

# Guidance for Householders

Effective from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2005



## Approved Document P: Electrical Safety

### Background

Government statistics indicate that each year on average 10 people die and about 750 are seriously injured in accidents involving unsafe electrical installations in the home. Because of this the government has decided that electrical safety requirements should be included in the Building Regulations to help reduce these statistics. This means that, from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2005 all electrical work in dwellings will need to comply with the new requirements (defined in regulations and the new Part P Building Regulation Approved Document) and be carried out by persons who are competent to do the work.

Small jobs such as replacing a socket-outlet or a light switch on an existing circuit will not need to be notified to a building control body. There are however some exceptions for high-risk areas such as kitchens and bathrooms and the technical requirement of Part P will still apply (See attached table 1). All work that involves adding a new circuit to a dwelling will need to be either notified to building control, or carried out by a Competent Person who is registered with a Part P Competent Person Self-Certification Scheme.

### General Comments

If the electrical work is part of a building project covered by the Building Regulations, the applicant should advise the Building Control service of the intention to use a registered '**Competent Person**' when the Building Regulation application is made. The 'Electrical Installers Details' response post card enclosed to help you do this.

There are three ways of ensuring compliance with the new requirements and these are summarised below.



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<b>Broadland Office</b>	Tel 01603 430496
<b>Norwich Office</b>	Tel 01603 212258
<b>South Norfolk Office</b>	Tel 01508 533825
E: <a href="mailto:enquiries@cncbuildingcontrol.gov.uk">enquiries@cncbuildingcontrol.gov.uk</a>	
W: <a href="http://www.cnc.buildingcontrol.gov.uk">www.cnc.buildingcontrol.gov.uk</a>	

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## **Option 1 (The preferred option) (Installers working under a Competent Person's Scheme)**

By using an installer who is registered as a 'Competent Person' with a Government approved 'Competent Person's Scheme' to carry out the electrical work.

The '**Competent Person**' can self-certify the electrical work. The electrician must supply certificates to the owner before leaving site when the electrical works have been completed. The applicant will need to provide the Building Control service with copies of all relevant certificates. Without them, it will not be possible for the Council to issue the Completion Certificate for the overall project until they receive evidence of self-certification of the electrical work by a registered '**Competent Person**' through the formal '**Competent Person's Scheme**' process. This could be at least 30 days after the electrical work has been completed.

This is the most straightforward option. The householder will know from the outset that the work will be installed to the correct standards. The householder will also know that the amount to be paid for the electrical work will include the cost of testing, relevant certificates, etc. This, preferred, approach should not unduly delay the issue of the Building Regulation Completion Certificate when any associated building work is complete.

***If using this option please fill in Option 1 on the response post card enclosed.***

## **Option 2 Installers competent to sign a BS 7671 electrical installation certificate.**

This option is when a person, who is **NOT** registered under a 'Competent Person's Scheme' but is competent to sign BS 7671 electrical installation certificates, carries out the electrical work.

The electrical engineer must be formally qualified. On completion of the electrical work, Building Control will accept certificates and test records provided by that person as evidence that the work complies with the electrical requirements of the Building Regulations 'Part P'. An example of such a person might be an electrical engineer holding a formal designation equivalent to that of a NICEIC 'Qualified Supervisor'. The electrician must supply the certificate to the owner before leaving site.

With this option, the Building Control Surveyor may make a visual inspection of the electrical work primarily to ensure Building Regulation requirements other than 'Part P' have been complied with. It should be noted that any inspection **WILL NOT** be a specialist electrical safety inspection.

Regardless of whether the project is a stand-alone electrical project or part of a larger job, the local authority Building Control service will not issue a Building Regulation Completion Certificate until it receives full test and certification documentation completed and signed by the qualified electrician. This test and certification documentation must be equivalent to that detailed in Building Regulation Approved Document P or BS 7671:2001.

The Building Regulation Charges made for a stand alone electrical project reflect the involvement of the local authority Building Control service.

***If using this option please fill in Option 2 on the response post card enclosed.***

### **Option 3**

#### **In all other cases**

Where controlled electrical work is **NOT** covered in options 1 and 2 above, or the work is being carried out on a 'DIY' basis, the householder will need to employ a suitably qualified electrical engineer to formally certify that the work is safe. An example of such a person might be an electrical engineer holding a formal designation equivalent to that of a NICEIC 'Qualified Supervisor'.

The formally qualified electrical engineer will need to provide test and certification documentation, including confirmation that the cabling was seen before it was covered up and found to be satisfactory, equivalent to that detailed in Building Regulation Approved Document P or BS 7671:2001. Copies of this test and certification documentation will need to be provided to both the householder and the Building Control service. Testing, certification, and any required rectification work, will be at the cost of the householder. The adoption of this option may seriously delay the issue of a Building Regulation Completion Certificate. **There are obvious disadvantages with this option and you are not recommended to use it.**

In this case, it is expected that the applicant/installer will invite inspection by the Building Control Surveyor before any cabling is covered up. The Building Control Surveyor's visual inspection of the electrical work will be primarily to ensure Building Regulation requirements other than 'Part P' have been complied with. It should be noted that any inspection **WILL NOT** be a specialist electrical safety inspection.

Where the work is of a minor nature, the Building Control Surveyor **MAY** decide to accept the installation without requiring an electrical installation certificate. This option will be solely at the discretion of the Building Control Surveyor.

***If using this option please fill in Option 3 on the response post card***

### **Do you need to notify us?**

Notification of proposals to carry out electrical installation must be given to a building control body before work begins, unless the work is undertaken by a person registered with an authorised 'Part P' Competent Person's scheme.

Whether or not work is notifiable is dependant on the nature of installation work proposed and its location within a dwelling.

Examples of Notifiable Work : Table 1

	Areas outside of bath/ shower rooms and kitchens	Within a bath/shower room or kitchen (special location)
Complete new/rewire of installation	Yes	Yes
Consumer unit change	Yes	Yes
Installing a new shower circuit	Yes	Yes
Installing an additional socket	No	Yes
Installing an additional light	No	Yes
Addition of fused connection unit to ring final circuit	No	Yes
Installing a new cooker circuit	Yes	Yes
Connecting a cooker to an existing connection unit	No	No
Installing or upgrading main or supplementary equipotential bonding	No	Yes
Replacing a damaged cable for a single circuit	No	No
Replacing a damaged socket outlet	No	No
Replacing a light fitting	No	No
Installation and fit of a storage heater, including final circuit	Yes	Yes
Fit and final connection of storage heater	No	No
Installing extra low voltage lighting (not CE marked sets)	Yes	Yes
Taking a new supply out to a garden shed	Yes	N/A
Installing a socket in a garden shed	Yes	N/A
Installing a light fitting in a greenhouse	Yes	N/A
Installing a pond pump, including supply	Yes	N/A
Installing a hot air sauna	Yes	Yes
Installing a solar photovoltaic power supply	Yes	Yes
Installing ceiling or floor heating	Yes	Yes
Installing a small scale generator	Yes	Yes
Installing an additional socket in a motor caravan	N/A	N/A

## Additional Guidance

Further information on the new Part P can be found on the following web sites.

Office of the Deputy Prime Minister  
 Local Authority Building Control  
 Electrical Contractors' Association  
 ELECSA Limited  
 National Association of Professional Inspectors & Testers  
 Institution of Electrical Engineers  
 National Inspection Council for Electrical Installation Contracting

[www.odpm.gov.uk/electricalsafety](http://www.odpm.gov.uk/electricalsafety)  
[www.labc-services.co.uk](http://www.labc-services.co.uk)  
[www.eca.co.uk](http://www.eca.co.uk)  
[www.elecsa.org.uk](http://www.elecsa.org.uk)  
[www.napit.org.uk](http://www.napit.org.uk)  
[www.iee.org.uk](http://www.iee.org.uk)  
[www.niceic.org.uk](http://www.niceic.org.uk)