



Are you ready to return?

Spotlight on electrical safety after lockdown

Contents

- 3 Introduction**
- 4 Spotlight on electrical issues**
- 6 Ensuring you're ready to return**
- 8 Other measures to be aware of**

Introduction

As businesses, offices and other premises across Scotland prepare to reopen after lockdown, it's important to ensure that all workplaces are safe for staff, visitors and customers to return.

As well as putting health and safety measures in place to protect against COVID-19, it's also vital to check that your electrical systems are safe and operating correctly, and that there's been no damage or deterioration while you've been away.

With many premises being shut and unattended for long periods, now is the time to carry out proper inspection and testing of any electrical equipment that may have been sitting idle during lockdown.

It's also important to ensure that only a suitably qualified and competent electrician carries out this work, such as a SELECT member company.

This guidance is designed to help you identify which electrical areas need attention and the next steps that should be taken to ensure a safe return.

It also outlines some of the other health and safety measures to put in place before opening, including ongoing measures to protect against the threat of COVID-19.

With infection rates dropping, none of us should become complacent, and it's important for all businesses to put the spotlight on both electrical and COVID-19 safety to offer peace of mind to staff, visitors and customers.

So the question is: **Are YOU ready to return?**

Spotlight on electrical issues

As a result of lockdown, the electrical equipment in your premises may have been non-operational for a prolonged period or may not have been inspected or tested for some time.

Such electrical equipment could include the following:

- **Emergency lighting**

Has your lighting undergone its usual weekly, monthly and annual tests? If not, you should consider completing a full duration test before occupancy.

- **Fire detection and alarm systems**

Has the regular maintenance of these essential systems been carried out throughout lockdown? If not, increased checks should be made ASAP.

- **Security systems**

As above, if the usual maintenance of your system hasn't been done during lockdown, arrange for an inspection to be carried out as soon as possible

- **Electrical installations**

Equipment such as residual current devices (RCDs) and functional and operational switching are essential for the safe running of premises. Has the periodic or planned maintenance of them lapsed because of restrictions? If so, an inspection may need to be carried before the re-energising of circuits which have been dormant for some time.

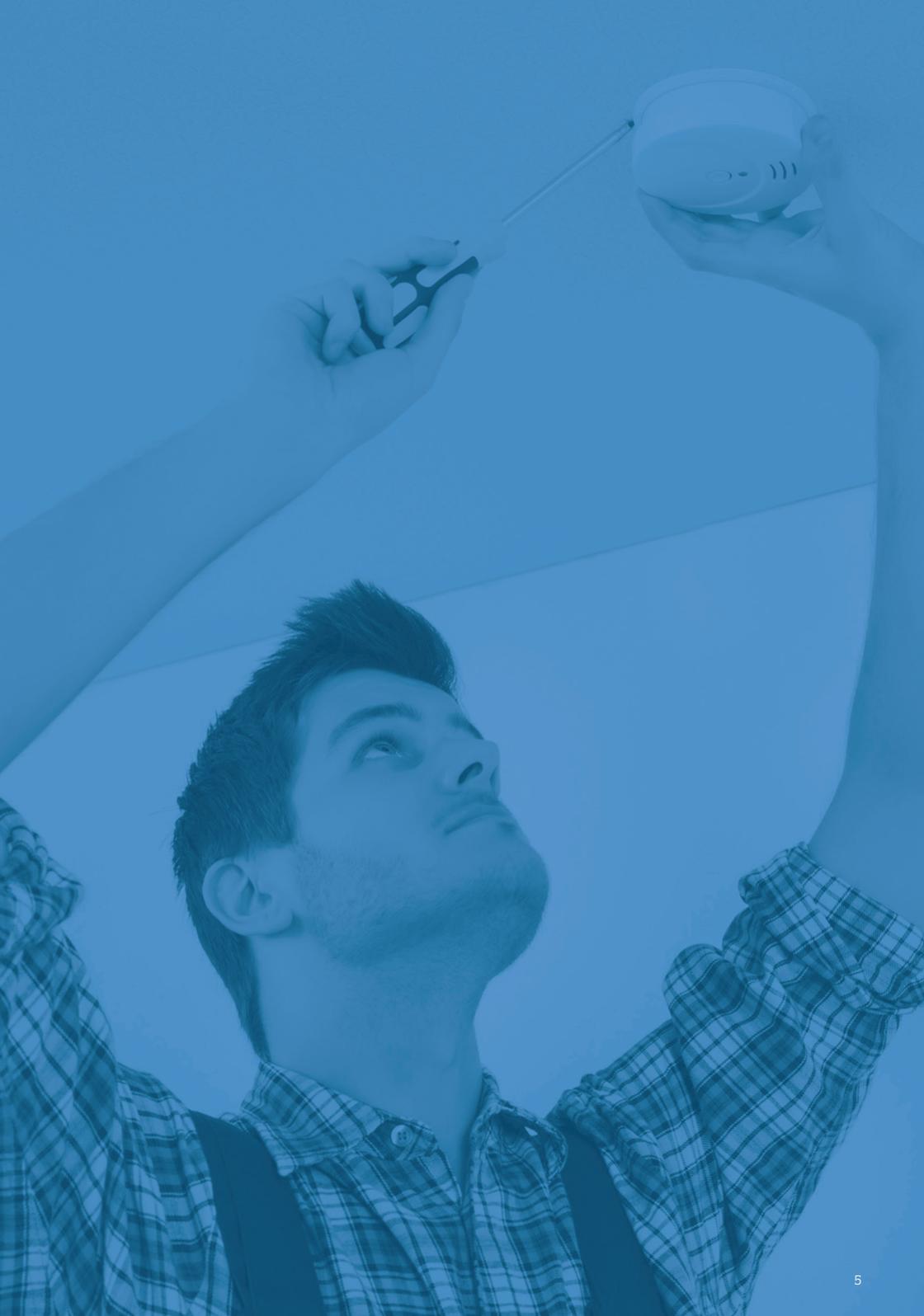
- **Portable appliances**

Items in the workplace – and more importantly, items taken away or bought specifically to help staff working from home – may need to be inspected and tested to ensure they're safe. Have any appliances kept in the workplace not been unplugged or been moved recently? If so, testing may be needed to ensure they're still working safely.

In all these circumstances, you should contact a competent person, such as a member of SELECT, and arrange for thorough inspection and testing at the earliest opportunity.

As the duty holder, you should also have records in place that specify how equipment was maintained in a safe condition during lockdown. These records must be provided to the competent person for review, as they may influence the depth and content of any subsequent examination and testing.

It's particularly important that any information about how the equipment has been kept includes evidence of a robust inspection and any additional maintenance carried out by people with the necessary skills, experience and knowledge.



Ensuring you're ready to return

In order to ensure a safe return to your workplace, it's vital that your duty holder ensures that:

- A thorough examination and testing of your electrical equipment is carried out within the stated period by a competent person, in accordance with all the appropriate regulations.
- Any equipment whose period between thorough examination and testing has exceeded, or will exceed, the maximum specified by the appropriate regulations due to problems caused by the pandemic, is identified and examined and tested thoroughly at the earliest practicable opportunity.
- Any equipment that has been non-operational for a prolonged period of time is returned to service in a planned and safe way.
- Any equipment requiring thorough examination and testing that has been non-operational for a prolonged period is subject to thorough examination and testing before being returned to service.
- Any equipment in the premises remains in a safe condition.

Further information

If you're unsure about your electrical systems, or have any further queries, please contact SELECT on **0131 445 5577**.

You can also find your nearest electrical contractor by using the member database on our website at www.select.org.uk

All SELECT members are quality contractors, with capability across a wide range of design, manufacturing, testing and commissioning skills.

For further peace of mind, they are also backed by a contract completion guarantee and a code of practice that includes a complaint resolution and disciplinary procedure.



Other measures to be aware of

COVID-19

As well checking that your electrical systems are safe, it's also important to ensure that you have measures in place to manage the risk of COVID-19.

This includes ongoing updates to your risk assessments to make sure they're in line with the latest government guidance.

It's also important to have secure measures in place that everyone can follow to manage risks. These can include:

- Social distancing
- Frequent cleaning
- Adequate ventilation
- Good hand hygiene.

It's important to speak to your staff to help them understand these measures and talk about other changes in your workplace, e.g. site rules, one-way systems etc.

Further details on the latest COVID-19 health and safety measures are available at www.cicvforum.co.uk/downloads

Legionella

If your building has been closed or had reduced occupancy during the COVID-19 pandemic, water system stagnation can occur due to lack of use, increasing the risks of Legionnaires' disease.

Further details are available from the Scottish and Northern Ireland Plumbing Employers' Federation at www.snipef.org

Worker support

If employees have been away from the business for a prolonged period of time, they may well experience a decline in their ability or proficiency. Workers may therefore need additional time and support to get back to pre-pandemic performance.

Further details of how to help staff, as well as other health and safety advice, is available from the Health and Safety Executive at www.hse.gov.uk





Founded in 1900, SELECT is Scotland's largest construction trade association.

It has nearly 1,250 member businesses who collectively have an annual turnover of around £1 billion and employ over 15,000 people and 3,500 apprentices.

SELECT also delivers training courses to more than 3,500 electricians each year and is committed to regulation of the industry for a safer Scotland.

The Walled Garden
Bush Estate
Midlothian EH26 0SB
Tel: 0131 445 5577

www.select.org.uk