VyRal

A LeakReceipts Field Guide

LeakReceipts for Electrical Subcontractors

The Field Guide: where the money leaks, how to prove it, and how to close it

For: Electrical Subcontractor — Field Ticket to Change Order

by VyRal Dynasty

LeakReceipts for Electrical Subcontractors The Field Guide: where the money leaks, how to prove it, and how to close it

First edition, November 2026, revised 12 November 2026. Built from VyRal's lane research as it stood on 11 November 2026.

© 2026 VyRal Dynasty Holdings LLC, a South Carolina company. All rights reserved. A VyRal Dynasty product.

How every number in this book is labeled.

- **VERIFIED** means the figure comes from a named, dated source, and the source is printed next to it.
- **CALCULATED** means it is arithmetic on verified numbers or on your own numbers, and the math is shown.
- **ESTIMATE** means a reasoned range, and it is always called one.
- **STRUCTURAL** marks a standing rule of the trade (a law, a contract term, how the paperwork works), not a market figure.
- **STILL BEING MEASURED** means VyRal has not verified a figure yet, so no number is printed.

If a number is not labeled, it is a blank for you to fill from your own paper.

What this book is not. This is education, not legal, tax, accounting or financial advice. Where a fix says a professional decides, a professional decides. Nothing here says that any company, customer or person did anything wrong. The fixes show you how to check your own paper and ask in writing.

About how this book was made. This book was assembled with AI from VyRal's sourced research on this trade and checked against those sources. AI can make mistakes. Before you act on a figure, check it against the source printed beside it. Rules and rates change, and every figure carries its date for that reason.

Before you share any document with anyone, Vera included, black out account numbers, Social Security numbers and anything else you would not hand a stranger.

Contents

1. The short answer for your trade
2. What people in your trade say hurts
3. Get your paper together
4. Leak 1: Directed Work Without a Written Change Order
5. Leak 2: Miller Act Notice Window (No Direct Contract With Prime)
6. Leak 3: The 21/30-Day Claim Notice Clock
7. Leak 4: Self-Employment / Entity-Structure Tax Boundary
8. Leak 5: Pride Economy: Trucks, Tools, and the Shop Itself
9. Leak 6: Retainage Withheld Past Completion
10. Leak 7: Licensed Qualifying Individual — Assignment Cap
11. Leak 8: Prime-to-Sub Prompt Payment Clock
12. More leaks to check
13. Grow it: the next rung
14. The household side: TrueNET
15. Your 30-day leak plan
16. Take it into LeakReceipts
17. Sources
18. Your leak log

The short answer for your trade

The two companies that dominate electrical contracting nationally got there by opposite ownership paths — one sold equity to the crew, one bought up established shops — but they share one discipline underneath: every hour of directed field work gets turned into paper before the invoice goes out. That's the same discipline that separates a sub who gets paid for extra work from one who eats it.

Your leak map

Every leak this book covers, biggest first. The size grade is VyRal's research grade for how much money a leak tends to move in this trade. It is a grade, not a dollar figure. Your own paper sets the dollars.

#	Leak	Size grade	Evidence	Fixes
1	Directed Work Without a Written Change Order	Major	VERIFIED	1
2	Miller Act Notice Window (No Direct Contract With Prime)	Major	VERIFIED	1
3	The 21/30-Day Claim Notice Clock	Major	VERIFIED	1
4	Self-Employment / Entity-Structure Tax Boundary	Moderate	STRUCTURAL	1
5	Pride Economy: Trucks, Tools, and the Shop Itself	Small but common	STRUCTURAL	1
6	Retainage Withheld Past Completion	Major	STILL BEING MEASURED	1
7	Licensed Qualifying Individual — Assignment Cap	Significant	STILL BEING MEASURED	1
8	Prime-to-Sub Prompt Payment Clock	Significant	STILL BEING MEASURED	1

Then there are 3 more leaks to check, each with its own fixes, in the chapter called More leaks to check.

What people in your trade say hurts

Before we built a single fix, we went and read what people in this trade say out loud: forums, trade press, regulators' complaint files and court records. These are the pains that kept coming up, the ones with the most sources first. If one of them is yours, you're not imagining it.

Extra work gets signed in the field and never fully paid

The super tells me to do it, I get a ticket signed, and weeks later it's negotiated down, stuck pending, or never makes it onto a pay app.

Found in 3 public sources; newest dated 2026-09-04. VERIFIED count from VyRal's public research log; the sources are listed at the back.

Switchgear and transformers take a year or more to show up

The gear is on order for a year or more. The job stalls, my crew sits or moves, the price of the gear keeps climbing, and the GC still holds me to the schedule.

Found in 3 public sources; newest dated 2026-10-18. VERIFIED count from VyRal's public research log; the sources are listed at the back.

Data centers pull my electricians away and labor costs climb

Big data-center jobs pay more and run long. My good hands leave, I pay more to keep the rest, and last year's bids didn't carry that cost.

Found in 2 public sources; newest dated 2026-09-11. VERIFIED count from VyRal's public research log; the sources are listed at the back.

Gas for the work vans is up more than a dollar a gallon

My vans run every day between the shop, the supply house and the job. On a lump-sum job I can't add fuel to the bill, so the jump comes out of my margin.

Found in 2 public sources; newest dated 2026-10-26. VERIFIED count from VyRal's public research log; the sources are listed at the back.

I float payroll while the GC waits on the owner

I pay my crew every week. The GC pays me when the owner pays him. My line of credit or my savings fills the gap.

Found in 2 public sources; newest dated 2026-09-04. VERIFIED count from VyRal's public research log; the sources are listed at the back.

Pay apps eat my hours and portals charge me to get paid

Every month I rebuild the pay app, chase lien waivers and upload it to the GC's portal. Some portals bill the sub a usage fee on top.

Found in 2 public sources; newest dated 2026-09-04. VERIFIED count from VyRal's public research log; the sources are listed at the back.

I miss the lien deadline and lose my leverage

I'm busy on the next job. By the time I realize the last one isn't paying, the preliminary notice or lien date has passed.

Found in 1 public source; newest dated 2026-09-04. VERIFIED count from VyRal's public research log; the sources are listed at the back.

Retainage and final payment take three months or more

My scope is done and inspected, but the money held back sits with the GC until the whole building closes out.

Found in 1 public source; newest dated 2026-09-04. VERIFIED count from VyRal's public research log; the sources are listed at the back.

Get your paper together

Every fix in this book starts with paper, not memory. Memory rounds in the other side's favor. Paper doesn't.

Pull the last 90 days. Put it all in one folder, paper or phone, and label each piece with its date. Black out account numbers and Social Security numbers before you share anything with anyone.

The paper that proves each leak:

- Your contracts, invoices, statements, pay records and the messages around them.

The records this trade runs on: Subcontract, Field tickets, Change orders, Pay applications, Lien waivers, Payment and retainage records, Material receipts, License and insurance certificates

My folder checklist

Last 90 days of statements or pay records _____

Every contract or agreement I work under _____

Every invoice, ticket or settlement for the same 90 days _____

The messages that changed a price, a scope or a date _____

Leak 1: Directed Work Without a Written Change Order

Size grade: Major · Evidence: VERIFIED

What it is. Field-directed extra work — a GC or owner's rep telling your foreman "just do it, we'll sort the paperwork later" — that never gets converted into a signed, priced change order before or during the work.

Why it leaks. A field ticket proves the labor happened; it does not prove anyone agreed to pay for it. Under FAR 52.243-4(b), an oral order counts as a change order only if the contractor gives the contracting officer written notice of it — and under 52.243-4(d), costs incurred more than 20 days before that notice are generally excluded. Under AIA A201-2017 §7.4, performing directed minor work without first telling the architect in writing that it affects cost or time can waive the adjustment entirely, even though the work got done exactly as told.

The number to hold it against. Federal contracts: a contracting officer's order counts as a change only if the contractor gives written notice that it regards it as one; costs incurred more than 20 days before that notice are not adjusted. Source: FAR 52.243-4 (Jun 2007), acquisition.gov.

VERIFIED · Primary — government or regulator

> **Ask yourself:** When your foreman gets told to just go ahead and the paperwork will follow, does a written change order or at least a same-day email ever actually happen — or does the ticket sit in a truck folder until it's time to invoice?

1. Directed extra work done on a field ticket with no written change order

Fix approved · leak evidence: Verified

Fix 1 — Do it yourself (free).

1. The field ticket proves the work happened. It doesn't prove anyone agreed to pay for it.
2. Same day the work is directed, send a short written notice (below) to the person your contract names - the GC's PM or the contracting officer's channel. Say who directed it, when, what, and that you treat it as a change.
3. On federal jobs under FAR 52.243-4, an oral order counts as a change only if the contractor gives written notice; costs incurred more than 20 days

before that notice aren't allowed, and the right to an adjustment must be asserted within 30 days of the notice unless the government extends it (VERIFIED, FAR). On a subcontract, your notice goes up through the GC - so send it to the GC fast.

4. On AIA A201-2017 jobs, doing a directed minor change without written notice that it affects cost or time can waive the adjustment (AIA A201-2017 §7.4).
5. Get the ticket signed by someone your subcontract says can approve extra work, before you leave site.
6. What your contract allows you to recover is your attorney's call.

Fix 2 — The words to send, under your own name. Fill in the brackets, keep a copy, and send it from your own email or by mail. Nobody sends it for you.

> Subject: Notice of directed change - [PROJECT NAME], [DATE]
>
> To: [GC project manager / contract contact name], [GC COMPANY]
> From: [YOUR NAME], [YOUR COMPANY]
> Subcontract: [SUBCONTRACT #]
>
> On [DATE] at about [TIME], [Name and title of person] directed our crew to [Description of work] at [Location on site]. This work is not in our subcontract scope. We regard this direction as a change to our subcontract.
>
> Field ticket [TICKET #] is attached. We expect this change to affect our [cost / schedule / both]. We will send our pricing by [DATE].
>
> Please confirm receipt, and issue a written change order.
>
> [YOUR NAME]
> [TITLE] | [PHONE] | [EMAIL]

Fix 3 — Done for you. LeakReceipts · Billing Capture

WE DO: turn each field ticket into a change-order line with who directed it and when, track the notice day count on every verbal direction, and draft the same-day notice and the pricing summary. YOU DO: send the notice and the pricing, and sign the change order.

Keep it closed. No directed extra work without a same-day email notice. Ticket signed by an authorized person before the crew leaves site.

What this fix can't decide for you. Not legal advice. Whether a change is compensable, and what the contract means, is for an attorney. FAR clause applies to the prime's federal contract; how it reaches a sub depends on the subcontract flow-down.

My receipt for this leak			
Owed by my paper	Paid or billed	Gap (CALCULATED: owed – paid)	Fix 2 sent · answer

FREE FIRST CHAPTER

That's Leak 1 of 8.

The full Field Guide for Electrical Subcontractors walks through every leak on the map you just read: why it happens, the paper that proves it, and three fixes for each one — one you do yourself for free, the words to send under your own name, and what LeakReceipts can do for you while the decision stays yours.

Get the full guide:
leakreceipts.com/ebooks/electrical-subcontractors

Run it on your own numbers:
leakreceipts.com

WE WALK BY FAITH NOT BY SIGHT — 2 Corinthians 5:7