



and industrial electrical work located throughout the UK and Northern Ireland. To find an electrician in your area call 0870 013 0382 or visit www.niceic.com.

Competent contractors

NICEIC registered businesses are assessed every year to ensure they comply with national safety standards and codes of practice. The assessment covers a representative sample of the contractors' electrical work, documentation, and in some cases their premises, and the competence of their key supervisory staff.

Contractors are assessed against the national standard for the safety of electrical installations, British Standard BS 7671: Requirements for electrical installations (also known as the IEE Wiring Regulations). They must also comply with the electrical safety requirements of any other applicable Codes of Practice, such as those for fire alarms, emergency lighting.

In England and Wales, it is a legal requirement for electrical work carried out in and outside the home to comply with Part P of the Building Regulations. The easiest way to be sure that your electrician complies with the law is to employ one registered with a government authorised scheme, such as the NICEIC Domestic Installer scheme.

Registration with NICEIC is voluntary - however, electrical contractors that are competent and conscientious about the service they offer customers consider registration a priority.

Why use a registered electrician?

Electrical work should only be carried out by competent persons with the necessary skills and training. It's easy to make an electrical circuit work - it's far more demanding to make the circuit work safely. All contractors registered with NICEIC have undergone appropriate training and assessment -

demonstrating competence and having relevant qualifications and training is their only route to becoming registered.

Should I receive a certificate or report on completion of the work?

Any electrical contractor constructing a new electrical installation, or altering or adding to an existing electrical installation, should issue an Electrical Installation Certificate, which is a safety declaration confirming that their work complies with the national safety standard.

An electrical contractor reporting on the condition of an existing electrical installation should issue a Periodic Inspection Report detailing their findings and providing recommendations for any work that needs to be carried out.

The certificate or report should be fully completed and signed. Details of what you should expect to receive are given on the NICEIC website - www.niceic.com.

Complaints procedure

NICEIC expects registered contractors to provide quality services to customers so, subject to certain limitations and conditions, we endeavour to resolve all complaints about the technical standard of their electrical work. Work carried out by NICEIC Domestic Installers is covered by an Insurance Backed Warranty so in the event that your contractor goes out of business and the work does not comply with Part P, NICEIC will ensure that any remedial work is completed for you. Details of the complaints procedure are given on the NICEIC website.

Contact us:

General enquiries 0870 013 0382
Website www.niceic.com
Email enquiries@niceic.com

This document is available in other print formats. Please contact the Marketing Department on 01582 531000 to obtain a copy.

L5174 April 06

How safe is the wiring in your home?



www.niceic.com

How safe is the wiring in your home?

In less time than you may think, the electrics in your home can become damaged or worn through general wear and tear. It's important to get them inspected and tested to check they're still safe to use.

You should get checks done at least every ten years. If the electrics in your property have been checked before, a notice will usually be fixed on or near the fuse board recommending the next inspection date.

This might all sound dull but government statistics show unsafe electrical installations cause more than 750 serious accidents and 12,500 fires in homes each year.

If you are moving home, you need to know about the electrics in your new property. Be extra cautious if the property is old as it runs a higher risk of having faulty wiring. Don't put your life or your investment at risk; get an electrical survey on your new home before you sign on the dotted line.

According to the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS), property surveys that do look at electrics only include a visual inspection of the electrics that are on show. RICS advise clients to be very cautious if the electrics look suspicious because of the potentially high costs of putting things right. You can't see what's behind the walls so it's best to get a trained electrical engineer to inspect and test it.

An electrical survey, also known as a Periodic Inspection, looks for possible electric shock risks and fire hazards. The electrician will carry out tests on wiring and fixed electrical equipment, identify any faulty electrical work and highlight if safety measures (such as bonding) are present in the bathroom. After the inspection, you will be given an electrical survey report (Periodic Inspection Report). The report identifies the overall condition of all the electrics, stating whether it is satisfactory for continued use and any work which might need to be done.

Does your property need a complete rewire?

If your electrical survey has thrown up an unsatisfactory result, or the wiring in your home is very old and you need a rewire, follow these simple guidelines.

Start by preparing a brief of what you need and what you expect from the electrician. Contact at least three registered electricians (it's advisable to use an electrician registered with a government-authorized scheme such as the NICEIC, as rewiring must comply with Building Regulations) so that you can compare quotes.

Discuss the quotation with each contractor; the lowest price may not necessarily be the best. Don't forget to ask if there is a charge for the quotation, and discuss payment terms such as the deposit and/or stage payments before work begins. Agree a timescale of the installation with a definite start and finish date. Don't be afraid to ask questions – no reputable electrician will have a problem with that.

The job

- 1 Make a list of the number of sockets and lighting points you would like in each room
- 2 If you want wires concealed and accessories flushed in, make sure the electrician clearly understands this. Write it all down so it's clear. (We would suggest that you ask that all cables are installed in oval plastic conduit)
- 3 If you plan to buy your own light fittings or accessories for the electrician to fit, check with the contractor that they are suitable

Rewire first, decorate later

Rewiring your home can be a messy job – it's best to forget about decorating until it is finished. It can also cause major disruptions to the household as carpets and floorboards are up. You could also be

without cooking facilities and hot water for some time so you should try to keep young children and pets out of the way. Or if you have confidence in your chosen electrician, you could take a holiday whilst the work is carried out (this may also result in a lower price as the contractor does not have to put the boards back, carpets down and get the circuits back on each night).

To minimise disruption set some ground rules with your electrician before work begins

- Get agreement that they will clear up after each day's work
- Get agreement that they will screw down all floorboards raised after completion
- Get agreement that upon completion they will re-lay all carpets

When your rewire and other installations are completed the electrician will give you an electrical installation certificate which confirms the work has been carried out, inspected and tested in accordance with BS 7671, the national safety standard for electrical installations. Do not give the final payment until you are completely satisfied with the work and have got your certificate.

Within 30 days of the work being completed, you will also receive a certificate that confirms that the work complies with Part P of the Building Regulations. If you used an NICEIC electrician, the certificate will carry the NICEIC logo and the name of the firm you used. It is a legal requirement to comply with Building Regulations, so you should ensure that your electrician is registered with a government-authorized Part P scheme.

If, during the course of the work, you require alterations or additions to the installation, request a fixed price. Finally, check with your electrician if the local Public Supply Authority will be required to disconnect and re-connect the electrical supply to which there may be additional charges.

Part P of the Building Regulations

Part P of the Building Regulations for England and Wales was introduced by the government in January 2005, with an aim of reducing the number

of accidents in the home related to faulty electrical installations. Similar laws apply in Scotland. It is now a legal requirement for electricians, kitchen, bathroom and gas installers, and all other trades or individuals involved in carrying out domestic electrician work to comply with Building Regulations.

Most electrical installations carried out in a property are now notifiable: In other words the local authority building control must be notified prior to the work being carried out. The exception is if it is carried out, and certified by a person registered with a government-authorized competent scheme such as NICEIC. Failure to comply with Part P is a criminal offence and local authorities have the power to require the removal or alteration of work that does not comply with regulations.

Portable Equipment Outdoors

In domestic premises, all sockets outlets, which may be used for portable equipment outdoors, should be protected by an RCD (a safety device that switches off the electricity automatically when it detects an earth fault) to provide protection against electric shock.

Socket outlet installed below kitchen worktops may usually be considered to be unavailable for connection of outdoor portable equipment, and would therefore not be required to be RCD protected. It is wise to exclude socket outlets intended for refrigerators and freezers from circuits which require sensitive RCD protection.

Which electrician should I choose?

NICEIC acts under licence from the Electrical Safety Council, as the electrical contracting industry's independent voluntary regulatory body that has been assessing the competence of electrical contractors since 1956. NICEIC is dedicated to promoting safe electrical installations in the home, and places of work and leisure.

NICEIC has a register of around 20,000 Approved electrical contractors and Domestic Installers and other businesses involved in domestic, commercial