

## Electrical Testing Frequently Asked Questions...

As an Approved NICEIC electrical contractor we are subject to an annual audit by a fully qualified NICEIC Area Engineer to ensure "best practice and compliance to the British Standards" is being carried out by our company, record keeping, reporting and samples of our work are inspected, so you the client, can rest assured when you choose AFS to carry out your testing, our level of service has been tested on your behalf!

To submit a question or request a quotation please call 0800 731 8414 / 07973 741 586 or email [afselec@live.com](mailto:afselec@live.com)

Q) Why do I need to have my wiring tested?

A) Electricity will always find the easiest path to earth. Any faults or weaknesses within your electrical installation or portable appliances can go undetected. In the event of another fault developing, this could lead to serious risk of fire, electrocution or death. For example, a 13-amp ring-main without earth continuity could render all metal parts of appliances plugged into it "LIVE" if one item on the ring developed a fault to earth.

Fixed wiring testing will accurately identify faults, their locations and usually the recommended solution.

Q) Is electrical installation testing a legal requirement?

A) The law does require that you keep your entire electrical system safe at all times. The only effective means to that end is to have an electrical Installation condition report (EICR) carried out, together with action to remedy any faults found as a result of testing.

If an accident or fire does occur where electricity is suspected to have been the cause, then the duty is yours to prove that you did your best to avoid that accident (offence). Test data results together with preventative maintenance records will provide your best proof and defence.

Q) Will testing cause a lot of disruption to the power?

A) A short power outage can be expected on each circuit within the system but because most of the testing is carried out whilst the system is still live, these outages can be planned around your daily activities.

Q) Is electrical testing a requirement of my insurance company?

A) Increasingly, insurers are insisting that inspection and testing be carried out on a regular basis. If tested. This does not hold true for the vast majority, for which full inspection and testing should be undertaken.

Q) What will happen if I don't have testing carried out?

A) Unless and until you suffer an accident then probably nothing will happen. However, remember that maintenance of a safe electrical system is a legal requirement. Therefore a preventable accident could lead to prosecution, for which there will be no insurance cover and possible custodial implications depending on the case.

You may also find that an insurance loss adjuster could make much of the fact that you may not have maintained the system adequately which could have led to the claim. Again, this could lead to an unsuccessful claim and a costly experience.

Q) I run a small business, do I need to have my portable appliances tested?

A) The Electricity at Work Regulations apply to all businesses from multi-nationals to sole traders. So you still need to comply.

Q) I am afraid that my electrical installation is quite old, won't testing open a can of worms in terms of remedial work costs?

A) Because we accurately identify any faults found, the cost of remedy in most cases is not too great. The majority of problems found involve earthing deficiencies, which although potentially very dangerous are not usually hugely expensive to remedy.

Q) How often should my electrical installation be tested?

A) The IEE guidance suggests the following test intervals: -

Domestic 10-years

Commercial 5-years

Industrial 3-years

The frequency of future tests is decided by the tester based on the condition of the installation at the time of testing. If you suffer an avoidable accident, then under law, if found guilty, you will be deemed to have committed a criminal offence. Insurers will not pay fines or compensation suffered resulting from a criminal offence.

Q) My insurers have recently carried out a site survey and they didn't ask me to have electrical testing carried out.

A) A visiting inspector will not necessarily identify the need to maintain electrical safety at every inspection he makes, especially if there are other issues to be addressed. Because testing has not been specifically demanded does not mean that the legal requirements to comply with electrical safety do not apply.

Q) Why have I not needed to have testing carried out before?

A) There has always been a requirement to satisfy Health & Safety legislation. In 1989 The Electricity at Work Regulations came into force, which clarifies the need to maintain electrical systems safely. So there has always been the need and test data results will form a major part of your defence should an accident occur which leads to prosecution in court.

Q) My factory operates 24-hours a day, how can you carry out testing if I can't stop production?

A) We have a great deal of experience in working within the constraints of three manufacturing environments. Because the majority of the testing involves carrying out live tests; we can schedule

dead testing around pre-arranged windows of opportunity. Be these during holidays, process changes, or maintenance stoppages, shift changes or weekends.

Q) I rent my business premises, is testing my landlords responsibility or mine?

A) You are responsible to make sure that you and your staff comply with Health & Safety legislation. However, it is usually dependent on the terms of your lease as to whether you or your landlord pays for testing to be carried out on the electrical installation. Usually, if you are on a full repairing lease then the cost will fall to you. Portable Appliance testing will always be at your expense.

Q) I have been told that I only need to have a percentage of the system tested in order to comply.

A) As per the IEE Regulations, you can only rely on sample testing if you hold previous full system records, the installation is considered to be in excellent condition, no faults are found during sample testing and no undocumented alterations have been carried out since the system was new or last.

Q) I can get my electrical installation tested cheaper elsewhere, why should I choose AFS?

A) Not all testing companies offer the same service. You can rest assured that AFS provide a very thorough and cost effective survey of all systems that will enable you not only to be able to prove compliance and be comfortable in the knowledge that any faults found have been reported about, Also the fact that by virtue of the depth of detail that AFS reports provide, the cost of any remedial work required is likely to be lower than a less detailed report might be.