



Safety in Electrical Retail Sales

The sale of electrical goods can involve additional hazards arising out of the operation, and in some cases testing and repair, of appliances. The following details highlight some of these hazards, but they are by no means exhaustive and will vary depending on your own particular business. As a starting point use the blank sheet provided in this pack and carry out your own simple risk assessment.

Main Types of Risk

Appliance Displays

Overloaded sockets, adaptors and lighting circuits pose a risk of electrocution to staff and customers alike or can result in overheating which may lead to fire.

Managing the Risk

- Provide sufficient numbers of socket outlets.
- Fit a residual current device (R.C.D.) to supply circuits.
- Carry out visual inspections to check for overloading, damage and deterioration of connections at regular intervals.
- Remove damaged equipment and rectify all faults prior to re-use.
- Ensure children cannot access the rear of appliances or low level lighting units.

General Access

Trailing leads, uneven floor surfaces and obstructed passageways (especially fire escape routes and fire exits) can all lead to serious accidents, (trips and falls) or hinder evacuation of the premises.

- Minimise the length of leads and cables - secure or re-route over head if possible.
- Keep all passageways, stairs and exits free from obstruction.
- Designate storage areas and keep stock within them.

Manual Handling

Lifting and carrying heavy, often bulky appliances can lead to back and muscle injuries.

- Use mechanical aids, e.g. trolleys or castors, wherever practicable.
- Train staff in proper lifting techniques.

Violence to Staff

Robbery of expensive electrical goods may place staff at risk of violence.

- Consider the use of alarms and C.C.T.V.

Electrical Repairs

Working on electrical equipment (voltages up to 2,500 V d.c.) can pose a risk of electrocution.

- Avoid "live" working whenever possible.
- Clearly define the test areas and provide earth-free environments, insulated floor mats, wooden partitions and benches. Prevent unauthorised access.
- Provide insulated tools and give staff adequate training and supervision.
- Test service equipment regularly.

■ For further information:

Recommendations for Electrical Safety in Television, Radio and Audio Equipment Testing and Servicing (Oct. 1990)
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