



The law: Since January 1st 2005, the design, installation, inspection and testing of electrical installations has fallen within the remit of the Building Regulations. Following these regulations should help you avoid the danger and costs that could be incurred by a rogue electrician.

Part P of the Building Regulations refers to electrical safety in dwellings including gardens and outbuildings including sheds, detached garages and greenhouses.

Small jobs such as the provision of a socket-outlet or a light switch may be carried out by you (although there are some exceptions for high-risk areas such as kitchens and bathrooms).

All work that involves adding a new circuit to a dwelling, or electrical work in kitchens and bathrooms or in 'special locations' (see below) will need to be either carried out by a **competent person** who is registered with a Part P Self-Certification Scheme OR **notified to LABC (Local Authority Building Control)** with a building regulation application.

The two routes to compliance:

Route 1. Part P Self-Certification Scheme (Competent Person's Scheme)

If a Part P electrician registered on one of these schemes carries out the work, then a building regulation application will not be required. The electrician will certify that their work complies with the building regulations, notify LABC, cover the necessary fees and paperwork and provide you with two documents; an **electrical certificate** and **building regulations compliance certificate**. These documents will help should you wish to sell your property.

Route 2. Building regulation application – there are two options in this route

- a) A qualified, registered electrician carries out **or** inspects the work. They can issue the relevant certificate to supply to LABC. Additional inspections and tests by LABC may be carried out.
- b) Where the work is carried out by an unregistered electrician or is a DIY installation, it is your responsibility to **instruct** LABC to inspect and test the work to ensure it complies with Part P.

Special locations referred to above include fixed garden lighting or power installations (including ponds), swimming pools, electric floor heating systems, hot air saunas and locations containing a shower basin or bath tub.

You can check if an electrician is Part P registered on the **LABC (Local Authority Building Control)** website - <http://www.competentperson.co.uk>
You can also find your local authority by typing your postcode into the search box on the LABC homepage - www.labc.uk.com

Residents of Scotland must abide by the Scottish Building Standards Agency. To find a reliable electrician in Scotland go to:
NICEIC – www.niceic.org.uk or Select - www.select.org.uk

Useful contacts: There are several organisations who maintain a register of Part P competent persons, including:

BSI – Kitemark - 08450 765 600

ELESCA - 0845 634 9043

NAPIT – 0845 5430 330

NICEIC 0870 0130 391

NICEIC have provided a handy ‘Jargon Buster’:

<http://niceic.com/householder/jargonbuster>

Disputes: In the event of a dispute with a contract either in terms of safety or cost, the IET can be contacted in the first instance for advice or referrals.

IET – Institution of Engineering and Technology - 01438 313 311

According to DirectGov:

About 6,700 fires a year are reported as having an electrical source, which includes faulty or inadequate wiring. These fires, along with electric shock accidents cause around 43 fatalities and 2,900 serious injuries every year. Cables, switches, socket-outlets and other equipment will degrade over time and so it is important to get them checked and replaced as necessary by a qualified electrician.