

# Powys Safety Solutions

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Important information - HSE information on PAT testing - revised guidance

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Unnecessary electrical safety tests cost office-based businesses an estimated £30 million a year. It's a myth that every portable electrical appliance in the workplace needs to be tested once a year - and what's more it's a costly one.

Misleading advice and advertising, often by companies who offer the testing, is contributing to low-risk businesses such as offices, shops and hotels paying unnecessarily for over-the-top maintenance regimes.

The law simply requires an employer to ensure that electrical equipment is maintained in order to prevent danger - it does not state that every item has to be tested or how often testing needs to be carried out.

Testing appliances to ensure that they are safe to use can contribute to an effective maintenance regime, but in a low-risk environment most dangerous defects can be found simply by checking the appliances for obvious signs of damage such as frayed cables.

Launching HSE's revised guidance on portable appliance testing (PAT), HSE Chair Judith Hackitt said: "We know that low-risk companies are being mis-led over what the law requires when it comes to maintaining portable electrical appliances, and many are paying for testing that is not needed.

"Businesses are responsible for protecting their employees, but they shouldn't be wasting their money on unnecessary checks that have no real benefit.

"HSE has always advocated a proportionate, risk-based approach to maintenance. This new guidance is simple and clear to follow."

Nick Starling, Director of General Insurance at the Association of British Insurers, said: "Insurers have never required policyholders to undertake unnecessary portable electrical appliance tests which are not proportionate to the risk.

"We welcome HSE's guidance, which will help businesses focus on what they do best, free from worries about health and safety myths."

Useful information links:

Maintaining portable electrical equipment in low-risk environments [www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg236.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg236.htm)

Further information on portable appliance testing see HSE's FAQs

[www.hse.gov.uk/electricity/faq-portable-appliance-testing.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/electricity/faq-portable-appliance-testing.htm)

Revised guidance [www.dwp.gov.uk/policy/health-and-safety/](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/policy/health-and-safety/)



Business Link  
[www.selectsupply.co.uk](http://www.selectsupply.co.uk)

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