improperly sized control switches, disconnects, and power devices can cause failure or damage to components. Make sure all such devices support the specifications of the equipment they are controlling.
- Improper Grounding: Inadequate grounding can lead to serious system damage due to voltage
  fluctuations from power supplies, lightning, or accidental contact with a high voltage line. In addition,
  electronic devices within the system, lightning, or even the switching of heavy electrical loads like
  motors, may cause Electromagnetic Interference (EMI), which in turn can cause erratic operation or
  failure of any electronic circuit. Grounding provides a low impedance path that limits these voltages
  and stabilizes interference.



- Equipment/Device Failure: It is possible for equipment to fail and cause an overload or
  power surge, resulting in damage to other devices. Make sure that all equipment connected to
  the same circuit is also individually protected from power surges or spikes.
- **Enclosures and Wiring:** Even something as simple as selecting the correct enclosure, fittings, cable glands, terminals and more can cause issues if not done correctly. All these components are designed to meet certain specifications to ensure that all personnel and equipment is protected. An enclosure exposed to water splash or hazardous conditions will leak and cause shorts if the correct NEMA rating is not selected. Make sure all meet your requirements.
- Electrical Noise or Electromagnetic Interference: Certain industrial equipment and devices may cause a disturbance in an electrical system. This disturbance is created by electromagnetic induction or radiation, which can generate a frequency that will cause other devices to operate erratically. To prevent this, the addition of power line filters will reduce or eliminate the effects of any EMI or RF frequencies carried by cables/wiring in a system. Shielded cables can also help reduce or eliminate this problem. Use both to ensure the most trouble-free operation.

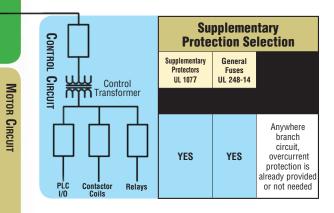


Circuit Protection Selection							
	Molded Case and DIN rail mounted UL489 Circuit Breakers	Current Limiting Fuses UL 248	Disconnect Switches UL 98	Manual Motor Starters (MMS) UL 508	Load Switches UL 508	Supplementary Protectors UL 1077	General Fuses UL 248
Short circuit for feeder and branch circuits	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO
Motor disconnecting means (NEC 430.101-430.113)	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO
Motor branch-circuit short circuit protection (NEC 430.51-430.58)	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO
Motor controller (NEC 430.81-430.91)	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO
Motor overload protection (NEC 430.21-430.44)	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO
OSHA Lockout/tagout disconnect (NEC 430.81-430.91)	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO

# What Type of Protection to Use?

With so many products available, it has become increasingly difficult to choose appropriate devices for specific requirements.

This chart provides general guidance on what devices are suitable for various aspects of circuit protection within an electrical system.



disconnecting means (NEC 430.101-430.113)

Motor branch-circuit short

circuit protection

(NEC 430.51-430.58)

Motor controller (NEC 430.81-430.91)

Motor overload protection (NEC 430.21-430.44)

OSHA Lockout/

disconnect (NEC 430.81-430.91)

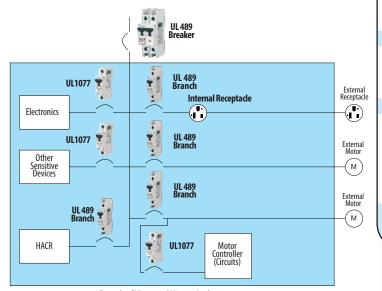
#### **Branch or Supplementary Circuit Protection?**

#### **Branch Circuit Protection**

Branch circuit protection typically refers to overcurrent protection for conductors and devices following a previous protective device. UL 489-rated circuit breakers are often used for branch circuit protection of feeder circuits downstream from a main disconnect, internal/external receptacles, external motors or HACR equipment (heating, air conditioning and refrigeration).

#### Supplementary **Protection**

UL1077-rated supplementary protectors are used for overcurrent protection within appliances or electrical equipment, or where branch circuit protection is already provided or not required. Supplementary devices are often used for lower-load equipment, internal loads, or as a simple additional disconnecting means.



## **UL489 Branch Protection**

**UL1077 Supplementary Protection** 

- UL489 Listed or Recognized
- CSA C22 2 No. 5
- International ratings available depending on breaker type
- UL Recognized under UL1077
- CSA 22 2 No. 285
- IEC 60947-2 or IEC 898

#### **Function**

- Opens automatically on Overload and Short Circuit
- when properly applied within its ratings
   Protects wire and cable against Overload and Short Circuit
- Opens automatically on Overload and Short Circuit
- Provides additional equipment protection where branch circuit protection is already provided or not required
- Not suitable for the protection of branch circuit conductors

#### **Applications**

- Branch circuit protection in control panels, panelboards, switchboards and motor control centers
- Motor overload and motor short circuit protection (UL489 Recognized motor circuit protectors) for control panels and motor control centers
- Used within appliances or other electrical equipment such as control circuits, control power transformers, relays, PLC I/O points and
- Ideal replacement for fuses that are applied as supplementary protection

#### **Features**

- Bolted down or DIN-rail mounted
- External handle mechanisms available
- Field mounted accessories
- · Stand alone branch circuit protection Various levels of protection (curve type)
- High voltage and interruption levels (up to 100 kAIC @ 480V)
- DIN-Rail mounted Field mounted accessories
- Various levels of protection (curve type)
- 10 kAIC @ 240 VAC
- 10 kAIC @ 277 VAC and 5 kAIC @ 480VAC
- 10 kAIC @ 48VDC

kAIC = thousands of Amps interrupt capacity

#### Summary

A Supplementary Protector can't be used for Branch Circuit Protection.

Understanding the difference between Branch Circuit Protection and Supplementary Protection helps to ensure their proper use.



# Fuses: Why and Where

Fuses can serve the same purpose as circuit breakers and are usually a more cost-effective method of overcurrent protection. They work well in applications where high fault current exists, and are commonly used to protect transformers, power supplies, and motors.

Fuses' main advantage is that they don't wear out as there are no moving parts, and contamination by dust or oil is unlikely. The biggest disadvantage is the need for replacement after operation, unlike a circuit breaker, which can typically be reset.

Also, fuses inherently increase the chance of single phasing. Thus, while a fuse protects the system from a fault, equipment can be damaged by a single-phase condition, so key devices should be equipped with blown-fuse detection phase monitoring devices.

#### **Common terms for fuse selection**

**Ampere Rating:** The continuous current carrying capability of a fuse under defined laboratory conditions. The ampere rating is marked on each fuse.

**Fast-Acting Fuse**: This is a fuse with no intentional time-delay designed into the overload range. It is sometimes referred to as a "single-element fuse" or "non-delay fuse."

**Fault Current:** Short-circuit current that flows partially or entirely outside the intended normal load current path of a circuit component. Values may be from hundreds to many thousands of amperes.

**Available Fault Current:** The maximum short-circuit current that can flow in an unprotected circuit.

**Interrupting Rating:** The maximum level of fault current that the fuse has been tested to safely interrupt.

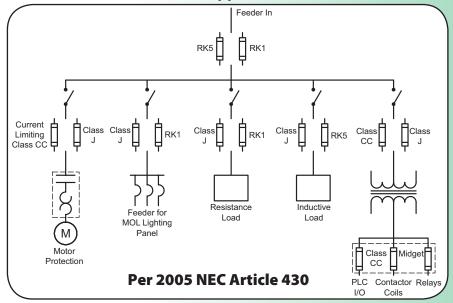
**Current-limiting Fuse:** A fuse that meets the following three conditions:

- 1. Interrupts all available overcurrents within its interrupt rating.
- 2. Within its current limiting range, limits the clearing time at rated voltage to an interval equal to, or less than, the first major or symmetrical current loop duration.
- Limits peak let-through current to a value less than the available peak current.

**Element:** A calibrated conductor inside a fuse that melts when subjected to excessive current. The element is enclosed by the fuse body and may be surrounded by an arc-quenching medium such as silica sand. The element is sometimes referred to as a link.

**Ferrule:** The cylindrical brass, bronze or copper mounting terminals of fuses with amp ratings up to 60 amperes. The cylindrical terminals at each end of a fuse fit into fuse clips.

#### **Fuse Classes and Application Guidelines**



## **Other Commonly Used Circuit Protection Devices**

Another important circuit protection device that is often overlooked are disconnects, typically used for industrial control systems to ensure the electrical feed circuit to a machine or system is completely de-energized to protect maintenance and operations personnel from electrical shock. Regulations require all power to the equipment MUST be shut OFF, locked out, and tagged out before servicing. Disconnects provide this functionality.



#### Manual Motor Starters (UL 508)

- Motor Overload Protection (NEC 430.21 430.44)
- OSHA Lockout/Tagout Disconnect (NEC 430.81 430.91)
- Suitable to reliably perform both motor control and disconnect
- Used to switch loads ON or OFF with manual operator controls



A partial list of products available from AutomationDirect include the following, shown with their suitable applications:

#### **Surge Protection Devices**

- Surge Protection for Feeder and Branch Circuits
- Designed with industry leading Mersen TPMOV Technology
- NEMA 4X enclosure for outdoor or indoor use



#### **UL 508-rated Disconnects**

- Provide safe control and disconnect for motors
- Suitable to reliably perform both motor control and disconnect
- Used to switch loads ON or OFF with manual operator controls



## Molded Case Circuit Breakers (MCCB) / **Current Limiting Fuses (UL 248) / Disconnect Switches (UL 98)**

- Short Circuit and Ground Fault Protection for Feeder and Branch Circuits
- Motor Disconnecting Means (NEC 430.101 430.113)
- Motor Branch-Circuit Short Circuit Protection (NEC 430.51 430.58)
- Motor Controller (NEC 430.81 430.91)
- Motor Overload Protection (NEC 430.21 430.44)
- OSHA Lockout/Tagout Disconnect (NEC 430.81 430.91)



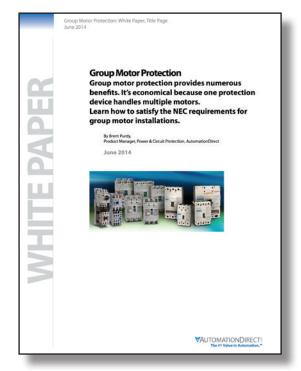
### General Fuses (UL 248-14)/ **Supplementary Protection (UL 1077)**

Anywhere branch circuit or overcurrent protection is already provided or not needed



Check out these white papers on electrical systems and circuit protection

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- Lead-free brass fittings
- Tubing
- Hose
- Hose clamps

Water (Potable) Components



## **Circuit Protection**

- Eaton UL 489 miniature circuit breakers
- · Fuji UL 489 molded case circuit breakers
- Faton UI 1077 supplementary protectors
- Edison fuses, fuse holders and fuse blocks
- Socomec, Gladiator® and Bryant® disconnect switches
- Bryant UL 508 manual motor controllers



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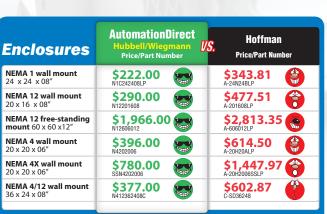
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