

## Condition Reports explained

**You cannot see electricity. Cables are usually hidden inside our walls, and consumer units are often hidden in cupboards, so it is not surprising that we forget to check the condition of our electrical installation for damage or wear and tear.**

Faulty and old wiring is one of the main causes of electrical fires in the home. You can reduce the risk of a fire by checking the condition of your cables, switches, sockets and other accessories regularly.

### How old is my electrical installation?

Clear signs that can help you tell the age of equipment in the electrical installation in your home include:

- Fixed cables coated in black rubber (stopped being used in the 1960s).
- Fixed cables coated in lead or fabric (used before the 1960s).
- A fuse box with a wooden back, cast iron switches, or a mixture of fuse boxes (used before the 1960s).
- Old round pin sockets (or light switches), braided flex hanging from ceiling roses, brown (or black) switches, or sockets mounted in or on skirting boards (used before the 1960s).
- Light switches on the walls or in bathrooms (used before the 1960s).

However old your electrical installation is, it may get damaged and will suffer from wear and tear. Therefore you should get an electrician to check its condition at least every 10 years or when you move into a new property.

### What is the aim of an electrical installation condition report?

The five main aims of an electrical installation condition report are:

1. Record the results of the inspection and testing to make sure the electrical installation is safe to be used until the next inspection (following any work needed to make it safe).

2. Find any damage and wear and tear that might affect safety and report it.
3. Find any parts of the electrical installation that do not meet the IET Wiring Regulations.
4. Help find anything that may cause electric shocks and high temperatures.
5. To provide records of all inspections and tests of the installation and recommended time interval for future checks, which may need to be increased as an installation ages.

## Types of condition report

In general, there are two types of domestic electrical installation condition report:

- Visual condition report - this does not include testing and is only suitable if the installation has been tested recently.
- Periodic inspection reports - this is what we would normally recommend, as it tests the installation and would find any hidden damage.

- **What will the report show?**

The electrical installation should be safe for continued use. In practice, if the report does not require investigative or remedial work, the landlord will not be required to carry out any further work.

Inspectors will use the following classification codes to indicate where a landlord must undertake remedial work.

- **Code 1 (C1): Danger present. Risk of injury.** The electrical inspector may make any C1 hazards safe before leaving the property.
- **Code 2 (C2): Potentially dangerous.**
- **Further Investigation (FI): Further investigation required without delay.**
- **Code 3 (C3): Improvement recommended.** Further remedial work is **not** required for the report to be deemed satisfactory.

If codes C1 or C2 are identified in on the report, then remedial work will be required. The report will state the installation is unsatisfactory for continued use.

If an inspector identifies that further investigative work is required (FI), the landlord must also ensure this is carried out.

The C3 classification code does not indicate remedial work is required, but only that improvement is recommended. Landlords don't have to make the improvement, but it would improve the safety of the installation if they did.