



PAT

(PORTABLE APPLIANCE TESTING)

Any landlord who lets residential accommodation which includes flats, apartments, houses, holiday homes, boats and caravans as a business activity is required by law to ensure the electrical appliances they supply as part of the tenancy are regularly PAT tested and safe.

Portable appliance testing is widely regarded as being the best way of complying with this obligation. Without a programme of planned appliance testing and maintenance, you could be legally liable for damages resulting from your untested appliances. This covers all portable appliances that you supply, including fridges and freezers, microwave ovens (additional testing is required), televisions and vacuum cleaners and any garden equipment.

PAT TESTING FOR LANDLORDS

The Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 1994, mandatory since 1 January 1997, states that all electrical appliances connected to the mains supplied with let accommodation must be safe. These appliances include washing machines, toasters and kettles, new or second-hand. Landlords therefore need to regularly PAT test and maintain all electrical equipment periodically - as they may become faulty over time. The only sure method of ensuring that these appliances are safe is to have them tested by a trained competent person using the appropriate calibrated portable appliance testing equipment. Failure to comply with the electrical regulations may constitute a criminal offence under the Consumers Protection Act 1987, which carries a maximum penalty on summary conviction of a £5000 fine and/or 6 months imprisonment. In addition, be sued in Civil Law under the duty of care for failure to ensure the tenants safety and face punitive damages.

RENTAL ACCOMMODATION PAT TESTING

From a tenant's perspective, it is essential that a property is checked prior to moving in to ensure that all appliances supplied are in a safe working condition. It would be good practice to have the equipment checked at regular intervals thereafter. Records should be available from landlords detailing the appliances supplied as part of the tenancy agreement and the checks made on those goods. The records should indicate who carried out the PAT testing and when they were tested.