

Homeowners Tips Sheets

Outlet Testing

Common inspection issues



**School of
Professional
Home Inspection**

**This document is a
sample from the Home
Inspections
Fundamentals class**

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Outlet Testing



There are many kinds of outlet testers. The state requirements call for checking GFCI protection where required. The testers at a minimum must have the ability to test for GFCIs.



Outlet Testing Open Ground

If you were drilling a hole with a drill having a metal case and hit a live wire...

If the drill is **properly grounded**, it will blow a breaker.

If the grounding conductor is not connected, the likely **path to ground would be you!**



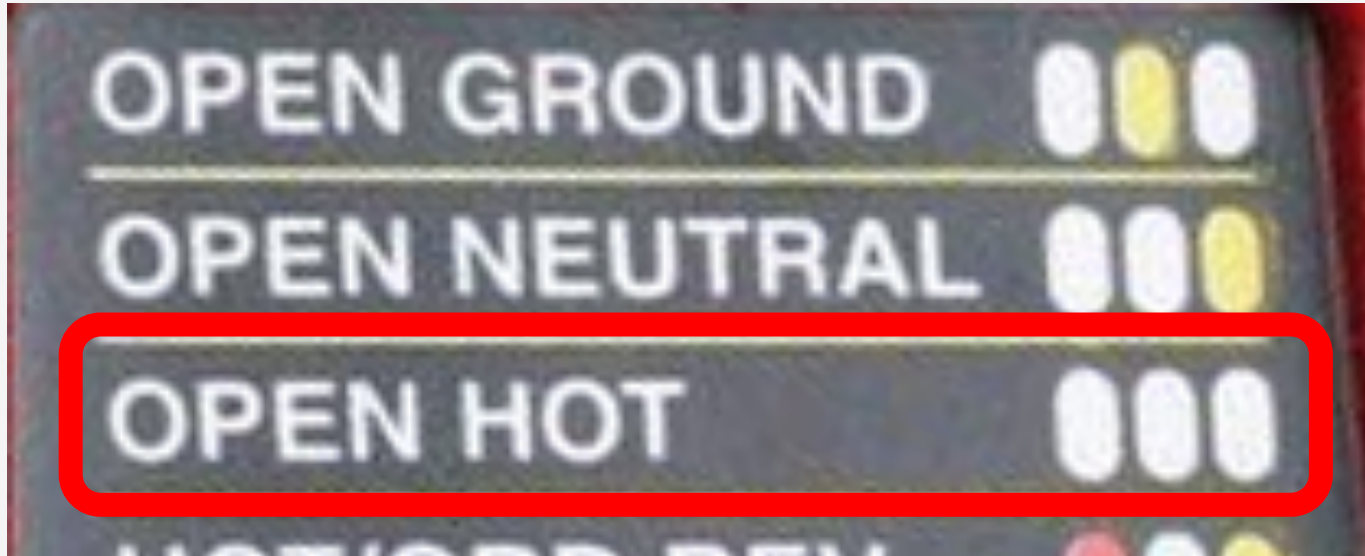
Outlet Testing - Open Neutral

When you have an open neutral, a connected appliance is 'live' even though it will not work.

You might think the appliance was dead since it is not operational.

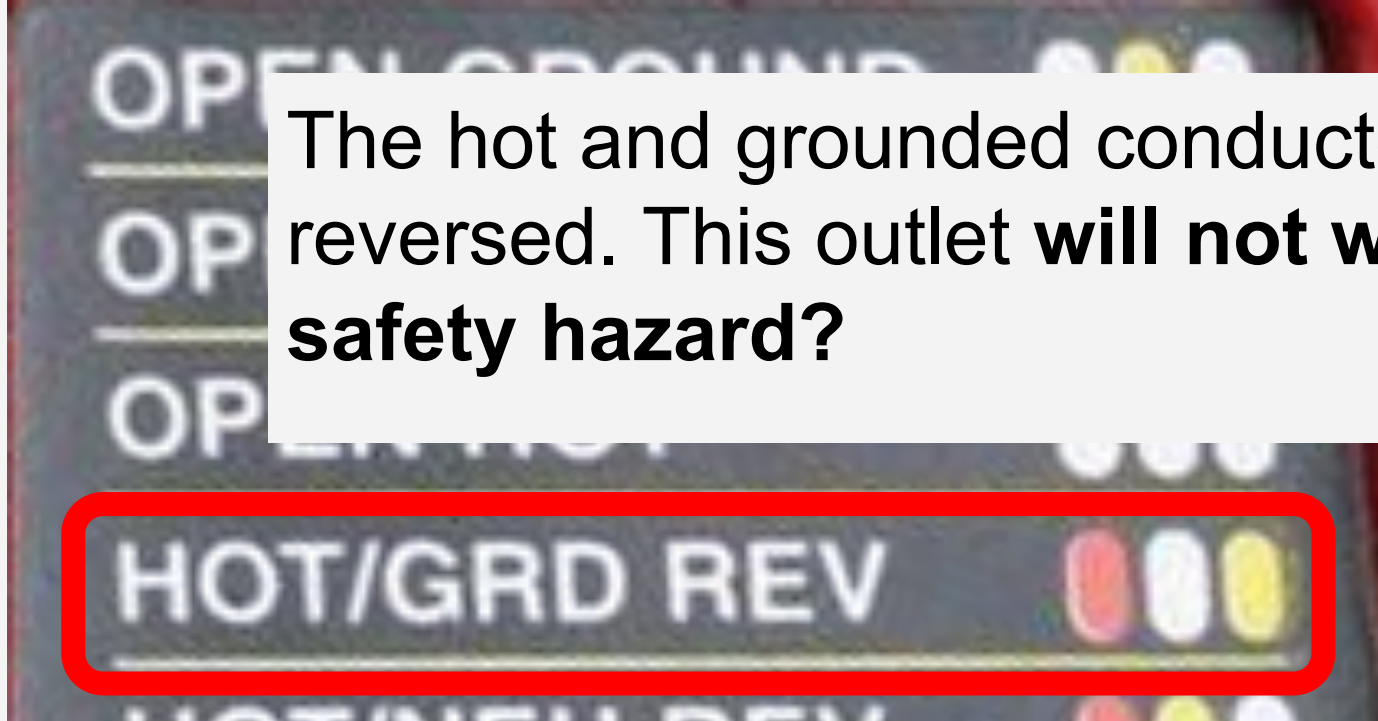
This might lead you to believe that the power is off, when in fact you can become the path to ground, leading to a shocking hazard.

Outlet Testing - Open Hot



The hot or ungrounded conductor is not connected. This outlet **will not work**.
Why is this **not a hazard**?
Because the outlet is dead.

Outlet Testing - Hot/Gnd Reverse

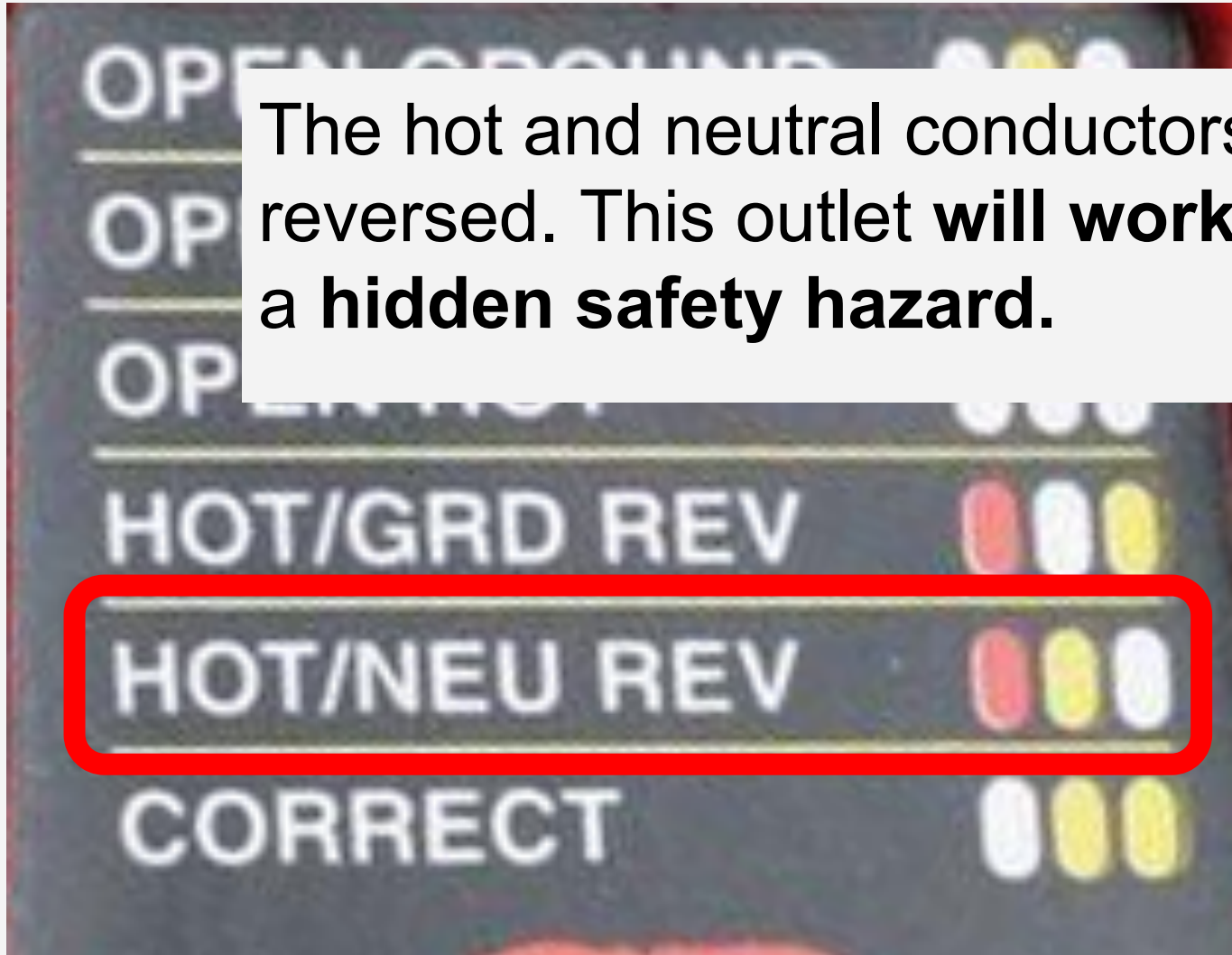
The background image shows a close-up of an outlet tester's display. It has several rows of text and corresponding colored indicator lights. The text 'HOT/GRD REV' is highlighted with a red rectangular box. Above it, the words 'OPEN GROUND' and 'OPEN HOT' are partially visible. To the right of the text, there are three colored lights: red, white, and yellow.

The hot and grounded conductors are reversed. This outlet **will not work**, is it a **safety hazard**?

Any connected appliance will not work, and the grounded parts will be live. This is a very hazardous condition.

Outlet Testing - Hot/Neu. Reverse

The hot and neutral conductors are reversed. This outlet **will work** and has a **hidden safety hazard**.





Outlet Testing - Hot/Neu. Reverse

Your toaster has a piece of toast lodged in so you remove it with the trusty butter knife. What happens next?

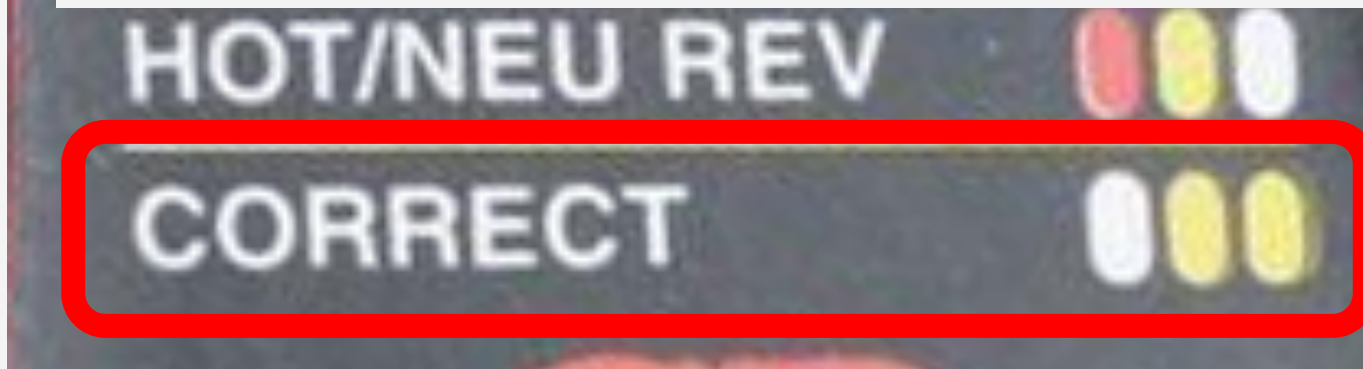
Since the *outlet is reversed*, the toaster works normally, but when it is popped up, (off) the conductor that is switched off is the neutral! **This is bad...**

Back to the knife & toaster story.....

If it touches ANY electrical part, ZAP!

Outlet Testing

Two amber lights indicate a properly wired outlet. Report any other conditions.



Thank You

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