

Introduction

The Scottish Government has issued Statutory Guidance on Electrical Installations and Appliances in Private Rented Property. The recently amended Housing (Scotland) Act includes a requirement for landlords to conduct five-yearly electrical checks of the fixed wiring and any electrical appliances supplied in privately rented homes from 1 December 2015.

The guidance states that these checks must be conducted by appropriately skilled persons and lists SELECT as one of the organisations whose Members meet this requirement.

Why the legislation was introduced

According to Scottish Government statistics, 69% of all accidental fires in Scottish homes (more than 3400 annually) are caused by electricity. Independent research carried out by Electrical Safety First also indicated that private tenants are more likely to be at risk of electric shock or fire than owner occupiers.

Landlords' Responsibilities

Private landlords in Scotland are required under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 to ensure that a rented house meets the "Repairing Standard" at the start of and throughout any tenancy. This includes a requirement for landlords to ensure

that the installations in the house for the supply of electricity, the electrical fixtures and fittings* and any appliances provided by the landlord under the tenancy are in a reasonable state of repair and in proper working order.

**Any smoke alarm installed from September 2007 onwards should be wired from the consumer unit and should be included in any electrical safety inspection.*

The Purpose of Electrical Safety Inspections

An electrical safety inspection is to:

- Confirm, so far as reasonably practicable that the electrical installation, fixtures, fittings or appliances are in a satisfactory condition for continued service; and
- Identify any work which relates to electrical installations, fixtures, fittings or appliances which needs to be done to ensure that they are in a satisfactory condition for continued service, a reasonable state of repair and in proper working order.

The electrical safety inspection has two separate elements:

- ✓ An Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) on the safety of the electrical installations, fixtures and fittings; and
- ✓ A Portable Appliance Test (PAT) on portable appliances.

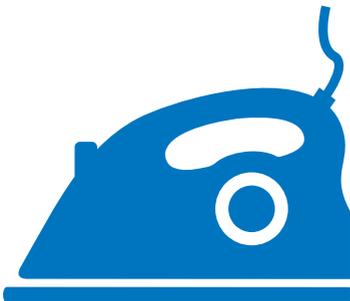
Frequency of Inspection

An electrical safety inspection must be carried out before a tenancy starts or during a tenancy, at intervals of no more than five years from the date of the previous inspection.

The electrical safety inspection does not have to be carried out immediately before a new tenancy begins or every time a new tenancy starts so long as an inspection has been carried out in the period five years before the tenancy starts.

Electrical Installation Condition Report

An Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR) must be completed by a suitably competent person. Competent person means *“a skilled person (electrically) as defined in amendment 3 of BS7671.”* This includes those employed by a firm that is a member of an accredited registration scheme operated by a recognised body such as SELECT.



An EICR must cover:

Installations for the supply of electricity

Electrical Fittings

The consumer unit

All switches

Socket Outlets

Light Fittings

Any visible wiring

Fixed electrical equipment

Fixed electrical heating equipment e.g. storage or panel heaters

Boilers and other heat producing equipment

Hard-wired smoke and fire detectors

Any electrical installation, fixtures, fittings or equipment which fails to pass an electrical safety inspection must be replaced or repaired immediately to comply with the Repairing Standard. Additionally, any element of the electrical installations, fixtures, fittings or equipment which is classified in an EICR under code C1* (danger present) or C2 (potentially dangerous) must be rectified to comply with the Repairing Standard. **Code C1 means that anyone using the installation is at risk and remedial work should be carried out by a competent person immediately. If it is practical to do so, the competent person should make*

the installation safe on discovery of the dangerous condition.

In some cases a landlord may have an Electrical Installation Certificate rather than an EICR. For example, new build properties or houses which have been fully rewired. In those circumstances the electrical safety inspection should take place five years after the issue of such a certificate.

Portable Appliance Testing (PAT)

The EICR covers installations and fixed electrical equipment, whilst a PAT covers appliances. For the purpose of the PAT, “appliances” means movable electrical equipment.

The PAT test can be completed with a PAT tester device. Competent Persons may not hold one of these, but they will have a set of test equipment that allows them to undertake the full range of testing required by BS 7671 which is capable of carrying out electrical safety tests on appliances. The duty to carry

out testing does not apply to electrical appliances that belong to tenants, only to appliances that are provided by the landlord.

More information

SELECT has more than 1200 Member businesses which operate all across Scotland. The vast majority of our Members can carry out the work required under the new legislation. To find a SELECT Member who can carry out an electrical inspection or PAT testing for your property, please visit www.select.org.uk or call our offices on 0131 445 5577.

If you are unsure of any requirements for your property visit our website or call our offices for assistance.



Be Safe, Be Sure, Be SELECT

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