Electrical Safety First

SAFETY GUIDANCE

1 LANDLORDS' GUIDE TO ELECTRICAL SAFETY

Northern Ireland

ISSUE 5

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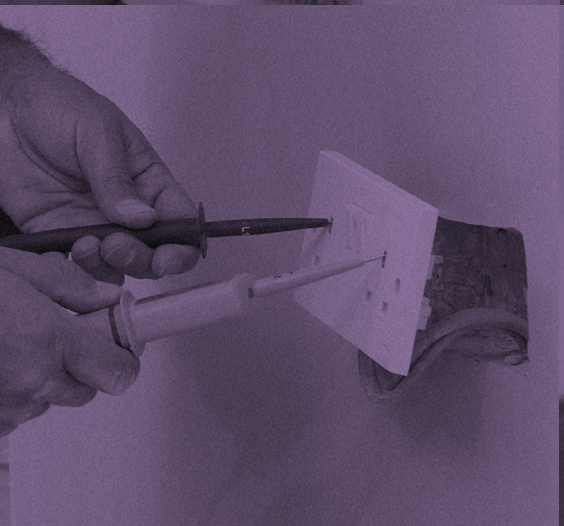
SAFETY GUIDANCE

LANDLORDS' GUIDE TO ELECTRICAL SAFETY

Northern Ireland



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.

IN 2019, 58% OF ALL ACCIDENTAL HOUSE FIRES IN NORTHERN IRELAND WERE CAUSED BY ELECTRICITY. THESE FIRES ACCOUNTED FOR 435 INCIDENTS RESULTING IN ONE DEATH AND 129 CASUALITIES[1]:

- These numbers however are a significant underestimate. They do not, for example, include deaths from electric shock (i.e. electrocution), nor other types of electrical injuries.
- There were 147 accidental electrical dwelling fires in In Northern Ireland in 2022-2023[2].

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] Electrical Safety First methodology of fire data provided by Northern Ireland Fire and Rescue Service in April 2020.

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

2.0 THE LAW
AND WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

In 2024, the Northern Ireland Executive introduced The Electrical Safety Standards for Private Tenancies Regulations, with the aim of ensuring the safety and well-being of tenants by mandating rigorous electrical safety checks in rental properties.

FIVE-YEARLY ELECTRICAL CHECKS

Section 10 of the Private Tenancies Act (NI) 2022 requires landlords in Northern Ireland to comply with the new electrical safety standards[3].

From 1 April 2025, private landlords in Northern Ireland will be required to have the electrical installation in their rental properties checked by a qualified 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 April 2025.
- Checks must be carried out on any existing tenancies by 1 December 2025.

These checks must then be carried out on a five-yearly basis.

A copy of the most recent electrical installation condition report (EICR) must be provided to both new and retained tenants within 28 days of receiving the report.

If the inspection reveals any action that needs to be taken, this remedial work must be carried out within 28 days (or less if specified in the report).

A copy of the EICR must be provided to the local council within seven days if requested.

It must meet British Standard BS 7671, with appropriate certification issued. You can find out more about periodic inspections in Section 5 of this guide.

To meet ***The Electrical Safety Standards for Private Tenancies Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2024***, landlords must ensure that:

- The electrical safety standards are met during the period when the dwelling-house is let under the private tenancy;
- They retain a copy of the EICR until the next inspection and test is due, and supply a copy to the qualified person carrying out the next inspection and test;

Landlords must also provide a copy of the most recent EICR to:

01 Any new tenant before they occupy the dwelling-house; and

02 Any prospective tenant within 28 days from the day a written request is received from that prospective tenant.

As the landlord, it is your ongoing duty to ensure the property is safe.

[3] The Licensing Scheme for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) remains in effect.

The landlord must coordinate with the tenant to schedule a convenient time and date for the EICR. If the inspection reveals the need for remedial work, the landlord and tenant should also agree on a suitable time and date for these repairs to be carried out. It is important for the landlord to maintain records demonstrating that all reasonable efforts have been made to access the property.

A landlord is also responsible for making sure that the person who completes the check is suitably qualified[4]. Using an electrician or firm that is registered with a recognised electrical trade body (such as NICEIC and NAPIT) will give you the confidence that this has been achieved ***(see Section 9, Finding a registered electrician)***.

To verify a person's qualifications and competence, landlords can:

- Confirm if the inspector is a member of a competent person scheme; or
- Request the inspector to complete a checklist certifying their competence, which should include their experience, proof of adequate insurance, and a qualification covering the current version of the Wiring Regulations and the periodic inspection, testing, and certification of electrical installations.

Visit: www.electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk/findanelectrician

If a landlord fails to adhere to the electrical safety regulations or provide proof of compliance, the local council is empowered to enforce legal action.

Full details of the legislation for Northern Ireland can be found at: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisr/2024/201/contents

SMOKE ALARMS AND CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTORS

For new private tenancies from 1 September 2024 and existing tenancies from December 2024, the landlord must ensure the property has a minimum of one smoke alarm in:

- The most used daytime room (usually the living room);
- In every circulation space (halls, stairs, landing, corridor);
- One heat alarm in each kitchen;
- One carbon monoxide alarm in any room or circulation space with a flue or fixed combustion appliance (excluding gas cookers/ovens).

All alarms must meet British Standards and be installed on the ceiling or wall as per the manufacturer's instructions. ***(See Section 8 of this guide for further information)***

The full legislation can be found at: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisr/2024/123/contents/made

[4] A qualified person is defined in the Regulations as "a person competent to undertake the inspection and testing required by Regulation 3(1) and any further investigative or remedial work in accordance with electrical safety standards."

3.0 ELECTRICAL INSTALLATIONS

An electrical installation comprises all the fixed electrical equipment that is supplied through the electricity 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.

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

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

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

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 Electrical Installation Condition Report. A copy of this schedule should be kept next to the consumer unit (fusebox) for information purposes.

FREQUENCY OF PERIODIC INSPECTIONS

By law, a periodic inspection of the electrical installations in rental properties in Northern Ireland 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.

CERTIFICATION OF REMEDIAL WORKS CALLED FOR BY A CONDITION 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, landlords must complete it within 28 days (or sooner if specified on the EICR). They must then confirm in writing to the tenant and the Council that the work has been done within 28 days.

In most cases, probably the most effective, and easy to document, method of demonstrating that the necessary remedial work has been carried out is by the issue of:

- 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.

Landlords are required to provide a copy of any relevant report and certificate (EICR, MEIWC, or EIC) to a Council official within seven days of receiving a request for such documents.

HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION (HMOS)

HMOs in Northern Ireland continue to be covered under the HMO Licensing Scheme. Legislative information can be found here: https://www.gov.uk/house-in-multiple-occupation-northern-ireland

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.

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.

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

You should also tell your tenants to register any products that they bring with them into the property.

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

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: SMOKE, HEAT, 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 smoke detection and smoke alarm system, your property does not comply with **The Smoke, Heat and Carbon Monoxide Alarms for Private Tenancies Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2024.**

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.

SMOKE ALARM REQUIREMENTS

Landlords must ensure that there are working smoke alarms installed in the most used daytime room (usually the living room), in every circulation space (halls, stairs, landing, corridor) and a heat alarm in each kitchen. 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 Northern Ireland are also required to install carbon monoxide alarms in any room or circulation space with a flue or fixed combustion appliance (excluding gas cookers/ovens).

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

In order to comply with The Smoke, Heat and Carbon Monoxide Alarms for Private Tenancies Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2024, the landlord must ensure that:

- All alarm units (smoke, heat, and carbon monoxide) purchased and installed are marked or referenced as compliant with British Standards and are fully functional;
- If any alarms are to be hardwired into the main electrical system, a qualified electrician must perform the work;
- If any alarms within the property are reported as faulty, they must be repaired or replaced;
- They keep a formal record of when alarms are installed or replaced;
- The tenant confirms that all alarms are functional at the start of any tenancy.

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 Guidance can be found here: https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/articles/smoke-heat-and-carbon-monoxide-alarms-private-tenancies-regulations-northern-ireland-2024-guidance-notes

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 register suitably qualified and experienced electricians who can carry out electrical installation work and periodic inspection & testing.

NICEIC
Telephone: 0870 013 0382
Website: niceic.com

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

COMPETENCY

Electrical supervisors (commonly known as qualified supervisors) of businesses registered with one of the trade bodies listed 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

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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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