



This guidance is related to the importance of ensuring buildings are safe for use following periods of low or no occupation.

Key information

- Buildings may not be suitable for immediate occupation post COVID-19
- Building owners, landlords and managers should ensure that appropriate checks are done
- This information is a guide, other checks should be considered depending on the building type

1. The importance of electrical maintenance

With the recent COVID-19 crisis causing many businesses to close their doors and forcing people to work from home, where possible, there has been a lack of clarity over what maintenance work should be undertaken.

Electrical maintenance is a critical form of maintenance work and should not be neglected. Of course, some elements are more important than others, but certain key safety services should always be suitably and adequately maintained.

2. Opportunity to access infrastructure

Now is a great opportunity to undertake this type of work as access should be more readily available and many buildings are empty. This will allow for a more thorough electrical inspection to be undertaken than would typically be practicable.

The following items would be considered safety critical or essential in terms of their maintenance, though this list is not exhaustive:

- Fire alarm testing and maintenance
- Security, CCTV and access equipment testing and maintenance
- Firefighting equipment, including lifts
- Emergency lighting systems testing and maintenance including central battery systems
- Generators and UPS
- Motors and pumps
- Any emergency medical equipment

- RCDs and other similar protective devices
- Building Management Systems
- Any Smart aligned systems
- Electrical vehicle charge points and systems
- On site generation such as solar PV systems, heat pumps and wind etc.
- Any electrical energy storage systems

General electrical inspection and testing should be undertaken where possible.

Where a client is unable to authorise any electrical maintenance or testing to be undertaken, it should be made clear that legal responsibilities should continue to be adhered to during this crisis. The client will need reasonable justification for not undertaking safety critical work or undertake mitigating actions as responsibility will sit with the duty holder of the building. It is particularly important for clients to check their insurance (including disclosure clauses), contractual and legal obligations before deciding not to proceed with planned or routine work.

3. Returning to work

Prior to buildings opening again when authorised to do so, it would be strongly recommended that building owners, landlords and building managers ensure that their infrastructure and services are suitable for staff to return to work, especially where there has been a long break. A periodic inspection and test of the electrical services would be recommended, depending on when this was last undertaken and the typical maintenance regime in place. The following should be considered for inspection prior to commencement of work, again this list is not exhaustive:

- Electrical circuits supplying water systems, refrigeration and air conditioning where legionella may be present
- Electrical safety devices such as RCDs, emergency stops, call points etc.
- Fire alarm systems, equipment and processes including fire suppression
- Emergency lighting systems, in particular the quality and duration of battery systems
- General lighting systems check and replacements of defective lamps
- Any other safety critical services

This guidance will help to ensure that post COVID-19 businesses can return to work with a minimal fuss and ensure that the electrical installation within is safe and ready to be used.

This guide assumes all reasonable safety precautions and social distancing measures have been adhered to.



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