



# Electrical Safety Guidelines

The purpose of this guide is to promote electrical safety requirements to all Anglican Canberra and Goulburn Diocesan Ministry Units and provide guidance regarding compliance responsibilities with relevant legislation and regulatory requirements.

Health and safety legislation in all jurisdictions requires reasonably practicable steps to be undertaken by the Anglican Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn to ensure the wellbeing of all people in the workplace. Ensuring electrical safety is part of these overriding general obligation as the risks surrounding electrical safety are known and commonly:

- electric shock;
- arcing, explosion or fire, causing burns;
- toxic gases released by burning electrical equipment; and
- fire resulting from an electrical fault.

Having an awareness of these risks, requires all ministry units to ensure:

- all electrical work is undertaken in compliance with relevant laws, standards and codes of practice;
- all electrical work is undertaken by a *competent person* where required; and
- all *electrical appliances* are inspected, tested and tagged dependent on their individual risk.

## Key Definitions

A **competent person** is a person with the necessary practical and theoretical skills (acquired through training, qualification, experience or a combination of these) to correctly perform tasks within the scope of electrical work approved by management.

An **electrical appliance** is an electricity consuming device or apparatus (including the cord) that is connected to or capable of being connected to the electrical installation. The term includes both electrical and electronic equipment. An electrical appliance is a sub set of electrical equipment.

**Test and Tagging** applies to all protectively earthed and double insulated equipment covered by AS3760:2010

## A Guide to Electrical Safety

All electrical appliances shall be inspected, tested and tagged based on the level of risk associated with their use (see exclusions below).

**(Visual) Inspection:**

Evidence indicates that greater than 90% of defects are detected by visual inspection, therefore:

- all *electrical appliances* shall be visually inspected for any abnormalities (to the extent practicable) before being plugged into an electrical socket. If any unusual signs are apparent, do not connect the appliance – send for repair or testing by a competent person.
- where it is not practicable for the user to conduct a visual inspection before subsequent uses, then the user, supervisor and/or a competent person should determine an appropriate inspection frequency or schedule.

**Test and Tag Program:**

Electrical testing and tagging must only be conducted by a *competent person*.

**Testing:**

- testing is to be attended regularly, in accordance with *AS/NZS 3760:2010 – Table 4 – Indicative testing and inspection intervals for electrical equipment*.
- in-service safety inspection and testing of electrical equipment, following any repair or modifications and for all second-hand electrical appliances before entering it into service.
- all defective appliances must be removed from service immediately and labelled accordingly.

**Exclusions:**

- within the ministry site, external parties may be leasing areas where they are responsible for own area. These areas are exempt from this procedure however, as users of the ministry unit's facilities, the same level of electoral safety is expected.
- all "NEW" electrical appliances displaying Australian or equivalent international approval markings showing it complies with relevant safety standards (eg computers). The manufacturer is considered to be responsible for the item's safety, although the item must be visually inspected and should be tagged before entering service
- all electrical equipment excluded by the scope of AS/NZS 3760 In-service inspection of electrical equipment including: equipment or appliances which would need to be dismantled to perform the inspection and tests specified in the Standard equipment (such as suspended light fittings) which is at a height of 2.5 m or greater above the ground, floor or platform fixed light fittings (luminaires), electric doors, toilet fans and similar equipment considered part of the building infrastructure stationary equipment/appliances (>18 kg and no carrying handles) connected by a flexible cord or cable which is not flexed during normal use nor exposed to abuse or damage, nor for use in a hostile environment equipment connected by fixed wiring.
- electrical appliances of a temporary nature electrically assessed as part of a hire agreement;
- mobile phone chargers, and laptop power supplies meeting Australian standards, design and voltage requirements, that have also undergone and passed regular visual inspection.

**Tagging:**

Electrical appliances tested shall be tagged and recorded in accordance AS/NZS 3760:2010 *In-service safety inspection and testing of electrical equipment* that identifies:

- the tag, shall be durable, legible, non-reusable, non-metallic and may be colour coded to identify the period in which the test was performed, and shall include all of the following information as a minimum:
  - the name of the person or company who performed the test;
  - the test or inspection date, a retest date and a reference AS/NZS 3760
  
- All equipment that is new and entering into service for the first time but not tested and tagged shall have a tag applied that includes the following information:
  - i. Wording, “new to service”
  - ii. Date of entry to service
  - iii. Date when next test is due
  - iv. Statement, “This appliance has not been tested in accordance with AS/NZS 3760”.

**Privately Owned Electrical Appliances:**

The use of privately own electrical appliances at a Diocesan worksite is to be discouraged and if they are to be used, (see exclusions), must be inspected, tested and tagged prior to use. The cost of testing and tagging by a competent person or external company is to be covered by the appliance owner or by arrangement.

**Documentation:**

Worker induction material should contain information pertaining to electrical safety.

Where records of test and inspection are kept, the following should be recorded:

- a register of all equipment;
- a record of formal inspection and tests;
- a ‘repair’ register;
- a record of all faulty equipment showing details of services or corrective actions.

Where records are kept, they should be retained for 7 years, or such period as required by the relevant regulator. It is acceptable for this to be in electronic format.

**Other consideration:**

- all hired electrical appliances or equipment must have a current tag prior to receiving the hire equipment onsite – this is the responsibility of the entity to the equipment is hired from;
- double adaptors should never be permitted on site as they have no overload protection;



#### Anglican Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn

- all work areas must be set up so electrical cords, cables and equipment are protected from damage (including damage by liquids).

#### Incident Reporting:

- All incidents and hazards are to be reported using the Diocesan hazard or incident form accessed from the [Diocesan website](#).
- All significant electrical incidents must be reported immediately to the ministry unit line manager, [WorkSafe ACT](#) or [SafeWork NSW](#) **and** the site preserved whilst maintaining the safety of all workers and visitors.

## Responsibilities

The onus of electrical safety responsibility. This is on all workers, reinforced by those managing or overseeing ministry units, to verify that electrical safety is properly managed.

Specific obligations require those with the overall responsibility of a ministry unit to:

- ensure a risk management approach towards electrical safety is implemented;
- ensure sufficient resources, information and training are provided to all workers to allow for effective electrical safety;
- engage competent and suitably qualified contractors;
- implement systems for the maintenance, repairs, testing, tagging and registering of all electrical appliances as required;
- ensuring external groups hiring Diocesan space are responsible for testing and tagging of electrical equipment brought onto and used within the hired work area, and/or provision of safety switches as required;
- ensure all workers are informed of their responsibility to report incidents and hazards and have knowledge of the worksites emergency procedures.

All workers are to:

- ensure that a visual inspection of electrical appliances is undertaken **before use** and that no appliance is used if it is damaged equipment or tagged out;
- notify the supervisor immediately if an appliance is damaged;
- ensure any appliance use is set up correctly and used according to safe operating instructions or recommended practices; and
- never repair, modify, or interfere with electrical appliances or equipment

## Related Legislation, Polices, Codes of Practice and Standards

#### Legislation

Work Health and Safety Act (2011)

Electrical Safety Act 1971

Electricity (Consumer Safety) Act 2004



Anglican Diocese of Canberra and Goulburn

### Codes of Practice and Standards

AS/NZS 3760:2010 In-service safety inspection and testing of electrical equipment

[Code of Practice: Managing electrical risks in the workplace. February 2016](#)

### Policies

Policy – Work Health and Safety

Policy Statement - Work Health and Safety

Policy - Selling or Gifting Second Hand Goods