

Electrical Safety Requirements – New Regulations

As of 1st July 2020, the rules will be changing in England. This will introduce new standards of electrical safety as well as legal requirements on the documents that need to be given to relevant people.

The biggest change for landlords is the fact that every property needs to have an Electrical Inspection Condition Report. This will place the property in one of three categories:

1. C1 – meaning the property is very dangerous and immediate action is required
2. C2 – meaning the property presents a low danger but action is required
3. C3 – meaning the property is safe, although slight improvements could be made.

This is estimated to cost around £175 for a 3-bedroom property. This certificates also need to readily available and accessible for all relevant parties and as the landlord you must supply the tenant with a copy. Fines of up to £30,000 could be issued for failing to comply.

Changes to the 18th edition of wiring regulations:

Recommendation for installation of Arc Fault Detection Devices

- A new Regulation has been introduced recommending the installation of Arc Fault Detection Devices (AFDDs) to mitigate the risk of fire due to the effects of arc fault currents. This means that some circuits may now require the fitting of an AFDD to protect specifically against arc faults.

Requirements for metal cable supports

- Currently, regulation states that only wiring systems located in fire escape routes must be supported against premature collapse in the event of fire. This will now apply throughout the entire installation, and wiring systems in all locations will need to have metallic clip supports. Not all clips will need to be metal, however – there just needs to be an adequate number in place – expected to be around 25%.

Requirements for RCD protection

- With the exception of FELV and RLV sockets, all AC sockets that are rated up to 32A will require RCD protection, as opposed to just 20A. This is a life-saving regulation designed to prevent any electrical shocks to the installer working with live AC socket outlets. It means that electrical contractors will need to pay increased attention to the type of RCD being used, to prevent RCDs being ‘blinded’ by the current waveform.

Metallic pipes entering a building with an insulating section at their point of entry no longer need to be connected to the protective equipotential bonding

- This regulation will require electrical installers to identify whether or not an incoming metallic pipe has an insulating section, to allow them to determine if they must add the protective bonding to the pipe.

Content relating to energy efficiency, devices for isolation and switching, and onshore units of electrical shore connections for inland navigation vessels has been introduced

- Energy efficiency appears in new Appendix 17 in the 18th Edition. This provides recommendations on the design and erection of electrical installations for optimising the overall efficient use of electricity.

To prepare for full compliance with the 18th Edition, electricians can seek a range of AFDDs, varying RCD types (AC, A, B and F), and automation, control, software, and metering and monitoring products for Appendix 17's energy efficiency application. Other equipment that electricians ought to be sourcing includes metallic cable clips to provide support under fire conditions, and Surge Protection Devices (SPDs) for Section 443 applications. However, the 18th Edition doesn't just mean that electricians need to invest in new equipment. They'll also need to plan and prepare for a revised installation process, potentially putting aside more time to conduct an electrical install. It could also mean that electricians will need to take a more active role in the architectural design process of a building to ensure it will comply with regulations.

Thank you for reading this week's blog and I hope you have found value in the content. If you have any questions or would like to have a chat to find out how we can help you in your property journey, then please send an email to info@dixonsourcing.co.uk.