



Brixham Town Council

Portable Appliance Testing Policy

Adopted: September 2014

Review Date: 14.05.15

Review History: 1st review date

Introduction

To prevent danger arising from electrical work equipment a pre-planned preventative maintenance programme is essential, an important element of which is portable appliance testing.

This policy lays out the duties and procedures for Brixham Town Council, its employees, tenants, the employees and /or volunteers of tenants and the hirers of Brixham Town Hall in relation to portable appliance testing.

Legislation

The four main pieces of legislation of specific relevance to the inspection and testing of portable electrical equipment are:

- a) The Health & Safety at Work Act 1974
- b) Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- c) Electricity at Work Regulations 1989
- d) Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998

a) The Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 (HSAW)

Section 2.2 of the HASW Act requires employers so far as is reasonably practicable “to provide and maintain plant and systems of work that are safe and without risk to health. Plant covers any machinery, equipment or appliances including portable appliances.”

b) The Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (MHSW)

In order to implement the MHSW Regulations "Every employer shall make suitable and sufficient assessment of:

- i. the risks to the health and safety of his employees to which they are exposed whilst at work
- ii. the risks to ensure the health and safety of persons not in his employment arising out of or in connection with the conduct by him of his undertaking."

c) The Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 (PUWER)

- i. states "Every employer shall ensure that work equipment is maintained in an efficient state, in efficient working order and in good repair."
- ii. covers most risks that can result from using work equipment. With respect to risks from electricity, compliance with the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 is likely to achieve compliance with the PUWER.
- iii. only applies to work equipment used by workers at work. This includes all work equipment (fixed, transportable or portable) connected to a source of electrical energy.

d) The Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 (EAWR)

Regulation 16 – “Persons to be competent to prevent danger and injury” states that “No person shall be engaged in any work activity where technical knowledge or experience is necessary to prevent danger or, where appropriate, injury, unless he possesses such knowledge or experience, or is under such degree of supervision as may be appropriate having regard to the nature of the work.”

Equipment that should be inspected and tested:

Equipment used in the Town hall that is owned by Brixham Town Council, its Tenants, volunteers or employees of tenants and hirers of any part of the Town Hall.

This policy covers both new and existing single phase equipment up to 230 volts that is intended to be connected to a fixed installation or a generator by means of a flexible cable and plug.

Testing of:

- a) three phase equipment
- b) equipment operating at voltages greater than 230 volts
- c) equipment operating at currents in excess of 13 amps

- d) equipment which is connected to a power supply through a spur or breaker box
- e) fixed equipment/appliances that are fastened to a support or otherwise secured in a specific location
- f) built-in appliances/equipment

should all be carried out by a qualified electrician.

Personal Equipment brought into Brixham Town Hall

Staff should be discouraged from bringing personal items of electrical equipment to work (eg radios, kettles and fridges). However, there may be circumstances when this is approved, in which case this equipment must be inspected and tested before use and then at intervals as specified in this Policy.

Equipment which fails the test must be removed from Brixham Town Hall premises.

Where personal equipment is brought into the Town Hall by Staff or Tenants or Hirers then it must be tested as per this policy.

Responsibility

The Town Council is responsible for ensuring that equipment owned by Brixham Town Council is tested in accordance with this policy.

The Employer for each tenant is responsible for ensuring that equipment owned by them is tested in accordance with this policy.

Each hirer is responsible for ensuring that equipment owned by them is tested in accordance with this policy.

Equipment That Needs Testing

Brixham Town Council has adopted the definitions used in The Institute of Electrical Engineers (IEE) Code of Practice for In-service Inspection and Testing of Electrical Equipment (4th Edition) guidance.

- a) **Portable appliance** - These are appliances which are capable of being easily moved whilst in an energised state and/or operation or an appliance which can easily be moved from one place to another, e.g. vacuum cleaner, toaster, kettles, angle poise lamps, laptops
- c) **Moveable equipment (transportable)** - These items are either: 18 kg or less in mass and not fixed or may have wheels to facilitate movement, eg shredder
- d) **Stationary equipment or appliances** - These items are appliances with a mass exceeding 18kg and are not intended to be moved, eg refrigerator
- e) **Information technology equipment** - These items include electrical business equipment, eg computers, scanners, photocopiers
- f) **Extension leads (portable)** - These items must be tested as a Class I appliance and also require a polarity test. In terms of use, these items must be used in accordance with the manufacturer's guidance and must not be 'daisy chained'.

Frequency of Testing

The frequency of testing is based on the following Health & Safety Executive guidance:

- a) HSE Guidance Note Ind 236 "Maintaining portable electrical equipment in low risk environments" <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg236.pdf> -
- b) HSE Guidance Note Ind 107 "Maintaining portable and transportable electrical equipment" <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/priced/hsg107.pdf>

Type of business		User checks	Formal visual inspection	Combined inspection & test
Equipment hire		N/A	Before issue/after return	Before issue
Battery operated equipment (less than 40 V)		No	No	No
Extra low voltage (less than 50 V ac), telephone equipment, low-voltage desk lights		No	No	No
Construction	110V equipment	Yes, weekly	Yes, monthly	Yes, before first use on site then 3-monthly
	230V equipment	Yes, daily/every shift	Yes, weekly	Yes, before first use on site then monthly
	Fixed RCDs	Yes, daily/every shift	Yes, weekly	Yes, before first use on site, then 3-monthly (portable RCDs – monthly)
	Equipment site offices	Yes, monthly	Yes, 6-monthly	Yes, before first use on site then yearly
Heavy industrial/high risk of equipment damage (not construction)		Yes, daily	Yes, weekly	Yes, 6–12 months
Light industrial		Yes	Yes, before initial use then 6-monthly	Yes, 6–12 months
Office information technology rarely moved, eg desktop computers, photocopiers, fax machines		No	Yes, 2–4 years	No if double insulated, otherwise up to 5 years
Double insulated (Class II) equipment moved occasionally (not hand-held), eg fans, table lamps		No	2–4 years	No
Hand-held, double insulated (Class II) equipment, eg some floor cleaners, some kitchen equipment		Yes	Yes, 6 months – 1 year	No
Earthed (Class I) equipment, eg electric kettles, some floor cleaners		Yes	Yes, 6 months – 1 year	Yes, 1–2 years
Cables, leads and plugs connected to Class I equipment, extension leads and battery charging equipment		Yes	Yes, 6 months – 4 years depending on type of equipment it is connected to	Yes, 1–5 years depending on the equipment it is connected to

The Frequency of Testing Table should be used as guidance for normal situations; however, there may be instances where more frequent testing is required. The frequency of testing must be considered when preparing a risk assessment for an activity. Factors which could indicate that additional testing is required includes Damage or Interference. If the equipment is in a situation where it could be damaged or interfered with, eg public areas and heavily used items.

Competence and Training

The IEE Code of Practice states, those carrying out the inspection and testing must be competent to undertake the inspection and, where appropriate, testing of electrical equipment and appliances having due regard of their own safety and that of others.

In order to achieve this level of competency Brixham Town Council requires that Portable Appliance Testers hold the City and Guilds Code of Practice for In-Service Inspection and Testing of Electrical Equipment qualification 2377 and have suitable and sufficient practical training and experience.

Record Keeping Copies of the PAT Certificate must be retained by tenants and users. Brixham Town Council retains the right to request a copy at any reasonable time.