



# PART P COMES INTO FORCE

By Geoff Cronshaw

## Overview

Part P of the Building Regulations came into force on 1 January 2005. Part P doesn't just apply to flats and houses. Dwellings and business premises that have a common metered supply – for example, shops and public houses with a flat above – are covered too, along with common access areas in blocks of flats and shared amenities such as laundries and gymnasiums. However, if the business unit is separately metered to the dwelling it does not come under Part P. The legislation also extends to parts of installations in or on associated land. This would include fixed lighting and pond pumps in gardens, or a supply to outbuildings such as sheds, detached garages and greenhouses.

A clear distinction has to be made between residential accommodation that are places of work such as university halls of residence, residential care homes and dwellings. University halls of residence, and residential care homes do not come under Part P since these are covered by the Electricity at Work Regulations and

would be subject to HSE investigations in the event of an incident. The local authority Building Control officer or an approved inspector will be able to confirm whether Part P of the Building Regulations apply in a specific case.

Significant work, such as house rewires, new circuits, and any additions to existing circuits in kitchens, bathrooms or outside the house will be 'notifiable', however, the local authority Building Control officer or an approved inspector will be able to confirm whether work is notifiable in a specific case. That means it will have to be certificated by a member of one of the competent person self-certification schemes that have been approved by the Government or notified to the local authority, which will then be responsible for inspection and testing. Part P covers the fixed electrical installation i.e. fixed wiring and equipment. It is understood that equipment plugged into a 13A BS 1363 socket outlet for example does not come under Part P.

## TYPICAL QUESTIONS

### Work in a kitchen – Cooker

**Q** If I connect a new cooker to an existing cooker control unit in a kitchen do I have to notify the local authority?

**A** No, because this is regarded as replacement work under Part P.

### Work in a bathroom – Shower

**Q** If I replace an existing electric shower with a new electric shower connected to an existing shower circuit is this notifiable work?



**A** No, providing the shower is a like for like replacement.

#### Light fitting

**Q** Is the replacement of a light fitting in a bathroom notifiable work?

**A** No, providing that the light fitting is a like for like replacement. For example if a light fitting was replaced by a number of down lighters this would be classed as alteration work rather than replacement work and would be notifiable.

#### Work outside – Wall mounted outside light

**Q** Is the installation of a wall mounted outside light fitting installed on the outside wall of a house notifiable work?

**A** The general view of the ODPM is that it is not notifiable. Even though this work is outside the house it is generally considered not notifiable providing the supply is taken from an existing lighting circuit and the connection is not made in the kitchen or a special location.

#### Extra low voltage wiring – Alarm wiring

**Q** Is the installation of intruder alarm wiring notifiable?

**A** No, providing the intruder alarm wiring is not in a special location. Therefore intruder alarm wiring in, for example, a kitchen would not be notifiable. Telephone or extra low voltage wiring and equipment for the purposes of communications, information technology, signalling control and similar purposes that is not in a special location need not be notified to Building Control bodies.

#### Caravans, mobile homes, and park homes

**Q** Do caravans, mobile homes, and park homes come under part P?

**A** Caravans, mobile homes, and park homes are treated as caravans under legislation, and do not ordinarily fall within the definition of a building in the Building Regulations, and therefore would not normally come under Part P. Also, to clarify the situation most two-unit caravans (those which are delivered in two sections and bolted together on site) fall within the definition of caravans as referred to above.



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