

ELECTRICAL SAFETY

1. AIMS OF SECTION

- ▶ To prevent harm from electrical shock or burns.
- ▶ To provide procedures and records that will enable compliance with legal duties and good practice in respect of electrical safety.

2. INSTRUCTIONS

FIXED WIRING

- ▶ The main electrical circuit should be tested at least every 5 years (or 20% every year) by a qualified electrical engineer when a certificate will be issued. These details should also be added to the form. A copy of the electrical circuit test certificate should be kept available. Enter its number on **FORM 1: SUMMARY OF ELECTRICAL INFORMATION**.
- ▶ Electrical commissioning certificates for new installations should also be held on file.
- ▶ Fill in the other information as requested on the form entitled **FORM 2: SUMMARY OF ELECTRICAL INSTALLATION TESTS** including dates of any Thermographic checks of distribution boards (often required annually by the Insurance Company).

PORTABLE ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

Generally, equipment that has a lead (cable) and plug and which is normally moved around or can easily be moved from place to place eg. floor cleaners, kettles, heaters, fans, kitchen appliances etc. Equipment in the bedrooms, such as hairdryers or kettles, with a permanently wired lead, also comes into this category, as does equipment that could be moved eg. photocopiers, fax machines and desktop computers.

- ▶ Staff who regularly use electrical equipment should receive training in electrical hazard spotting to enable them to carry out informal 'user checks'.
- ▶ 'Competent persons' should be assigned who will carry out regular visual checks of electrical equipment (see over page). This person may require training in electrical hazard spotting. Details should be added to **FORM 1**.
- ▶ For each department make a list of all portable electrical equipment on the form entitled **FORM 3: PORTABLE ELECTRICAL APPLIANCE INSPECTION AND TESTING**. Identify the required frequency of inspection. The frequency depends on the type and use of the equipment. There are no specified legal frequencies, but they should be based upon risk.

Guidance on electrical equipment inspection

Ref	Equipment	User checks	Formal visual inspection	Combined inspection and testing
	Battery-operated: (less than 20 volts)	No	No	No
	Extra low voltage: (less than 50 volts AC) eg. telephone equipment, low voltage desk lights	No	No	No
A	Information technology: eg. desktop computers, DSE	No	Yes, 2 - 4 years	No if double insulated – otherwise up to 5 years
B	Photocopiers, fax machines: NOT hand-held. Rarely moved	No	Yes, 2 - 4 years	No if double insulated – otherwise up to 5 years
C	Double insulated equipment: NOT hand-held. Moved occasionally eg. fans, table lamps	No	Yes, 2 - 4 years	No
D	Double insulated equipment: HAND-HELD eg. some floor cleaners, some kitchen equipment and irons	Yes	Yes, 6 months – 1 year	No
E	Earthed equipment (Class 1): eg. electric kettles, some floor cleaners	Yes	Yes, 6 months – 1 year	Yes, 1 - 2 years
F	Cables (leads) and plugs connected to the above Extension leads (mains voltage)	Yes	Yes, 6 months – 4 years depending on the type of equipment it is connected to	Yes, 1 – 5 years depending on the type of equipment it is connected to

NB Experience of operating the maintenance system over a period of time, together with information on faults found, should be used to review the frequency of inspection. These are the minimum frequencies to be used.

- ▶ Portable electrical equipment combined inspection and testing should be carried out by a ‘competent person’ and the results entered onto the form entitled **FORM 3: PORTABLE ELECTRICAL APPLIANCE INSPECTION AND TESTING**. Alternatively, the electrician’s certificate can be filed.

ELECTRICAL SAFETY

- ▶ Any defective equipment identified must be removed from service until the appropriate remedial action has been taken. Any action taken should be recorded.

FORM 1: SUMMARY OF ELECTRICAL INFORMATION

Fixed Wiring Circuit (Installation)

CERTIFICATE NUMBER:

DATE:

INTERNAL COMPETENT PERSON(S) TO CARRY OUT VISUAL INSPECTIONS:

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APPROVED ELECTRICAL CONTRACTOR:

NAME:

ADDRESS:

TEL. NO.:

COMPETENCY:

FORM 2: SUMMARY OF ELECTRICAL FIXED WIRING TESTS

Date	Area	New/Existing	% of Fixed Wiring Tested	Test Certificate Number	Dates of Thermographic Tests

