

# Electrical Safety in the Home

This leaflet provides you with some  
general information on electrical safety  
and electrical installations.

Electricity can be very dangerous and must be treated with respect. As we use it so often we can sometimes forget how dangerous it can be. This leaflet offers some basic tips to help you keep yourself safe in your home. If you don't really know what to do, be safe and call in a qualified electrician.



# Your Electrical Installation

- Circuit breakers and fuses should be the correct size current rating for their circuit.
- Consider having a Residual Current Device (RCD) for whole house protection. An RCD will disconnect the power supply to equipment immediately if a fault is detected.
- Make sure you have enough wall plug sockets. If you need more, contact a qualified electrician.
- If carrying out any electrical repairs, always turn the electrics off at the mains. Only attempt repairs if you are suitably qualified and know what you are doing.
- By law, you must be able to prove that any new electrical work or any change to existing wiring meets with Scottish Building Standards. It is therefore strongly recommended that you always use a qualified, registered installer who will undertake work to current British Standards and be able to issue a safety certificate on completion.

## Using Appliances

- If an appliance appears faulty, do not use it.
- Check all appliances before use to ensure the electrical cable and plug has not become worn or damaged.
- Switch off electrical items that are not in use at the socket and ensure that, when you are away from home

for any length of time, you unplug and switch off all electrical items. Items left plugged in can be a fire risk if left on standby. They also waste energy.

- Use appliances as advised and always read the instructions.
- Do not use items with cords which are damaged or showing the wires. Either repair or replace them.
- Use RCD protected sockets for all powers tools.
- Use an RCD protected socket when using electric lawnmowers, hedge trimmers and other items that are used outside or where water may occur.
- Do not use electrical equipment outside if it's raining.
- Do not use damaged or charred sockets. Replace them.
- Do not remove a plug from a wall plug socket by pulling the cord; always pull the plug.
- Do not use any portable mains operated items in the bathroom.
- Always avoid plugging and unplugging appliances with wet hands.

## Buying Appliances

- Where older appliances do not have a fitted plug, ensure the correct plug (BS 1362) is used and wired.
- Look for the CE mark, the BEAB mark, BS Safety mark or British Standard number when buying electrical equipment.

## Other Issues

- Have your wiring installation checked every 10 years by a qualified electrician or straight away if you are buying an older property.
- Always follow safety warnings provided with electrical appliances.
- Never drill holes or fix nails in walls without knowing what is behind them.
- Never plug adaptors into other adaptors and avoid using adaptors filled with plugs where possible.
- When using a cable drum extension lead, fully unwind the cable to avoid overheating.
- Use the correct wattage light bulb for all light fittings and shades.
- Don't use tape to secure cables together.
- It is a good idea to keep a torch handy in case of a power cut. Keep it somewhere you can easily locate it in the dark.
- If you have young children in your home, make sure you use safety covers on any sockets within reach.

## Contacting an Electrician

If you are unsure of the best way to find an electrician you can contact either Select or NICEIC for the names of approved electrical contractors in your local area.

NICEIC [www.niceic.com](http://www.niceic.com)  
Telephone **0333 015 6625**

Select [www.select.org.uk](http://www.select.org.uk)  
Telephone **0131 445 5577**

The Electrical Safety Council also has useful information. Please see their website for more information [www.esc.org.uk](http://www.esc.org.uk) or telephone 0131 445 4690 or email [enquiries@electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@electricalsafetyfirst.org.uk)

## What to do if you're unhappy with work carried out

Consumer advice in Aberdeenshire is now provided in partnership with Citizens Advice Consumer Service, an advice only service which is funded by BIS and covers the whole of Scotland. This service provides free, confidential and impartial advice on consumer issues. Visit [www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/business/trading-standards/consumers/consumer-advice/](http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/business/trading-standards/consumers/consumer-advice/) or [www.citizensadvice.org.uk/scotland/](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/scotland/)  
**03454 04 05 06**  
(9am to 5pm Monday - Friday ) or email [advice@citizensadvisedirect.org.uk](mailto:advice@citizensadvisedirect.org.uk).

For further information please contact the Private Sector Housing Team at

[private.housing@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:private.housing@aberdeenshire.gov.uk) or call **01467 534753**

