Electrical Safety First

SAFETY GUIDANCE

LANDLORDS' GUIDE TO ELECTRICAL SAFETY

England & Wales

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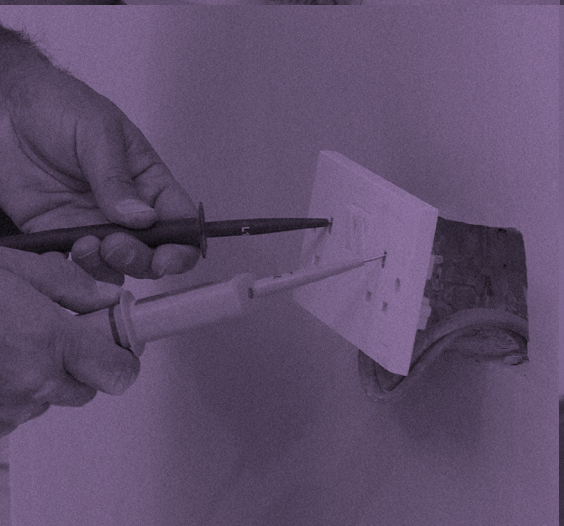
England & Wales



1.0 INTRODUCTION

WHY YOU NEED THIS GUIDE AND HOW IT CAN HELP YOU

Electrical Safety First has produced this guide to help landlords understand their responsibilities for electrical safety in their rental properties – and to provide practical advice on what is required to ensure the safety of tenants.

GREAT BRITAIN HAS A RELATIVELY GOOD RECORD OF ELECTRICAL SAFETY BUT THE MOST RECENT FIGURES AVAILABLE SHOW THAT IN A TYPICAL YEAR:

- Many deaths and injuries in homes are caused by faulty electrics and electrical equipment. Almost half of all domestic fires are caused by electricity.
- There were 16,628 accidental electrical dwelling fires in 2022-2023.[1]

Most accidents involving electricity in the home arise through faults in, or misuse of, domestic appliances or the electrical installation. Another major cause is objects being placed too close to a heat source, such as an electric heater or lamp.

The three major hazards from electricity in the home are electric shock, fire and burns.

These can occur through:

- The electrical installation and appliances deteriorating over time.
- Damage to switches, sockets and appliances.
- Misuse of the installation and appliances.
- Poor or lack of maintenance of the installation.
- Vandalism.

[1] Data obtained from the Home Office's 'Fire statistics incident level datasets' (2022-2023)

2.0 THE LAW
AND WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Landlords have a legal duty to ensure that their rental property, and any electrical equipment provided, is safe before a tenancy begins and throughout its duration.

FIVE-YEARLY ELECTRICAL CHECKS

PRIVATE LANDLORDS

Since 1 June 2020, private landlords in England are required to have the electrical installation in their rental properties checked by a qualified and competent electrician to ensure that they are safe.

This means that:

- Electrical installations must be inspected and tested prior to the start of a new tenancy from 1 July 2020.
- Checks must be carried out on existing tenancies by 1 April 2026

These checks must be carried out within a maximum 5 year period.

SOCIAL LANDLORDS

From 1 November 2025, social landlords in England are required to have the electrical installation and any electrical appliances provided in their rental properties checked by a qualified and competent electrician, to ensure that they are safe.

The electrical safety inspection has two separate elements:

- A periodic inspection and test of the electrical installation, fixed electrical equipment, and;
- An inspection and test of any portable electrical appliances provided by the landlord (formerly known as PAT testing).

This means that:

- Electrical installations and any electrical appliances provided must be inspected and tested prior to the start of a new tenancy from 1 December 2025.
- Checks must be carried out on any existing tenancies by 1 November 2026.

These checks must also be carried out within a maximum 5 year period.

- The frequency of checks for all portable electrical appliances provided under the tenancy, will be dictated by a risk assessment (maximum 5 year intervals) and at the start of every tenancy.

A copy of the most recent Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) must be provided to both new and retained tenants. *See section 6 for further details.*

If the inspection reveals any action that needs to be taken, this must be carried out within 28 days. It must meet British Standard BS 7671, with appropriate certification issued. *You can find out more about periodic inspections in Section 6 of this guide.*

As the landlord, you are responsible for making sure that the person who completes the check is suitably competent. Using an electrician or company that is a member of an accredited registration scheme operated by a recognised body will give you the confidence that this has been achieved.

Visit www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/findanelectrician

Full details of the legislation for England can be found at: www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2025/1043/contents/made

In Wales, **The Renting Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) (Wales) Regulations 2022** applies. To meet these regulations, landlords in Wales must ensure that:

- There is a valid EICR during each period of occupation and,
- The EICR is carried out by a qualified person[2], such as a registered electrician and,
- The EICR remains valid for five years from the date the inspection is conducted (i.e. the inspection date) or,
- If the report states that the next inspection is due in less than five years, the landlord must ensure the inspection is completed by the specified date in the report.

The landlord must also provide the contract-holder with:

01 A copy of the latest EICR within 14 days of the occupation date, and

02 Written confirmation of any investigatory or remedial work done on the electrical installation since that report, within 14 days of the occupation date.

If an inspection is conducted after the occupation date, the landlord must provide the contract-holder with a copy of the EICR within 14 days from the completion of the inspection.

When investigatory or remedial work is performed on the electrical installation in the dwelling after the occupation date, the landlord must give the contract-holder written confirmation within 14 days of receiving it.

A dwelling is considered unfit for habitation if the landlord fails to comply with these requirements (regulation 6).

Full details of the legislation for Wales can be found at: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2022/6/contents

PART P OF THE BUILDING REGULATIONS

In January 2005, the **Building Regulations for England and Wales** were amended to include Part P, which covers electrical safety in dwellings. This means that all electrical installation work undertaken in a home in England or Wales must, by law, comply with Part P of the Building Regulations.

This requires 'reasonable provision... in the design and installation of electrical installations ...to protect persons operating, maintaining or altering the installations from fire or injury'.

Except for some types of minor work, if you intend to carry out electrical installation work in domestic premises, you must either:

- Notify a building control body (usually your local authority building control department) before the work starts, or
- Have it carried out by an electrician who is registered with one of the Government-authorised Part P competent person scheme operators ***(see Section 9, Finding a registered electrician)***, or
- In England, have the work inspected and tested by a registered third-party certifier.

These requirements apply not only to new construction but also to existing installations – including full and partial rewires – or for an alteration or addition in a special location.

The legal requirements apply to all electrical installation work in dwellings in England and Wales, whether carried out professionally or by DIY, whether or not 'minor work', and whether or not it is notifiable to a building control body.

[2] Qualified person ("person cymwysedig) a person who is competent to undertake the inspection and testing of an electrical service installation, and any further investigative or remedial work, in accordance with the electrical safety standards

'Minor work' is any installation work that does not involve the addition of a new circuit. Examples of such work include the addition of socket-outlets or lighting points to existing circuits, or the relocation of a light switch or socket-outlet.

More information can be found in:

For England, Approved Document P (2013 edition) https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/electrical-safety-approved-document-p

For Wales, Approved Document P (2006 edition with 2010 amendments) https://www.gov.wales/approved-document-p-electrical-safety-dwellings

In October 2006, the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (England and Wales) became law. It replaces most previous fire safety legislation and applies to all non-domestic premises, including common parts of blocks of flats, and houses in multiple occupation (HMOs).

Guidance on carrying out a fire safety risk assessment for sleeping accommodation can be downloaded free from: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fire-safety-risk-assessment-sleeping-accommodation

COMMUNAL AREAS

A landlord is also responsible for the communal areas of a house, block of flats, or an estate that residents use in common with other tenants, such as:

- Entrance halls and foyers.
- Lifts and stairwells.
- Corridors.
- Landings.
- Kitchens and bathrooms.
- Laundries.
- Gymnasiums.
- Swimming pools and other leisure facilities.
- Parking and refuse areas.
- Pathways.
- Gardens.

Further information and guidance can be found here - Electrical Safety in Communal Areas of Residential; Properties in England & Wales:
https://www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/media/irhfwzmq/arma-brochure-v6.pdf

SMOKE ALARMS AND CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS

From 1 October 2015, when properties are occupied by tenants, the landlord must ensure that:

- A smoke alarm is equipped on each storey of the premises on which there is a room used wholly or partly as living accommodation;
- A carbon monoxide alarm is equipped in any room of the premises which is used wholly or partly as living accommodation and contains a solid fuel burning combustion appliance;
- Checks must be made by or on behalf of the landlord to make sure that each prescribed alarm is in proper working order on the day the tenancy begins (if it is a new tenancy).

The full legislation can be found at: www.legislation.gov.uk/ukdsi/2015/9780111133439/pdfs/ukdsi_9780111133439_en.pdf

3.0 ELECTRICAL INSTALLATIONS

An electrical installation comprises all the fixed electrical cables and fixed electrical equipment located on the consumer's side of the electricity supply meter. It includes the cables that are usually hidden in the walls and ceilings, accessories (such as socket-outlets, light switches and fittings), and the consumer unit that contains the circuit protective devices e.g. fuses, circuit-breakers and residual current devices (RCDs - see Section 4).

THERE ARE MANY FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO A 'GOOD' ELECTRICAL INSTALLATION, SUCH AS ENSURING:

- There are enough socket-outlets for electrical appliances, to minimise the use of multiway socket-outlet adapters and trailing leads.
- Basic protection is provided by insulation and provision of covers to prevent fingers coming into direct contact with live parts (broken or damaged light switches and socket-outlets etc. should be replaced without delay).
- A residual current device (RCD) is installed to provide additional protection against electric shock (see also Section 4 of this guide).
- Satisfactory earthing arrangements are in place to ensure that a fuse or circuit breaker operates quickly to disconnect the electricity supplying the circuit before an electric fault causes an electric shock or fire (remedial work maybe be necessary to repair a fault that has caused a protective device to operate).
- Satisfactory protective bonding conductors are in place where required (so that the risk of any electric shock risk is minimised until a fault is cleared).
- Sufficient circuits are provided and arranged to avoid danger and minimise inconvenience in the event of a fault.
- Cables are correctly selected and installed in relation to the fuse or circuit-breaker protecting the circuit.

Over time, and with the wear and tear of regular use, the installation will start to deteriorate. Connections can work loose (a potential fire hazard), equipment can be damaged, and building and maintenance work can have an impact on the wiring.

ONE SIMPLE THING YOU CAN DO TO SEE IF YOUR ELECTRICAL INSTALLATION IS SAFE, IS TO CARRY OUT A REGULAR VISUAL CHECK. THINGS TO LOOK OUT FOR INCLUDE:

- Broken accessories (such as socket-outlets and light switches).
- Signs of scorching around socket-outlets due to overloading.
- Overheating of electrical equipment (such as lamp holders fitted with the wrong lamps) - usually detected by a strong, often fishlike smell.
- Damaged cables to handheld equipment and mobile electrical equipment or trailing cables/flexes.
- Lack of additional protection by a 30 mA RCD for final circuits, particularly those supplying socket-outlets and for any equipment located in the bath/shower room or garden.

Where such hazards are identified, landlords have a duty of care to put the situation right as soon as practicable.

Regular visual safety checks do not replace the need for periodic inspection to be carried out every five years (see Section 6 of this guide).

Electrical Safety First has produced a Landlords Interim checklist to assist those carrying out such checks. This may be downloaded from: https://www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/media/ul5lyihr/landlords-interim-checklist-v4.pdf


Electrical Safety Professional

electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk

LANDLORDS INTERIM CHECKLIST

ELECTRICAL SAFETY CHECKLIST

Conditions of use

This checklist should only be used where both of the following conditions have been met.

A formal inspection and test (EICR) has been carried out on the property (within the last 5 years)

Actions recorded on the EICR have been addressed (Tick to confirm)

Name (Person carrying out the electrical safety check)

Date (Date carried out)

Address of property (Print the full address of the property being checked)

Checklist summary (Provide details of the electrical safety risk(s) and state the required action)

Record the risk and its location	State the action to be taken
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
6	6

(Where additional risks need to be recorded, attach an additional page to this checklist)

Comments (Insert, as appropriate, any other comments regarding the electrical safety of the premises)

4.0 RESIDUAL CURRENT DEVICES (RCD)

An RCD, or residual current device, is a life-saving device which is designed to prevent you from getting a fatal electric shock if you touch something live, such as a bare wire. It can also provide some protection against electrical fires. RCDs offer a level of personal protection that ordinary fuses and circuit-breakers cannot provide.

WHAT DOES AN RCD DO?

An RCD is a sensitive safety device that switches off electricity automatically if there is a fault.

An RCD is designed to protect against the risks of electrocution and fire caused by earth faults. For example, if you cut through the cable when mowing the lawn and accidentally touched the exposed live wires or a faulty appliance overheats causing electric current to flow to earth.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

An RCD constantly monitors the electric current flowing through one or more circuits it is used to protect. If it detects electricity flowing down an unintended path, such as through a person who has touched a live part, the RCD will switch the circuit off very quickly, significantly reducing the risk of death or serious injury.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN TYPES OF RCD?

30 mA RCDs can help protect you from electric shock in potentially dangerous areas like bathrooms and gardens, and there are various types of RCDs which provide additional protection that can be used to make sure you are always as safe as possible.

- **FIXED RCDS:**
  These are installed in the consumer unit (fusebox) and can provide protection to individual or groups of circuits. A fixed RCD provides the highest level of protection as it protects all the wiring and the sockets on a circuit, and any connected appliances.
- **SOCKET-OUTLET RCDS:**
  These are special socket-outlets with an RCD built into them which can be used in place of a standard socket-outlet. This type of RCD provides protection only to the person in contact with equipment, including its lead, plugged into the special socket-outlet.
- **PORTABLE RCDS:**
  These plug into any standard socket-outlet. An appliance can then be plugged into the RCD. They are useful when neither fixed nor socket-outlet RCDs are available but, as with socket-outlet RCDs, they provide protection only to the person in contact with the equipment, including its lead, plugged into the portable RCD.

5.0 CERTIFICATION OF ELECTRICAL INSTALLATION WORK

You should ensure that you receive and keep the paperwork for all completed electrical installation work including periodic inspection and testing. A copy should be provided to your tenants. All certificates and reports should include schedules of inspections, circuit details and test results.

The type of certification or report you receive depends on the extent and type of electrical installation work, or inspection and testing, you have had carried out.

ELECTRICAL CERTIFICATION FOR NEW INSTALLATIONS, ALTERATIONS OR ADDITIONS

Electrical Installation Certificates (EICs) and Minor Electrical Installation Works Certificates (MEIWCs) provide you, as the person responsible for the safety of an electrical installation, with a declaration that the new installation, alteration or addition, complies with the industry standard BS 7671, is safe to use and functions properly at the time it was put into service.

These certificates, if retained, also provide a basis for any future inspection and testing, as they can help save on costly exploratory work which might otherwise be needed. Additionally, in the event of a claim that injury or fire was caused by an electrical installation, certificates are documentary evidence which help show that the installation had been installed to a satisfactory standard of safety.

The EIC will indicate whether the electrical work that has been carried out is 'new', an addition or an alteration. The term new applies where the installation has been installed as new, if a complete rewire has been carried out, or where a consumer unit has been replaced.

The term 'addition' applies if an existing installation has been modified by adding one or more new circuits.

The term 'alteration' applies where one or more existing circuits have been modified or extended (for example to add a socket-outlet), or items such as a consumer unit and switching equipment have been replaced.

An EIC must be issued for all new electrical installations. It may also be required for an alteration or addition to the installation depending upon whether or not a new circuit has been installed. Where an alteration or addition is carried out but does not include a new circuit, a MEIWC or an EIC may be used.

We strongly recommend that you use a registered electrician to carry out any electrical installation work. Information on how to find a registered electrician can be found on Electrical Safety First's website at www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/findanelectrician

6.0 PERIODIC INSPECTION,

TESTING AND ELECTRICAL INSTALLATION CONDITION REPORTING

Every electrical installation deteriorates with use and age. You must ensure that your tenant(s) – or anyone entering or using your property – are not put at risk, by ensuring that the electrical installation remains in a safe and serviceable condition.

A periodic inspection and test checks the condition of an existing electrical installation against BS 7671, the UK Standard for the safety of electrical installations.

Tests are also carried out on the installation to check that it is safe.

A PERIODIC INSPECTION SHOULD:

- Discover if electrical circuits or equipment are overloaded.
- Identify potential electric shock risks and fire hazards.
- Find any defective electrical work.
- Highlight any lack of satisfactory earthing or bonding. Further information explaining the importance of earthing and bonding can be found at www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/guides-and-advice/around-the-home/earthing-and-bonding

ELECTRICAL INSTALLATION CONDITION REPORT Report No.:

SECTION A. DETAILS OF THE PERSON ORDERING THE REPORT

Name ...
Address ...

SECTION B. REASON FOR PRODUCING THIS REPORT

Date(s) on which inspection and testing was carried out ...

SECTION C. DETAILS OF THE INSTALLATION WHICH IS THE SUBJECT OF THIS REPORT

Occupier ...
Address ...

Description of premises
Residential ☐ Commercial ☐ Industrial ☐ Other (include brief description) ☐ ...
Estimated age of wiring system ... years
Evidence of additions / alterations? Yes ☐ No ☐ Not apparent ☐ If yes, estimate age ... years
Installation records available? (Regulation 651.1) Yes ☐ No ☐ Date of last inspection ... (date)

SECTION D. EXTENT AND LIMITATIONS OF INSPECTION AND TESTING

Extent of the electrical installation covered by this report ...

Agreed limitations including the reasons (see Regulation 653.2) ...

Agreed with: ...
Operational limitations including the reasons (see page no. ...) ...

The inspection and testing detailed in this report and accompanying schedules have been carried out in accordance with BS 7671:2018 as amended to ...

It should be noted that cables concealed within trunking and conduits, under floors, in roof spaces, and generally within the fabric of the building or underground, have not been inspected unless specifically agreed between the client and inspector prior to the inspection. An inspection should be made within an accessible roof space housing other electrical equipment.

SECTION E. SUMMARY OF THE CONDITION OF THE INSTALLATION

General condition of the installation (in terms of electrical safety) ...

Overall assessment of the installation in terms of its suitability for continued use SATISFACTORY / UNSATISFACTORY* (Delete as appropriate)
*An unsatisfactory assessment indicates that dangerous (code C1) and/or potentially dangerous (code C2) conditions have been identified.

SECTION F. RECOMMENDATIONS

Where the overall assessment of the suitability of the installation for continued use above is stated as UNSATISFACTORY, I / we recommend that any observations classified as 'Danger present' (code C1) or 'Potentially dangerous' (code C2) are acted upon as a matter of urgency. Investigation without delay is recommended for observations identified as 'Further investigation required' (code FI). Observations classified as 'Improvement recommended' (code C3) should be given due consideration.

Subject to the necessary remedial action being taken, I / We recommend that the installation is further inspected and tested by ... (date) for the following reasons ...

SECTION G. DECLARATION

I/We, being the person(s) responsible for the inspection and testing of the electrical installation (as indicated by my/our signatures below), particulars of which are described above, having exercised reasonable skill and care when carrying out the inspection and testing, hereby declare that the information in this report, including the observations and the attached schedules, provides an accurate assessment of the condition of the electrical installation taking into account the stated extent and limitations in section D of this report.

Typical example of an Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR).

A schedule of circuit details and test results should always be provided as part of the EICR along with the date by which the next inspection and test is required.

For social housing landlords in England, where portable electrical equipment is provided as part of a tenancy, the EICR must include a statement confirming the required safety checks for each item are up to date.

FREQUENCY OF PERIODIC INSPECTIONS

By law, a periodic inspection of the electrical installations in rental properties in England & Wales must be carried out every five years.

However, the person compiling the Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) may recommend a shorter interval before the next inspection based on the findings of the inspection and testing that has been carried out.

When a change of tenancy occurs, the landlord or their representative should always carry out a visual check to confirm that a property is safe to re-let. This check should include confirming that there are no broken or missing switches or socket-outlets, no accessible live parts, no signs of burning on electrical equipment and that any installed RCDs operate when the integral test button is pressed.

DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

In England, following a periodic inspection, a copy of the report must be supplied to:

- Existing tenants within 28 days,
- New tenants before they occupy the property,
- Prospective tenants within 28 days of a request,
- The local council within 7 days of a request,
- The next appointed inspector.

The report must be retained until the next inspection and test (or until replaced by a newer report).

Where the overall result of the periodic inspection is given in the EICR as unsatisfactory, remedial work will be necessary to rectify the issue(s) identified as warranting a code C1 (danger present) or code C2 (potentially dangerous) outcome before the installation can be deemed to be in a satisfactory condition.

If remedial work or further investigation is required, it must be completed within 28 days - or sooner if specified.

Upon completion, a copy of the original report and written confirmation from the qualified and competent electrician who carried out the work must be provided to both the tenant and the local council within 28 days.

In Wales, the landlord must provide written confirmation within 14 days if completing any remedial work after the occupation date.

In most cases, the most effective method of demonstrating that the necessary remedial work has been carried out, is by issuing:

- An Electrical Installation Certificate (EIC), particularly where the remedial work was carried out on more than one circuit, or
- A Minor Electrical Installation Works (MEIWC) Certificate where remedial action was only necessary on a single circuit within the property.

It is not necessary for a second 'clean' EICR to be issued after any required remedial works have been carried out and certified appropriately as described above. However, the EICR detailing the non-compliances and the associated certification of the remedial works should be kept together in a safe place for future reference. Copies of the certification should be provided to your tenants.

Further information on periodic inspection and testing can be found in Best Practice Guide 10: www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/media/beodpzwe/best_practice-guide-10_issue_1-2.

HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION (HMOS)

Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) must be inspected and tested at least every five years by a suitably qualified person. In Wales, the Management of Houses in Multiple Occupation (Wales) Regulations 2006 impose a similar requirement for five-yearly electrical safety checks on installations within HMOs.

7.0 ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES

Most deaths from electric shock and fires in UK homes are caused by misuse of, or faulty, plugs, leads and equipment/appliances. But many of these fatalities can be avoided by taking simple steps.

The safety of electrical equipment and appliances relies, to some extent, on the condition of the home's fixed wiring – but misusing electrical equipment/appliances will increase the risk of electric shock and fire. For example, after using an iron, winding the flexible cable around it may create a twist or kink in the cable. Repeating this process over time can damage the cable and increase the risk of electric shock or fire. To keep risks to a minimum, you and/or your tenant must ensure that electrical equipment/appliances are safely used, stored and regularly checked.

PROVIDING ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES

If you provide electrical appliances/equipment (such as a kettle, iron or washing machine) for your tenant(s) you should check that the item carries, at least, a CE Mark or UKCA mark – the manufacturer's claim that it meets the minimum requirements of EU/UK legislation. Electrical Safety First recommends the purchasing of appliances that carry additional safety marks, such as the British Standard Kitemark or the 'BEAB Approved' mark, as these can provide greater assurance of electrical safety.

You need to make sure that any appliances/equipment you supply is suitable for its location and its intended use. To help ensure your tenants use appliances correctly, you should make copies of the manufacturers' instructions available for them to refer to.

SOCIAL LANDLORDS

In England, in-service inspection and testing of electrical equipment on all electrical appliances supplied by social landlords as part of a tenancy - commonly referred to as 'PAT testing' - is a legal requirement.

The frequency of inspection and/or testing will be established based on a risk assessment at a maximum period of every five years, and at the start of every tenancy. Confirmation should be recorded on the EICR (where applicable).

PRODUCT REGISTRATION

Make sure that any electrical products that you provide with the tenancy are registered with the manufacturer. This means that if there is a problem and they need to issue a recall or safety notice, the product can be traced. You should also tell your tenants to register any products that they bring with them into the property.

Find out more at www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/registration

CHECKING ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES

To ensure electrical appliances remain safe to use, regular basic safety checks should be carried out.

YOU AND/OR YOUR TENANT SHOULD CHECK THAT:

01 There are no cuts or abrasions in the cable covering (sheath).

02 The outer covering of the cable is gripped by the cord grip in the plug top, so that no coloured cable cores are visible from outside of the plug.

03 The plug casing is not cracked and the pins are not bent.

04 There are no signs of overheating or burning, particularly at the plug and socket-outlet.

05 There are no loose parts or screws.

06 No part of the appliance/equipment is damaged or missing.

Most dangerous defects in electrical appliances/equipment can be identified by carrying out such simple checks. For more information on testing electrical appliances/equipment, go to: www.hse.gov.uk/electricity/faq-portable-appliance-testing.htm

Further information on portable and stationery appliance testing can be found in Best Practice Guide 6: www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/media/1207/best-practice-guide-6.pdf

PRODUCT RECALLS

You can check to see if any of the electrical equipment or appliances you have provided for the use of your tenants is subject to a product recall by visiting: https://www.gov.uk/product-safety-alerts-reports-recalls?product_category%5B%5D=electrical-appliances-equipment

USING ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES OUTDOORS

Any socket-outlet supplying electrical equipment used outdoors should be protected by a 30 mA RCD.

Electrical Safety First recommends that all socket-outlets supplying electrical equipment for outdoor use are protected by a fixed RCD (where the RCD is fitted in the consumer unit or alternatively incorporated into a socket-outlet).

Fixed RCDs should be **tested at least every six months** by pressing the test button marked 'T' or 'Test' – see the instructions that should be on, or next to, the consumer unit.

If there is no RCD in the consumer unit, we strongly recommend that a portable plug-in RCD is provided. Equipment should be plugged into the portable RCD, which is then plugged into the socket. This type of RCD, which costs around £10, should be tested before each use by following the manufacturer's instructions.

8.0 FIRE DETECTION:
FIRE, SMOKE, AND CARBON MONOXIDE ALARMS

Electrical accidents are the primary cause of accidental domestic fires in the UK.

Loose connections in electrical equipment and parts of the electrical installation (such as socket-outlets) can result in fire. Incorrectly selected fuses or circuit-breakers can also lead to overheated cables.

Many fires in the home start in the kitchen and are usually caused by cooking appliances. Other causes of fire include cigarettes and candles, and clothes being hung over heaters to dry.

To safeguard your tenants from the risk of fire, you will need to ensure that there is a suitable fire detection and fire alarm system, which should be regularly tested and maintained.

A properly installed and maintained fire detection and fire alarm system will alert occupants to a fire in its early stages, allowing them to get to a place of safety before escape routes become blocked by smoke or fire. The system should be designed to wake people who are sleeping and to alert them to fire in any hidden areas – such as boiler rooms, storerooms, cellars or lofts (if they contain equipment such as battery storage systems, solar PV inverters or central heating boilers) – before the fire affects the escape route.

SELECTING AN APPROPRIATE SMOKE DETECTION AND SMOKE ALARM SYSTEM

If you do not currently have a fire detection and fire alarm system in England, your property does not comply with the Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations 2015. In Wales, the absence of such a system would result in non-compliance with the Renting Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) (Wales) Regulations 2022.

The type of fire detection and fire alarm system you need to provide depends on the type of property you are letting, based on the level of risk.

A small, single-family house will only require a number of interconnected smoke and heat alarms, while large HMOs need a more sophisticated system – where fire detectors are linked to a control panel and alarm sounders.

All residential premises where people are sleeping should have some form of automatic fire detection and warning system.

TESTING FIRE DETECTION AND FIRE ALARM SYSTEMS

All fire detection and fire alarm systems need to be regularly tested to ensure they are working properly.

In England and Wales, it is the responsibility of the landlord to ensure that fire alarm systems (where present) are tested regularly in accordance with BS 5839. This is typically carried out by a designated 'responsible person' who must conduct routine checks and ensure that all fire safety equipment, including alarms, is in proper working order.

SMOKE ALARM REQUIREMENTS

In England & Wales, landlords must ensure that there are working smoke alarms installed on each storey of their rental properties where there is a room used wholly or partly as living accommodation. These alarms must be tested and in proper working condition at the start of each new tenancy. Regular checks and maintenance are essential to ensure that smoke alarms continue to function correctly throughout the tenancy period.

Basic, routine tests do not demand specialist knowledge and can normally be carried out by you or your tenant(s). Such tests are generally required weekly, where one or more detectors or call points are tested

CARBON MONOXIDE ALARM REQUIREMENTS

Landlords in England & Wales are also required to install carbon monoxide alarms in any room that contains a solid fuel-burning appliance, such as a wood-burning stove or an open fire. As with smoke alarms, these carbon monoxide alarms must be tested and confirmed to be in proper working condition at the beginning of each tenancy.

REGULATIONS AND COMPLIANCE

Failure to comply can result in penalties for landlords. It is crucial for landlords to keep records of all alarm installations and maintenance work carried out, as well as to provide tenants with instructions on how to test and maintain these alarms.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE CAN BE FOUND HERE:

- **England** - https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/smoke-and-carbon-monoxide-alarms-explanatory-booklet-for-landlords/the-smoke-and-carbon-monoxide-alarm-england-regulations-2015-qa-booklet-for-the-private-rented-sector-landlords-and-tenants
- **Wales** - https://www.gov.wales/fitness-homes-human-habitation-guidance-landlords-html

9.0 EMERGENCY LIGHTING

In the event of fire, your tenants need to be able to find their way out of the property to a place of safety. This requires a planned escape route which is kept free from clutter and has sufficient lighting to allow for a fast (and safe) escape.

SOME BUILDINGS, SUCH AS THOSE LISTED BELOW, WILL ALSO NEED EMERGENCY LIGHTING COVERING THE ESCAPE ROUTE. THEY INCLUDE:

- Large buildings with lengthy exit routes.
- Buildings with a complex layout.
- Buildings with no natural or borrowed lighting along the escape route.
- Buildings accommodating vulnerable people or those at particular risk, such as individuals who are confined to a wheelchair.

When a fire starts, people move rapidly in distress and panic. At night, when they have been awoken abruptly, they may also be disorientated. So it is important that staircases and escape routes are adequately lit.

Emergency lighting is not covered in this guide, please see BS 5266 documentation for further information.

10.0 FINDING AN ELECTRICIAN

The following organisations are authorised by the Government to register electricians so they can carry out domestic electrical installation work and periodic inspection & testing which meets Part P of the Building Regulations.

NICEIC
Telephone: 0870 013 0382
Website: niceic.com

NAPIT
Telephone: 0345 543 0330
Website: napit.org.uk

Blue Flame Certification
Telephone: 0845 194 9031
Website: blueflamecertification.com

COMPETENCY

Electrical supervisors (commonly known as qualified supervisors) of businesses registered with one of the other government approved scheme providers will have had, among other things, their qualifications, experience and samples of their work checked to confirm that they have the knowledge and experience to carry out electrical works in accordance with BS 7671.

Using a registered electrician will place less responsibility on you to decide whether an electrician is competent or not.

To find a registered electrician in your area, visit:

electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/findanelectrician

FIND OUT MORE

Electrical
For more information about electrical safety in rented properties visit:
electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk

Gas
For information about gas safety in rented properties, visit:
gassaferegister.co.uk

A wealth of free electrical safety advice is available at electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk or via the above QR code.

Electrical Safety First

Electrical Safety First
45 Great Guildford Street
London SE1 0ES

Email: enquiries@electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk

Registered Charity (England and Wales) No. 257376
Registered Charity (Scotland) No. SC039990.

Electrical Safety First is the UK charity dedicated to reducing deaths and injuries caused by electrical accidents. Our aim is to ensure everyone in the UK can use electricity safely.

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Powering change + saving lives.

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