



## Surrey Building Control Guidance Note - Number 20



### PART P, ELECTRICAL SAFETY

From 1 January 2005, new Approved Document P, Electrical Safety, comes into force. These new regulations apply to all electrical installation work in dwellings, including in gardens.

**Applicants proposing work involving new or existing electrical installations are strongly advised to employ the service of an electrician registered with one of the following competent persons self-certification schemes.**

a) Full Competence Scheme

BRE Certification Ltd  
British Standards Institution (Kitemark Scheme)  
ELECSA Ltd  
NAPIT Certification  
NICEIC Certification Services Ltd

b) Defined Competence Schemes

for those who do electrical work as an adjunct to their main trade eg boiler installations, security systems, kitchen and bathroom fitters etc

CORGI Services Ltd  
ELECSA Ltd  
NAPIT Certification Ltd  
NICEIC Certification Ltd  
OFTEC (for oil-fired combustion appliances)

**If the electrical work is carried out by a member of one of the above schemes there is no requirement to involve the building control department.**

In all other cases (with certain exceptions for minor work) it will be necessary to apply for Building Regulations approval for the work.

Minor Works

The following work is exempt from the need to apply for Building Regulations approval.

- 1 Replacing socket-outlets, switches, ceiling roses etc
- 2 Replacing damaged cable for a single circuit only
- 3 Re-fixing or replacing the enclosures of existing installation components
- 4 Providing mechanical protection to existing fixed installations
- 5 Adding lighting points (light fittings and switches) to an existing circuit
- 6 Adding socket-outlets and fused spurs to an existing ring or radial circuit
- 7 Installing or upgrading main or supplementary equipotential bonding

**However, items 5, 6 and 7 are not exempt if the work is in a kitchen or 'special' location or involves a 'special' installation.**

Special Locations and Installations

Locations containing a bath or shower  
Swimming pools or paddling pools  
Hot air saunas  
Electrical 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

## Satisfying the Building Regulations

There will be three main approaches to demonstrate your project complies with the regulations:

- 1 Use an electrician registered under a competent persons scheme.
- 2 Make a Building Regulations application. Use a qualified electrician who, whilst not a member of a competent persons scheme (ie is unable to self-certify the work), is able to issue a BS7671 electrical installation certificate on completion of the work.
- 3 Make a Building Regulations application and, if the work is not to be carried out by a qualified electrician as described in 1 or 2 above, arrange for the work to be inspected and tested by someone appropriately qualified to issue BS7671 certification on completion of the work.

## Inspections

If approaches 2 or 3 above are adopted, the Building Control Surveyor will require to be notified when the work reaches the 'first fix' stage, ie before the wiring is covered up, in order that an inspection may be carried out. On completion of the work the Council will require a copy of the BS7671 certificate.

## Building Control Charges

Where the electrical work is clearly an integral part of a larger building project (eg the wiring to a new house, running a new circuit to an extension) the fee will be included in the normal building control charge for the building project. In all other cases, where the electrical work is independent of any other building project the building control charge is determined by reference to Schedule 3 of the Charges Guidance Notes (NB the estimated cost of work should be that charged by a tradesperson to carry out the work).

For further information contact the Building Regulations Division

**Please note that these guidance notes are for advice only and may not cover all situations. It is your responsibility to ensure that they are appropriate for use in your particular circumstance.**