



Electrical Installation Work

STOP!

1. Introduction

Changes to the Building Regulations, by the addition of Part P to the schedule 1 requirements, will introduce regulations affecting domestic electrical installations and come into force on 01 January 2005. This means that a fixed electrical installation in a dwelling will become a 'controlled service or fitting' and thus subject to the statutory provisions of the building regulations.

The new regulations result from the Government's determination to address the fact that in the UK some 10 deaths and over 750 serious injuries are caused annually by faulty fixed electrical installations in the home. Furthermore, Government figures highlight that every year some 12,200 domestic fires are believed to be caused by faulty electrics.

2. Requirements

The new regulations will require:

- Reasonable provision to be made in the design, installation, inspection and testing of electrical installations to protect persons against fire and injury.
- Where an electrical installation is provided, extended or altered, sufficient information to be provided so that persons wishing to operate, maintain or alter the installation in the future can do so reasonably safely.

3. Scope

Part P applies in England & Wales to fixed electrical installations after the electricity supply meter in all dwellings and:-

- Dwellings and business premises that have a common supply;
- Common access areas in blocks of flats;
- Shared amenities of blocks of flats such as laundries and gymnasiums;
- Outbuildings; including sheds, garages and greenhouses, and in garden areas; e.g. to ponds and lighting, supplied from a consumer unit located in any of the above.

A way of meeting the requirements is to follow the technical rules in BS 7671: 2001 and the guidance given in installation manuals that are consistent with this standard, e.g. the IEE On-Site Guide and NICEIC Guidance Notes No's 1 to 7.

Notification of Work - With certain exceptions outlined below, once Part P comes into effect on 01 January 2005 notification of proposals to carry out electrical installation work must be given to a building control body **before** work begins.

This prior notification is **not** necessary if:-

- The proposed work is to be undertaken by a competent and qualified electrician registered (either as an individual or a member of a company) under a government approved Competent Person Scheme approved by the Secretary of State; or,
- The proposed work is Minor Work.

Minor Work

The following 'minor work' **does not** need to be notified to Building Control:-

a. Work that is not in a kitchen, or special location, comprising:-

- Adding lighting points to an existing circuit;
- Adding socket-outlets and fused spurs to an existing circuit;
- Installation/upgrading of main and supplementary equipotential bonding;

b. Work in all locations comprising:-

- Replacing accessories such as socket-outlets, control switches and ceiling roses;
- Replacement of the cable for a single circuit only;
- Re-fixing or replacing the enclosures of existing components;
- Providing mechanical protection to existing fixed installations.

NB see Schedule 2B to the regulations (as amended by SI 2004 No. 1808) for definitive full details of work where **no** Building Notice or deposit of Full Plans is required.

4. Competent Person Schemes (CPS)

The following organisations run Competent Person Schemes approved by the Secretary of State: (see also Schedule 2A to the regulations, as amended by SI 2004 No.1808, for further details of approved schemes)

BRE Certification Limited

This scheme, operated with the support of the Electrical Contractors Association and the Institution of Electrical Engineers, is primarily designed for those whose main business is electrical contracting and those who wish to be able to self-certify all types of electrical work in dwellings. The scheme will begin formal operation on 1 January 2005. For more information on this scheme see www.partp.co.uk

British Standards Institution

This scheme, which will be known as the Kitemark Scheme for electrical installation work, is primarily designed for those whose main business is electrical contracting and those who wish to be able to self-certify all types of electrical work in dwellings. The scheme will begin formal operation on 1 January 2005. For more information on this scheme see www.kitemarktoday.com

ELECSA Limited

This scheme, operated with the support of the British Board of Agreement, is primarily designed for those whose main business is electrical contracting and those who wish to be able to self-certify all types of electrical work in dwellings. The scheme will begin formal operation on 1 January 2005. For more information on this scheme see www.electsa.org.uk

NICEIC Certification Services Limited

This scheme, which will be known as the Domestic Installer Scheme, is designed for those who wish to be able to self-certify all types of electrical work in dwellings either as an electrical contractor or as part of an ancillary trade activity. The scheme will begin formal operation on 1 January 2005. For more information on this scheme see www.niceic.org.uk

Zurich Certification Limited

This scheme is primarily designed for those whose main business is electrical contracting and those who wish to be able to self-certify all types of electrical work in dwellings. The scheme will begin formal operation on 1 January 2005. For more information on this scheme see www.zurich.co.uk

NB The list of approved schemes will change from time to time therefore you are advised to visit the ODPM web site for a definitive list.

5. Local Authority Building Control

If you do not use a contractor registered under one of the CPS detailed above then you must notify the Council's building control service **before** commencing any work. This can be done in one of two ways:

- a. **Building Notice** - This method could be used where electrical work only is being carried out (to a newly erected or an existing dwelling) or, where electrical work in conjunction with other material alterations and/or extensions to an existing dwelling is intended. A building notice has to be given and accepted 48 hours before the commencement of any work.
- b. **Full Plans Application** – This method is only suitable where electrical work is to be carried out in conjunction with the construction of a new dwelling; or, carried out in conjunction with the material alteration and/or extensions of an existing dwelling. The charges for both the building notice and full plans options are the same and can be obtained from building control by any of the contact methods given below. Charges are required, by legislation, to be levied on a full cost recovery basis and will cover administration, inspection and third party testing of all the fixed electrical installation work.

6. Transitional Provisions

If you have already deposited an application, with building control, for building work which include a fixed electrical installation then, unless your plans have been approved unconditionally, the new Part P will apply to the work. Full details of this transitional provision imposed by the ODPM can be obtained from building control by any of the contact methods given below. See also the ODPM web site:

http://www.odpm.gov.uk/stellent/groups/odpm_buildreg/documents/page/odpm_breg_030323.pdf

7. The Consequences of Failure to Comply:

Failure to comply with the statutory requirements of the Building Regulations and the new Part P will result in:

- a. A Completion Certificate for the works (including the main development if the electrical installation forms part of the erection of a new dwelling or the extension/alteration of an existing one) not being issued. This will result in any future sale of the property being compromised.
- b. Enforcement action by the local authority, in the Magistrates' Court, for an order requiring the work to comply with the Building Regulations which will inevitably incur greater costs and the opening up of completed work for inspection.

As the owner of a dwelling you need to ensure all notifiable electrical work is carried out by a qualified electrician registered under one of the government's Competent Person Schemes.

As the designer you need to make sure you specify that the electrical work will be designed, installed, inspected and tested in accordance with the British Standard BS 7671 and will either fall under a Competent Person Scheme or the Local Authority Building Control Approval route.

As the Builder/developer you need to ensure that you employ only qualified electricians registered under one of the Competent Person Schemes or qualified/experienced electricians able to sign off their work as complying fully with the requirements of BS 7671 in respect of design, installation, inspection and testing where the work has also been controlled and inspected by a local authority building control body.

Notwithstanding the above, the most serious consequence of failure to comply with these new electrical safety rules is **Death or Serious Injury**. Don't become a victim or a statistic, follow the rules.

Further Guidance

Further guidance on the requirements of Part P and the methods of achieving compliance can be obtained from:

[Building Control Website](#)

e-mail: buildingcontrol@cardiff.gov.uk

Telephone: (029) 223 30381 / 30382 / 30383

Approved Document P available at:

http://www.odpm.gov.uk/stellent/groups/odpm_buildreg/documents/page/odpm_breg_029960.pdf

Electrical Installers' guide to the Building Regulations – a joint publication between NICEIC and ECA.

The IEE On-site Guide BS 7671:2001 (2004).

British Standard BS 7671 Requirements for Electrical Installations.

Or visit any of the following web sites:

www.odpm.gov.uk

www.partp.co.uk

www.elecsa.org.uk

www.niceic.org.uk

www.kitemarktoday.com

www.zurich.co.uk