



# 50plus Electrical



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## Periodic Electrical Inspections

### 1 What does a periodic inspection do?

A periodic Inspection will:

- Reveal if any circuits or equipment are being overloaded
- Find any potential electrical shock risks and fire hazards in the installation
- Identify any defective DIY electrical work
- Highlight any lack of earthing or bonding

Tests are also carried out on wiring and associated fixed electrical equipment to check that it is safe and a schedule of circuits is developed during the inspection.

### 2 What does a periodic inspection deliver?

- BS7671: 2008 Compliant Periodic Inspection Report
- Schedule of Test Results
- Evidence of any defects and departures from the IEE Wiring Regulations (17<sup>th</sup> Edition)
- Professional technical advice from a qualified engineer
- Advice relating to the frequency and extent of future tests
- An estimate for any remedial works required.

### 3 What are my (the client's) responsibilities?

#### 3.1 Routine checks

Under the Electricity at Work Regulations and the Health & Safety at Work Act every business has to be electrically safe for use by their staff, customers and the public. Hence in business premises electrical installations should be visually inspected in the periods of time between formal inspections. The frequency of these checks is dependent upon on the nature of the premises.

In domestic premises it is presumed that the occupier will soon notice any breakages or excessive wear and arrange for precautions to be taken and/or repairs to be carried out.

Routine checks would typically include those shown in table 1. They need not be carried out by an electrically skilled person but may be undertaken by someone who is able to safely use the installation and recognise defects.

**Table 1 - Routine checks**

Activity	Check
Defects reports	All reported defects have been rectified
Inspection	Look for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• breakages</li> <li>• wear / deterioration</li> <li>• signs of overheating</li> <li>• missing parts (covers, screws)</li> <li>• loose fixings</li> </ul>
Inspection	Confirm: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Switchgear is accessible</li> <li>• Doors of enclosures are secure</li> <li>• Adequate labelling in place</li> </ul>
Operation	Operate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Switchgear (where reasonable)</li> <li>• Equipment – switch on and off</li> <li>• RCDs (test button)</li> </ul>

### 3.2 Periodic Inspections

Periodic inspections are recommended at pre-set intervals depending on the location and use of the electrical installation. These periods take into account:

- The type of installation
- The use and operation
- The frequency and quality of maintenance
- The external influences to which it is subjected.

The inspector should be suitably qualified and must be made aware of the extent of the installation to be inspected and any criteria regarding the limit of the inspection. This should be recorded.

Enquiries should be made to the person responsible for the electrical installation with regard to the provision of diagrams, design criteria, electricity supply and earthing arrangements.

Diagrams, charts or tables should be available to indicate the type and composition of circuits, identification of protective devices for shock protection, isolation and switching and a description of the method used for fault protection.

Tables 2 and 3 show the recommended frequency of formal inspections as well as the routine checks.

**Table 2**

Type of installation	Routine check	Maximum Period between inspection and testing	Reference (see key)
GENERAL INSTALLATION			
Domestic	n/a	Change of occupancy /10 years	
Commercial	1 year	Change of occupancy /10 years	1,2
Educational	4 months	5 years	1,2
Hospitals	1 year	5 years	1,2
Industrial	1 year	5 years	1,2
Residential	Change of occupancy /1 year	5 years	1,2
Offices	1 year	5 years	1,2
Shops	1 year	5 years	1,2
Laboratories	1 year	5 years	1,2
BUILDINGS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC			
Cinemas	1 year	1 to 3 yrs	2,6,7
Church installations	1 year	5 years	2
Leisure complexes (ex swimming pool)	1 year	3 years	1,2,6
Places of public entertainment	1 year	3 years	1,2,6
Restaurants/hotels	1 year	5 years	1,2,6
Theatres	1 year	3 years	2,6,7
Public houses	1 year	5 years	1,2,6
Village/community halls	1 year	5 years	1,2

Reference key for Table 2.

1. Particular attention must be taken to comply with SI 1988 No.1057 - Electricity, Safety, Quality and Continuity Regulations 2002 (as amended)
2. SI 1989 No 635 – Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 (Reg 4 & Memorandum)
3. See BS 5266: Part 1: 2005 Code of practice for the emergency lighting of premises. Other than cinemas and certain other specified premises used for entertainment.
4. Other intervals are recommended for testing operation of batteries and generators
5. See BS 5839: Part 1: 2002 Code of practice for system design installation design
6. and servicing (Fire detection and alarm systems for buildings).
7. Local Authority Conditions of License
8. SI 1995 No 1129 (clause 27) – Cinematograph (safety) regulations
9. It is recommended that a caravan is inspected and tested annually if it is used frequently (see 721.514.1 and Fig 721 – Instructions for electricity supply)

Table 3

Type of installation	Routine check	Maximum Period between inspection and testing	Reference (see key)
SPECIAL INSTALLATIONS			
Agricultural/ Horticultural	1 year	3 years	1,2
Caravans	1 year	3 years	8
Caravan parks	6 months	1 year	1,2,6
Highway power supplies	As convenient	6 years	
Marinas	4 months	1 year	1,2
Fish Farms	4 months	1 year	1,2
Swimming Pools	4 months	1 year	1,2,6
Emergency lighting	Daily/Monthly	3 years	2,3,4
Fire Alarms	Daily/Weekly/Monthly	1 year	2,4,5
Launderettes	1 year	1 year	1,2,6
Petrol filling stations	1 year	1 year	1,2,6
Construction site installations	3 months	3 months	1,2

Reference key for Table 3.

9. Particular attention must be taken to comply with SI 1988 No.1057 – Electricity, Safety, Quality and Continuity Regulations 2002 (as amended)
10. SI 1989 No 635 – Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 (Reg 4 & Memorandum)
11. See BS 5266: Part 1: 2005 Code of practice for the emergency lighting of premises other than cinemas and certain other specified premises used for entertainment
12. Other intervals are recommended for testing operation of batteries and generators
13. See BS 5839: Part 1: 2002 Code of practice for system design installation design and servicing (Fire detection and alarm systems for buildings).
14. Local Authority Conditions of License
15. SI 1995 No 1129 (clause 27) – Cinematograph (safety) regulations
16. It is recommended that a caravan is inspected and tested annually if it is used frequently (see 721.514.1 and Fig 721 – Instructions for electricity supply)

For further information contact 50plus on 0845 22 50 495.

50plus also provides a householder / landlord safety electrical test. Please visit [www.the50plus.co.uk/landlords.html](http://www.the50plus.co.uk/landlords.html) for more information.