

<b>Building Control Guidance Note</b> (DRAFT SUBJECT TO CHANGE)	Subject	<b>APPROVED DOCUMENT PART P – ELECTRICAL SAFETY IN DWELLINGS.</b>						<b>20</b>
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## **PART P – ELECTRICAL SAFETY IN DWELLINGS.**

Electrical installations are responsible for a number of deaths by electrocution and can contribute to fires where installations fail or are incorrectly installed. To reduce these injuries and deaths from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2005 the design, installation, inspection and testing of electrical installations will be controlled under the Building Regulations Part P – Electrical Safety in Dwellings.

Part P introduces two new requirements for ‘**ELECTRICAL SAFETY IN DWELLINGS**’

- 1. Reasonable provisions shall be made in the design, installation, inspection and testing of electrical installations in order to protect persons from fire or injury.**
- 2. Sufficient information shall be provided so that persons wishing to operate, maintain or alter an electrical installation can do so with reasonable safety – i.e. appropriate warning notices and details of the installation in the form of diagrams / schedules must be provided.**

*NOTE: Where your contract for the electrical work was entered into before 1st January 2005 and the work is to be completed before 1st April 2005, the works do not have to comply with the new regulations (provided your contractor is in the process of signing up with a Part P Competent Person Scheme as described below).*

*Where the works relate to the installation of a heat-producing gas appliance, of an oil-fired combustion appliance or oil storage tanks and pipes, or of a solid fuel burning combustion appliance) provided the contract for the work was entered into before 1st April 2005 and the work is to be completed before 1st July 2005, the works do not have to comply with the new regulations (provided your contractor is in the process of signing up with a Part P Competent Person Scheme as described below).*

## **QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON BUILDING REGULATIONS REGARDING ELECTRICAL REQUIREMENTS.**

### **What type of premise does the new Part P regulations apply to?**

**Answer:**

- (1) Dwelling houses and flats.
- (2) Dwellings and business premises that have a common supply e.g. shop with flat over.
- (3) Common access areas in blocks of flats e.g. corridors/stairs, excluding power supplies to lifts;
- (4) Shared amenities to blocks of flats e.g. laundries/store areas etc.

**Part P also applies to electrical installations in gardens, in or on land associated with the above building types, where the electricity is from a source located within or shared with a dwelling e.g. fixed lighting and pond pumps in gardens.**

**Electrical installations to outbuildings such as sheds, detached buildings and garages, and greenhouses are also covered, where the electricity is from a source located within or shared with a dwelling.**

**(This includes these types of buildings that are exempt from other Building Regulations requirements – see relevant associated guidance notes and notes that follow).**

### **What are electrical installations defined as?**

**Answer:** Any fixed Electrical cables or fixed electrical equipment located on the consumers’ side of the electricity supply meter. It also includes low voltage and extra-low voltage installations.

**“Extra-low voltage”** means voltage not exceeding -

- (a) in relation to alternating current, 50 volts between conductors and earth; **OR**
- (b) in relation to direct current, 120 volts between conductors;

**“Low voltage”** means voltage not exceeding -

- (a) in relation to alternating current, 1000 volts between conductors or 600 volts between conductors and earth; **OR**
- (b) in relation to direct current, 1500 volts between conductors or 900 volts between conductors & earth;

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### **What works require a Building Regulation application?**

**Answer:** The scope of Part P is wide ranging and the majority of electrical works undertaken to a dwelling are covered – this includes both new and alteration works e.g. re-wires. Small jobs such as the provision of a socket-outlet or a light switch on an existing circuit will not need to be notified to Building Control (although there will be some exceptions for high risk areas such as kitchens and bathrooms).

All work that involves adding new circuits, or electrical work to a kitchen or bathroom or in ‘special locations’ (see below), will either require the submission of a Building Regulation application or the work has to be carried out by a defined competent person who is registered with a ‘Part P Self Certification Scheme’.

**See Appendix A** – for a list of works that might require a Building Regulation application. (It is not a full list of all possible works, but provides an indication of such works) – if in doubt ring Building Control.

### **DESCRIPTIONS OF MINOR WORK WHERE NO APPLICATION IS REQUIRED.**

#### **Work consisting of:-**

- (1) Replacing accessories e.g. Socket outlets, control switches or ceiling roses.
- (2) Replacing cables for a single circuit **ONLY**, where damaged e.g. by fire, rodent or impact. **Replacement cables must have same current carrying capacity and follow the same route as existing and must not serve more than one sub-circuit through a distribution board.**
- (3) Refixing or replacing the enclosures of existing installation components, **where the circuit protective measures are unaffected;**
- (4) Providing mechanical protection in existing fixed installations, **where the circuit protective measures and current carrying capacity of conductors are unaffected by the increased thermal insulation.**

#### **AND**

**Work that is not in a kitchen, bathroom or special location or does not involve a special installation (Special locations and installations are listed below) and consists of:**

- (1) Adding lighting points (light fittings and switches) to an existing circuit. **Only if existing circuit protective device is suitable and provides protection of the modified circuit, and other relevant safety provisions are satisfied.**
- (2) Adding sockets outlets and fused spurs to an existing ring or radial circuit. **Only if existing circuit protective device is suitable and provides protection of the modified circuit, and other relevant safety provisions are satisfied.**
- (3) Installing or upgrading main or supplementary equipotential bonding. **Work must comply with other applicable legislation, e.g. Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations.**

### **Special locations and installations means:**

**"SPECIAL INSTALLATIONS"** means an electric floor or ceiling heating system, garden lighting or electric power installation, an electricity generator, Solar photo voltaic (PV) power supply systems, or an extra-low voltage lighting system, which is not a pre-assembled lighting set bearing the CE marking referred to in regulation 9 of the Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 1994; **and**

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“**SPECIAL LOCATIONS**” means a location within the limits of the relevant zones specified for Baths / Showers / Swimming / Paddling Pools or Hot Air Saunas in the Wiring Regulations, sixteenth edition, published by the Institution of Electrical Engineers and the British Standards Institution as BS 7671: 2001.

**NOTE:** See I.E.E. Guidance Note 7, which gives more guidance on achieving safe installations, where risks to people are greater.

**I am intending to build an exempt conservatory, shed, greenhouse, detached garage / building or carport – do the electrical regulations apply? and what is the implication on the Building Regulation exemption?**

**Answer:** If you intend to provide electrical installations to any exempt building, which in either case receives its electricity from a source shared with or located inside a dwelling, then a Building Regulations application is required for the electrical work. Refer to appropriate guidance leaflets on the rules for exempting the above works.

**I am intending to do a rewire does this require Building Regulation Approval?**

**Answer:** Yes (see using competent person scheme below as an alternative).

**I am intending to install a garden pond with a electric pump does this require Building Regulation Approval?**

**Answer:** Yes if you are providing a fixed installation (see using competent person scheme below as an alternative).

**I am intending to provide external lighting / garden lighting does this require Building Regulation Approval?**

**Answer:** Yes if you are providing a fixed installation (see using competent person scheme below as an alternative).

**I am intending to install new lighting or electrical fan / additional lighting to my bathroom/ ensuite / shower room does this require Building Regulation Approval?**

**Answer:** As a bathroom / ensuite / shower room is a special location – Yes you do (see using competent person scheme below as an alternative).

**I am intending to provide additional lighting and sockets in my kitchen does this require Building Regulation Approval?**

**Answer:** As a kitchen is a special location – Yes you do (see using competent person scheme below as an alternative).

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### **How do I make a Building Regulation application?**

**Answer:** If the **notifiable** electrical works are associated with other Building Regulation works, e.g. extension to your house – the electrical works need to be included in the Building Regulation submission for the extension. Any plans or building notices submitted must be endorsed with appropriate notes to cover the electrical installation (see below).

Otherwise **before works commence**, you can apply using either a ‘**Full Plans Submission**’ – where plans are provided showing full details of the wiring installation, including wiring diagrams.

#### **OR**

You can submit a ‘**Building Notice**’ application, on receipt Building Control will review the work complexity, e.g. does it include kitchens / bathrooms and (if required) request appropriate additional information.

**Both application forms include statements regarding the electric works.**

#### **IMPORTANT NOTES FOR AGENTS:**

***PLEASE ADVISE YOUR CLIENTS OF THE IMPLICATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THESE NEW ELECTRICAL REGULATIONS. This is to reduce the possibility of problems developing during the projects construction phase and the council having to take enforcement action against the owner.***

#### **EXCEPTIONS:**

An exception to the above application routes is where you employ a member of a ‘**Competent Person Self-Certification Scheme**’ (C.P.S.) (see further details below) – (this allows you provided certain procedures are followed to avoid having to submit an application to the Local Authority for the **electrical element of the works only**). Employing a ‘Competent Person’ under a self-certification scheme means you do not have to submit a Building Regulation application for electrical work.

### **What do I need to show on my plans on full submissions?**

**Answer:** All plans should be endorsed with the following double statement:

#### **ELECTRICAL WORKS BY A NON- COMPETENT PERSON SCHEME MEMBER:**

***‘All wiring and electrical work will be designed, installed, inspected and tested in accordance with the requirements of BS 7671, the IEE 16<sup>th</sup> edition wiring guidance and Building Regulation Part P (Electrical Safety). On completion of works a copy of installers Electrical Installation Test Certificate compliant with BS 7671 is to be provided to the client and Local Authority.***

**AND**

***Prior to covering of all wiring / cables, the installation is to be inspected by a independent ‘Competent Person’ and on completion of the work, in addition to the above certificate, an additional ‘Competent Persons’ Electrical Installation Test Certificate compliant with BS 7671 is to be provided to the client and Local Authority. (Competent person- means a member of O.D.P.M Electrical Competent Persons Scheme).***

#### **ELECTRICAL WORKS BY A COMPETENT PERSON SCHEME MEMBER:**

***All wiring and electrical works to be designed, installed, inspected and tested in accordance with the requirements of BS 7671, the IEE 16<sup>th</sup> edition wiring guidance and Building Regulation Part P (Electrical Safety) by a member of the O.D.P.M Competent Person Scheme.***

**AND**

***The competent person is to send to the Local Authority a ‘Self-certification Certificate’ within 30 days of the electrical works completion. Client must receive both a copy of ‘Self-certification Certificate’ and a BS 7671 Electrical Installation Test Certificate.***

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### **What do I need to show on my plans on Building Notice submissions?**

**Answer:** Building Notice application forms include a statement regarding the electrical installation – by signing the application form you are agreeing to comply with the Local Authorities requirements as regards to design, installation, testing and certification in accordance with BS7671. (***See statement to be made for full plan applications above***).

On receipt of a Building Notice - Building Control will take a judgement on the work complexity, for instance does it include kitchens and bathrooms? Where appropriate we can request additional information to support the application e.g. a report on the existing installation suitability to carry the new loading / wiring diagrams / earthing details etc.

The client and/or agent is also responsible for ensuring that the '**Competent Person's**' inspections during installation and on completion are carried out – sufficient inspections are to be made to allow the for that said '**Competent Person**' to sign an **Electrical Installation Test Certificate compliant with BS 7671**.

### **Who are Competent Persons?**

**Answer:** Contractors or persons registered with one of the Part P self-certification schemes authorised by the Secretary of State – **Competent Persons Scheme (C.P.S)**.

It will be this person who is responsible for ensuring that the electrical works are designed, installed and tested in compliance with BS 7671.

***Works carried out by competent electricians, who could be considered competent for the purposes of signing a BS 7671 electrical installation certificate - but who are not a member of a 'Competent Persons Scheme' cannot "self-certify" their own work.***

### **IMPORTANT NOTES ABOUT THE COMPETENT PERSONS SCHEME:**

***ALWAYS OBTAIN EVIDENCE THAT YOUR CONTRACTOR IS ACTUALLY A COMPETENT PERSON SCHEME MEMBER.***

***YOUR APPROVED COMPETENT PERSON WHO UNDERTAKES THE WORKS, MUST PROVIDE A SELF-CERTIFICATION CERTIFICATE TO THE LOCAL AUTHORITY AND YOURSELVES, NOT MORE THAN 30 DAYS AFTER THE ELECTRICAL WORKS ARE COMPLETED.***

***PLEASE ENSURE THAT THE SELF-CERTIFICATION CERTIFICATE IS SENT TO THE LOCAL AUTHORITY –OTHERWISE IT CAN LEAVE YOU OPEN TO ENFORCEMENT ACTION AND IT WILL ALSO CAUSE YOU PROBLEMS IF YOU EVER WANT TO SELL YOUR PROPERTY.***

### **Current competent scheme members are:**

- **British Standard Institution** – [www.kitemarktoday.com](http://www.kitemarktoday.com).
- **The Electrical Installation Self-Assessment Scheme** - A person registered by BRE Certification Limited, British Standards Institution, (ELECSA Ltd) [www.elecsa.org.uk](http://www.elecsa.org.uk) - Phone – 020 7864 9913 / Fax – 020 7864 9910
- **National Inspection Council for Electrical Installation Contracting** (N.I.C.E.I.C Certification Services Ltd) -NICEIC Approved Contractors Scheme / Domestic Installers Scheme - [www.niceic.org.uk](http://www.niceic.org.uk) - Phone - NICEIC helpline 020 7564 2320 or Domestic Installers Scheme 0870 013 0391
- **The National Association of Professional Inspectors and Testers** – (N.A.P.I.T Certification Limited) <http://www.napit.org.uk> - Phone – 0870 441392 / Fax – 08704441427
- **The Electrical Contractors Association** (E.C.A) - [www.eca.co.uk](http://www.eca.co.uk) or [www.partp.co.uk](http://www.partp.co.uk)– Phone – 020 7313 4800

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### **DEFINED COMPETENCE SCHEMES**

This is an extension of the main ‘**Competent Persons Scheme**’ to allow specified trade association members to carry out limited electrical works associated with their job e.g. Corgi registered plumbers installing electrical items as part of plumbing installation works. You are advised to contact the appropriate scheme providers to establish how to join or to establish their current members:

- **CITB - Construction Skills, Building Engineering Services.**
- **CORGI Services Ltd.** - <http://www.corgi-gas-safety.com/>
- **N.I.C.E.I.C Certification Services Ltd** - [www.niceic.org.uk](http://www.niceic.org.uk) - Phone - NICEIC helpline 020 7564 2320 or Domestic Installers Scheme 0870 013 0391
- **Oil Firing Technical Association for the Petroleum Industry Ltd (OFTEC).** [www.oftec.org.uk/](http://www.oftec.org.uk/)

*Up to date scheme members are indicated on the O.D.P.M web site - [www.odpm.gov.uk](http://www.odpm.gov.uk)*

### **Other useful web pages / associations.**

Institution of Electrical Engineers (I.E.E) – [www.iee.org/Publish/WireRegs/IEE\\_Buildings\\_Regs.pdf](http://www.iee.org/Publish/WireRegs/IEE_Buildings_Regs.pdf)

The Wiring Regulations BS 7671: 2001 can be obtained from the Institution of Electrical Engineers, P.O. Box 96, Stevenage, Herts SG1 2SD [email sales@iee.org.uk](mailto:sales@iee.org.uk) or the British Standards Institution, Customer Services, 389 Chiswick High Road, London W4 4AL ([email cservices@bsi-global.com](mailto:cservices@bsi-global.com))

### **What must my ‘C.P.S’ Electrical Installation Certificate include?**

#### **Answer:**

1. Declaration that the works comply with the Building Regulations.
2. Address of the work.
3. A description of the work undertaken.
4. Date the work was completed.
5. The registered name of the contractor.
6. Contractor’s registration number.
7. The competent person scheme operator.

### **What if the works undertaken by a Competent Persons Scheme member deviates from the Building Regulations?**

**Answer:** Because the Building Regulations will only allow the current edition of BS7671 to be the standard for electrical works undertaken - any deviations from BS7671:2001 will mean that even a competent person scheme member will not be able to self certify the installation, as only Local Authority Building Control have the power to agree deviations from the Building Regulations. Similarly if there are proposed to be any deviations from the other related regulations a Building Regulation application must be made to the local authority.

### **What happens my electrical contractor is not a member of a Competent Person Scheme?**

**Answer:** Works carried out by competent electricians, who could be considered competent for the purposes of signing a BS 7671 electrical installation certificate - but who are not a member of a Competent Persons Scheme **cannot “self-certify” their own work.**

You will be required to submit a Building Regulation application for your electrical works and this will mean that you must also arrange for a ‘**Competent Person Scheme**’ member to undertake sufficient installation (Cont’d)

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inspections (prior to covering of wires etc) and completion testing inspections in accordance with BS7671. To allow the said '**Competent Person**' to sign an **Electrical Installation Test Certificate compliant with BS 7671 and any defective work found will have to be corrected.**

**A copy of your installers BS 7671 completion certificate (which is required in all cases) and a 'Competent Persons' Electrical Installation Test Certificate compliant with BS 7671 is to be provided to the client and Local Authority.**

**If your contractor fails to have the second tests / installation checks carried out - enforcement action may be taken against the householder.**

**Also no completion certificates will be issued for the works and this will cause you problems when you try to sell your property.**

### **Can I do my own electrics?**

**Answer:** The rules do not prevent this, **but you are strongly advised** before you decide this route you take professional advice from a qualified electrician. Preferably a member of the **Competent Persons Scheme**.

Persons undertaking DIY must provide proof that work will be carried out following 'authorative guidance' i.e. BS7671 / I.E.E guidance and have the works inspected and tested in accordance with BS7671 by a Competent Person Scheme member.

You will have to apply for a Building Regulation application and arrange for inspection and testing of the works (as above).

Any defective work found will have to be corrected as required.

***It may be cheaper and quicker to employ a competent person as described above to do the works.***

### **What inspections will the council make?**

Where other building work is being carried out our normal inspection process will apply.

For **electrical work only applications**, you or your contractor must notify us on commencement and completion of work.

***Our inspection is not an electrical check, but a check to ensure other areas of the building regulations that electrical installations can have an implication on are complied with i.e. fire stopping / joist notching / sound insulation provisions / ventilation provisions/ energy conservation / Access to and use of building particularly for the disabled – (wall mounted switches/socket outlets to be located so that they are easily reachable. Preferred zones between 400mm and 1200mm above floor level) / Accessible consumer units to be fitted in a lockable cupboard or have a child-proof cover, etc .***

An exception to this is where the electrical works are carried out under a '**Competent Persons Scheme**', as it is this person who is responsible for ensuring that the works comply with all the Building Regulation requirements and no inspection would be necessary for the electrical works.

**Our normal completion inspection will be undertaken when we are notified by the builder / owner (see notes below on what test certificates need to be provided).**

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**What will the Council inspect and how much will it cost?**

**Answer:** Charges will be based on estimated cost of works -see our Charges leaflet.

**What Test Certificates do I need to provide on works completion?**

**Answer:** On completion of the works the following need to be provided:

**LOCAL AUTHORITY BUILDING REGULATION APPLICATIONS.**

***In all cases*** a copy of your installers '***Electrical Installation Certificate compliant with BS 7671***' ***MUST BE*** provided to the Local Authority and the building owner.

You must also arrange for a '***Competent Person Scheme***' member to undertake sufficient installation inspections (prior to covering of wires etc) and completion testing inspections in accordance with BS7671. Sufficient inspections are to be made to allow the '***Competent Person***' to sign a ***Electrical Installation Test Certificate compliant with BS 7671 and any defective work found will have to be corrected as required. In all cases this certificate must also be provided to the Local Authority with a copy provided to the building owner.***

**If your contractor fails to have the second tests / installation checks carried out and provide both BS7671 test certificates - enforcement action may be taken against the householder.**

**Also no completion certificates will be issued for the works and this will cause you problems when you try to sell your property.**

**PLEASE NOTE:**

*You must ensure that your installer completes all schedules to the electrical installation certificate, including details of each circuit / wiring schematic's / circuit diagrams specifications, etc.*

*Periodic Inspection Report (PIR) is not acceptable as a test certificate, as it does not cover the inspection and testing of existing electrical installations. However any work carried out to correct deficiencies in a PIR can fall within the scope of Part P.*

**C.P.S SCHEMES.**

If using a competent person – on completion of the electrical works the person ordering the work should receive a signed '***Building Regulations Self-Certification Certificate***' issued under the O.D.P.M Competent Person Scheme (Copy to be provided to the Local Authority within 30 days of the works completion by installer). ***Please ensure you installer does this to avoid legal action being taken against you.***

**Also, the person ordering the work should also receive a duly completed Electrical Installation Certificate compliant with BS 7671. It is important that this certificate is made out and signed by the competent person / persons who carried out the design, construction, inspection and testing works.**

**What happens if I do not make a Building Regulation application or use a 'Competent Person'?**

**Answer:** Failure to comply with the regulations is an offence, and the Local Authority can pursue a prosecution for a fine against the person who has carried out the work or the householder. We can also require the removal or alteration of work that does not comply with Regulations.

It is highly unlikely you will be able to sell your property as the search processes are to be changed to ask questions regarding electrical work undertaken to your property.



**EXAMPLES OF ELECTRICAL WORKS REQUIRING BUILDING REGULATION APPLICATION OR INSTALLATION BY COMPETENT PERSON (NOTIFIABLE WORKS.)**

<b>TYPICAL DOMESTIC LOCATIONS.</b>	<b>EXTENSIONS AND MODIFICATIONS TO CIRCUITS.</b>	<b>NEW CIRCUITS.</b>
Bathrooms.	✓	✓
Bedrooms.	X	✓
Bedrooms containing a shower or basin.	✓	✓
Burglar Alarms.	X	✓
Ceiling (Overhead) / floor heating.	✓	✓
Communal areas of flats.	✓	✓
Computer cabling.	X	X
Conservatories.	X	✓
Dining Rooms.	X	✓
Ensuite Bath / Shower rooms	✓	✓
Extra low voltage (E.L.V) non pre-assembled C.E. marked lights.	✓	✓
Gardens – power and lighting.	✓	✓
Garden pond pump, including supply.	✓	✓
Garden Sheds.	✓	✓
Greenhouses.	✓	✓
Halls and landings.	X	✓
Integral Garages.	X	✓
<b>Kitchens.</b> <i>(Note: where kitchens are open-plan to adjacent living accommodation all linked rooms are treated as a kitchen!)</i>	✓	✓
Kitchen Diners / open plan living rooms.	✓	✓
Lofts.	X	✓
Lounge (see kitchen note).	X	✓
Remote / detached buildings.	✓	✓
Remote / detached garages.	✓	✓
Complete new / rewire of installation.	N/a	✓
Installing a hot air sauna.	✓	✓
Shower rooms.	✓	✓
Installing small-scale generator.	✓	✓
Installing a solar photovoltaic power system.	✓	✓
Stairways.	X	✓
Studies.	X	✓
Swimming pools.	✓	✓
Telephone cabling.	X	X
TV Rooms.	X	✓
Workshops – detached from dwelling.	✓	✓

(✓ - Building Regulation Approval required) / (X – Building Regulation Approval not required)