



PART P

SPECIAL LOCATIONS AND KITCHENS

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PART P AND MINOR WORKS

In general, work that would be considered as minor work in BS 7671 is not required to be notified to building control. Work that does not require the installation of a new circuit, such as adding sockets or lights, does not generally need to be notified to building control. However, there are very important exemptions to this, see Table 1 and Table 2 to Part P of the building regulations. Minor works in certain special locations, e.g. bathrooms, swimming pools and saunas, private generation and kitchens are notifiable.

KITCHENS

Kitchens are not a special location as far as BS 7671 is concerned but they are special as far as Part P is concerned. The reason for this is fairly clear: The electrical work associated with a fitted kitchen, though minor in terms of BS 7671 in that it would make use of existing lighting and power circuits, is in all probability hardly minor as far as the owner is concerned. The installations of fitted kitchens are a regular source of complaints to the IEE technical enquiry line. There is often concern that the electrical work carried out in a kitchen may well be unsatisfactory. In these circumstances it seems reasonable that the ODPM should make a special case for kitchens (and bathrooms) and require that work, when carried out by a firm or individual not registered under an approved competent person scheme, should be notified to building control for subsequent inspections and testing.

The IEE publication, possibly to be called the “Electricians Guide to the Building Regulations”, deals in some detail with good practice appropriate for kitchens.

Kitchens are difficult locations electrically, and care and attention needs to be taken in the location and installation of equipment.

GOOD PRACTICE IN KITCHENS

- a) Cooker control switches should be positioned so they can easily be located, i.e. not installed in cupboards, and so they can be operated without reaching over hobs.
- b) Extractor fan switches similarly should

be readily accessible and should not be located above hobs, again to prevent burning or even more dangerous spillage of boiling water from saucepans and the like.

- c) Sockets should be positioned at least 30cm from sinks and draining boards to reduce the risk from splashing.
- d) Sockets should be placed at least 5cm and preferably 10cm above a work surface to avoid excessive wear and tear on flexible cables.
- e) Socket outlets should be placed where they are readily accessible without reaching over hobs with gas or electric.
- f) Sufficient socket outlets should be installed in suitable locations to facilitate use.
- g) Sockets for kettles and toasters should be provided so that this equipment can be used without danger to children pulling the appliances from the work surface.
- h) Sockets for home laundry appliances may be installed underneath the work surface but they should be fixed to the building structure and they should be readily accessible on removal of the appliance, washing machine or tumble dryer from the kitchen fittings.
- i) Light switches similarly should be easily accessible to persons and preferably also to disabled persons.

While the general requirement for all switches and sockets to be accessible to disabled persons are not considered applicable kitchens because of practical difficulties, the main light switch clearly should be accessible to all persons, including those in wheelchairs and to young children with restricted reach.

WHAT IS NOT NOTIFIABLE IN A KITCHEN?

The Part P of the Building Regulations would allow even persons not registered under an approved competent person scheme to:

- Replace an existing light fitting
- Replace a faulty switch or socket without notification.

All other work in kitchens is notifiable. ■



TABLE 1: WORK THAT NEED NOT BE NOTIFIED TO BUILDING CONTROL BODIES

Work consisting of:

- Replacing accessories such as socket-outlets, control switches and ceiling roses
- Replacing the cable for a single circuit only, where damaged, for example, by fire, rodent or impact ^(a)
- Re-fixing or replacing the enclosures of existing installation components ^(b)
- Providing mechanical protection to existing fixed installations ^(c)

Work that is not in a kitchen or special location and does not involve a special installation ^(d) and consists of:

- Adding lighting points (light fittings and switches) to an existing circuit ^(e)
- Adding socket-outlets and fused spurs to an existing ring or radial circuit ^(e)
- Installing or upgrading main or supplementary equipotential bonding ^(f)

Notes:

- (a) On condition that the replacement cable has the same current carrying capacity, follows the same route and does not serve more than one sub-circuit through a distribution board
- (b) If the circuit's protective measures are unaffected
- (c) If the circuit's protective measures and current-carrying capacity of conductors are unaffected by increased thermal insulation
- (d) Special locations and installations are listed in Table 2
- (e) Only if the existing circuit protective device is suitable and provides protection for the modified circuit, and other relevant safety provisions are satisfactory
- (f) Such work shall comply with other applicable legislation, such as the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulation.

TABLE 2: SPECIAL LOCATIONS AND INSTALLATIONS ^(a)

- Locations containing a bath tub or shower basin
- Swimming pools or paddling pools
- Hot air saunas
- Electric floor or ceiling heating systems
- Garden lighting or power installations
- Solar photovoltaic (PV) power supply systems
- Small scale generators such as microCHP units
- Extra-low voltage lighting installations, other than pre-assembled, CE-marked lighting sets

Notes:

- (a) See IEE Guidance Note 7 which gives more guidance on achieving safe installations where risks to people are greater

Extract from approved document P subject to agreement with ODPM