**Electrical Equipment Management and Control Policy**

Aberdeenshire council will demonstrate that, in regard of managing the risks associated with Electrical Equipment it will:

* Identify and assess sources of risk
* Prepare a control system for preventing, reducing or controlling the risk
* Implement and manage and monitor precautions
* Maintain suitable and sufficient records of the precautions implemented and will carry this out for each Aberdeenshire Council premises within the Council’s control.
* Appoint a person to be responsible for the management and maintenance of the control system and measures adopted.

The Manager of the establishment has the day to day responsibility for the implementation of these procedures to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety of employees and others at council premises

Management has a statutory duty to ensure that compliance is active, continuous and effectively policed.

The Council must be able to demonstrate it has:

* Identified all the relevant factors
* Instituted the appropriate corrective or preventive actions and
* Is monitoring the effective implementation of the required solutions.

Electrical Equipment

INTRODUCTION

This procedure has been formulated to introduce a common approach to the Safe Use of Electrical Equipment.

It is intended to dispel some of the misconceptions which prevail with regard to inspection and testing of equipment, arising from the relevant legislation and highlight some of the hazards and associated risks which may arise while using such equipment.

Hopefully, by adopting a proactive approach, we can prevent or minimise the likelihood of accidents occurring which may result in injury to the user or others and also the loss of resources, property and assets.

INTERPRETATION

Hazard:

A simple definition of a hazard is anything which can cause harm if things go wrong (e.g. a fault on equipment).

Risk:

A simple definition of risk is the chance (big or small) of harm actually being done if anything goes wrong (e.g. risk of electric shock from faulty equipment).

Portable and Transportable:

This term is applied to equipment which is not part of a fixed installation but is, or is intended to be, connected to a fixed installation by means of a flexible cable/lead and either a plug and socket or a spur box or similar means.

All extension leads, plugs and sockets, and cord sets which supply portable equipment, are also classed as portable equipment.

Fixed Electrical Equipment:

This is equipment that is ‘hard wired’ to the electrical system, i.e. it does not have a plug that connects it to the system via a socket, it is wired directly to an outlet.

This type of equipment requires that maintenance and testing to be undertaken by a qualified electrician only.

User Visual Inspection:

Where the user simply examines the electrical equipment looking for obvious signs of damage (e.g. broken plug cover, damaged cable, etc).

Formal Visual Inspections:

Carried out by a competent person who, by virtue of his/her experience and knowledge of the work involved, can recognise the inherent dangers within.

Equipment Testing:

Series of checks carried out by a competent person to determine the working integrity of the equipment, using the appropriate test instruments.

Portable Electrical Equipment:

* Examples of portable equipment would be tools, extension leads, grinders, power saws, drills used in industry (high risk) and
* floor cleaners, metal bodied kettles, open electric heaters in offices (medium risk) and
* display screen equipment (DSE), photocopiers, overhead projectors (low risk).

APPLICATION

This procedure shall apply to all those within the company/organisation where portable electrical equipment is used and contractors carrying out work for or on the company/organisations behalf on its premises.

MAINTENANCE (INSPECTION & TESTING/RECORDS)

Since the introduction of the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989, (EAWR) industry has been inundated by companies offering inspection and testing services for Electrical Equipment. Contrary to the information contained in some of the literature received from them:-

* The person carrying out visual inspections need not be an electrician. Any (competent) person can do it, provided they have been given adequate training and have sufficient knowledge of the work involved.
* Legislation does not indicate the intervals at which these inspections and tests should take place, however, Section 4(2) of EAWR states quite clearly “as may be necessary to prevent danger, all electrical systems shall be maintained so as to prevent, so far as is reasonably practicable (a) such danger!” The word “system” includes all equipment connected to the system.

In order to carry out adequate maintenance, inspection and testing must be undertaken. However, the criteria used to determine the frequency at which they take place shall be determined by the type of system, its operations and use, the frequency of the maintenance required (i.e. the number of defects found) and the external influences to which it is subjected.

A table that indicates the type and frequency of inspections and testing requirements as recommended by the Institute of Electrical Engineers (IEE) is available by clicking the following [link](file:///\\ABNWHHNA02\HOME_CEX\DROBB\Documents%20from%20Desktop\My%20Docs\My%20Docs\New%20Guidance\Guidance\Electrical%20Safety%20(G)\Test%20periods.doc)

All existing portable electrical equipment will be allocated an identification number (ID No.) before commencement.

All new equipment will be allocated an ID No. before being taken into use for the first time.

A full record of all maintenance and testing shall be kept in each service area

An appliance must not be used after a defect is found. Defects uncovered must be reported to management who will ensure that the appliance is taken out of use and repaired as soon as possible.

TRAINING, INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTION

All users shall receive adequate information, instruction and training to enable them to carry out user visual inspection of the equipment that they use.

Only suitably trained (competent) person(s) will be permitted to carry out formal visual inspections or combined visual inspections and testing.

Where external organisations are used for such inspections, proof of competency shall be required of those who are to carry out the work on the Service’s behalf.

For further information on Electrical Safety please click the following link <http://www.hse.gov.uk/electricity/index.htm>