



Survey finds 98% of unregistered electricians willing to flout safety laws.

Three years after the introduction of safety legislation designed to prevent dangerous electrical installations, a significant number of electricians either remain confused about the regulations, or are deliberately flouting them. Research carried out on behalf of NICEIC, the UK's electrical contracting regulatory body, found that the resulting confusion is putting consumer safety at risk, with unregistered electricians advertising their services to carry out potentially hazardous electrical work.



Designed to prevent fires, injury and death, the latest safety legislation known as Part P, severely restricts the work that can be carried out by unregistered electricians. They should not, for example, install new plug sockets in a kitchen or fit an electric shower in a bathroom, unless their work is inspected and certified by the Local Authority Building Control department.

Posing as potential customers, researchers contacted unregistered electricians advertising in newspaper and on-line small ads. The vast majority, 98%, said they would fit both an electric shower and/or plug sockets in the kitchen, with no mention of a subsequent inspection. Only one of the electricians contacted said he could not do either job as he was not registered with a government approved scheme such as NICEIC. Several others mentioned the regulations to their would-be "customer" during the telephone conversation, but still said they could do the job,

A separate survey commissioned by the Electrical Safety Council, found that only 10% of consumers were aware of the regulations that govern electrical work in the home in England and Wales.

Each year around 12,500 house fires, 750 serious injuries and 10 deaths are caused by unsafe electrics in the home.

Said Jim Speirs, chief executive of NICEIC: "The extent to which a hard core of unregistered electricians are deliberately ignoring safety law is both shocking and deplorable. The industry has a duty of care to the public to ensure that all electrical installations are safe and certified, particularly as so many consumers are unaware of regulations governing such work. While we may not expect every householder to be aware of the law, after three years, there is no excuse for professional tradesmen not to fully understand the regulations.

"It is, however, unfortunate that the Government has not given the same level of consumer publicity to safety laws governing electrical installations as they have to those covering gas, both of which are potentially lethal if installed wrongly. We would urge householders to download our Part P fact sheet and ensure any electrician is registered before engaging them to carry out work in their home."

All work carried out by a registered electrician is tested and certified as safe. The householder should retain this certificate as it will be required as proof that work has been carried out correctly when their house is sold.

The NICEIC maintains a list of some 24,000 Approved Contractors and Domestic Installers, who are regularly inspected and meet national safety standards and codes of practice. To find a registered installer in your area or to download NICEIC's Part P fact sheet visit www.findanelectrician.info/factsheets or call 0870 013 0382.