

RECI

NEWS

December 2006

JOURNAL OF THE REGISTER OF ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS OF IRELAND

New Inspector



Due to the retirement of Martin Hopkins and Joe Kearns, RECI have appointed Tim O'Connor as inspector for Galway and Mayo.

Tim has extensive experience of electrical installations covering cinemas, office accommodation, hospitals, retail units, factories/ industrial units and domestic installations.

Living in Ballinasloe, he has been employed for the last seventeen years as a site foreman and as a contracts manager.

One Millionth ETCI/RECI Completion Certificate

Noel Dempsey, TD, Minister for Communications, Marine and Natural Resources presented the one millionth ETCI/RECI Domestic Completion Certificate to happy householders Damien and Anna Granahan in Dublin recently. A special function was held at the Plan Expo exhibition in the RDS to mark the achievement. The certificate was issued by Terry Kelly of registered contractors John Terry Kelly Electrical.

The Minister in his speech said *"the completion certificate demonstrates to the ESB that it is safe to supply electricity to a*



Minister Dempsey presents certificate AR1000000 — pictured are RECI Chairman, Tommy Heffernan with Anna and Damien Granahan; Minister Dempsey; and Terry Kelly, John Terry Kelly Electrical



Michael Stone, Chairman, ECA with Minister Dempsey and Liam Kelleher, Director General, CIF

particular installation. This ensures public safety and also serves to isolate rogue contractors. Further welcome improvements to the certification system will come on line in 2007, expanding on RECI's current role with regard to the safety of electrical installations. Recognition of need for self regulation of the industry by its various members has led to RECI evolving, since its foundation in 1992, into the formidable representative organisation which it is today.

continued overleaf

Routing of Completion Certificates

The ESB Networks (ESBN) and RECI computer systems are nearly ready to go ahead with the new arrangements for processing completion certificates. We will be starting with Wexford and Kerry certificates as a trial period. From now on contractors must make sure that the address of the installation which they enter on the completion certificate is exactly the same as the customer has put on their application to ESB Networks. If the address on the cert does not agree with the address on the MPRN website then the cert cannot be processed and RECI will have to refer back to the contractor. Obviously, the cert must also have the MPRN number. This system will prevent delays or mistakes at a later stage.

Contractors should note that information in

the comment box of the certificate will not be sent to ESBN. Therefore, if you need to give ESBN some specific information, you must do this directly by contacting the appropriate ESBN office using the ESB Networks Contacts list (see back page).

A feature of the new arrangement is that the contractor will automatically get a text message on his mobile phone when supply has been connected to the installation by ESBN. Contractors should therefore, make sure that RECI have their correct mobile phone number in their database.

The trial period will last a few months and if everything is satisfactory we expect that the new arrangements will go nationwide towards the end of the first quarter of 2007. If you require any further information or clarification please contact the RECI office.

Oxfam home
Ireland

Have you got time on your hands & do you want to do something for a good cause?

Oxfam Ireland needs a fully qualified volunteer electrician to test donated electrical goods in its Francis Street Store, Dublin.

call Paul & Maria on
01 4020555

REGISTER OF ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS OF IRELAND

Unit 9, KCR Industrial Estate,
Kimmage, Dublin 12.
Tel: 01 - 492 9966; Fax: 01 - 492 9983;
email: info@reci.ie Web: www.reci.ie

“As Minister with responsibility for Communications, I also note with approval RECI’s ‘on-line’ facility for completion certificates, which is particularly commendable and forward looking.

“As RECI members will be aware, the Government is currently taking steps to provide for enhanced regulation of both the electrical and gas industries.

“The Energy (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2006, currently being advanced through the Oireachtas, will provide a firmer legal foundation to the regulation of the electrical contracting industry with regard if safety matters.

“The Commission for Energy Regulation will play a pivotal role in the implementation of the provisions of this Bill, and will be given a variety of new responsibilities, including:

“A strong regime of inspection, and the power to designate certain classes of electrical work as being solely the province of registered electrical contractors.

“The bill also includes significant statutory penalties for those who falsely describe themselves as registered

electrical contractors, or contravene other safety provisions. The day of the “rogue” contractor operating outside the system, purporting to be fully qualified and taking advantage of unsuspecting people is over. It comes as no surprise that these new safety laws have garnered the support of everyone inside and outside the industry.



RECI Chairman, Tommy Heffernan making presentation

“I wish to acknowledge the ongoing commitment, support and input which RECI has provided in developing this new policy and to say a special word of thanks to the CER, and especially its safety manager Eamonn Murtagh, who has been a driving force.

“I look forward to RECI’s continuing success, backed up by concrete statutory measures and continued Government support.

“My Department will continue to work closely with the CER, RECI and other industry representative bodies to put in place the new measures as quickly as possible once they receive the endorsement of the Oireachtas”.

A lunch was held after the ceremony and was attended by representatives of all sectors of the industry. The Chairman of RECI Tommy Heffernan made a presentation of an inscribed cutglass bowl to the house owners and to the electrical contractor as a memento of the occasion.

Submit Your Email Address & Win a Bottle of Champagne

Any contractors who have not already notified us of their email address should do so before 31st December. All the names received will be put into a draw and the first two out of the hat will each receive a bottle of bubbly to celebrate the new year!



Fires Caused By Recessed Light Fittings

RECI News has highlighted on a number of occasions, deficiencies that arise in practice in the installation of recessed light fittings, both 230v and 12v fittings in ceilings where thermal insulation is present.

This problem is still very much with us and we were informed recently by the Fire Authorities of a serious incident in the Galway area.

A two storey detached house was quite badly damaged due to fire and fortuitously escaped further extensive damage. The Fire Authority believes that the fire was caused by the recent retrofitting of thermal insulation which surrounded and covered several recessed light fittings. They have communicated their concern to the thermal insulation company involved and also to other thermal insulation installers in the area.

While it would appear that the recessed light fittings were installed correctly, the owner of the property in question was not made aware of the importance of keeping thermal insulation away from the recessed light fittings.

Registered contractors are requested to explain to the home owner/occupier (where this is possible) or the builder the importance of keeping all thermal insulation clear of all recessed light fittings.

Extra low voltage lighting provides attractive, effective, economic and reliable lighting solutions where correctly installed. Ensuring that best practice is observed in installation work will guarantee safety and satisfaction for the user and safeguard the reputation of the installer.

Apartment Buildings

Registered Contractors must be very careful when certifying electrical installations in apartment buildings as it is easy for errors to occur which can have serious consequences. The first certificate issued must always be for the landlord’s supply covering the main switchboard and lighting in the common passageways etc. This is required to comply with Rule 562.11 in Amendment No.2 which states ‘Escape routes in common passageways and public areas in buildings such as commercial units and apartments shall be provided with an electrical supply for both normal and emergency lighting which is independent of supplies to individual occupiers’.

Contractors should take great care to ensure that the apartment number which they enter on a completion certificate is correct as a wrong number on the certificate could lead to an unfinished installation being made live.

Also when the landlords supply is connected the passageways and escape routes in the buildings will be lit for workers completing the building.

Under no circumstances should electrical contractors connect vacant apartments from a “borrowed” live supply. There have been a number of dangerous occurrences in the recent past caused by back feeds to the meter tails of vacant apartments.

MV Certification

Over the last few years there has been a marked improvement in the quality of information supplied by electrical contractors on electrical test certification. However, we still have some way to go with some contractors who continue to have a difficulty in appreciating the importance of correctly completing the test certificate. As we head towards a time when there will be a new certification process it will be vitally important for all electrical contractors to give this subject their full attention. The alternative will be rejected certification and disappointed customers.

One of the certification areas that require clarification from time to time is the correct method for certifying MV Installations. The difficulty is caused more often than not when “gaps” in the certification of the installation come to light i.e. when some parts of the electrical installation in question are not covered by the “main completion certificate” submitted for connection. In the absence of a specific ETCI certificate for MV installations (due to be released by ETCI in the near future) the contractor must use an ETCI commercial/industrial certificate (see ET101 Cert No.2). If the contractor is only responsible for the MV part of the installation then he/she completes the required testing and enters the test data on the cert in question. The contractor responsible for the LV part of the installation must complete his/her respective testing and enter the results of his/her tests on a separate Industrial/Commercial Completion Certificate.

In larger installations there may be certain “specialist” parts of the installation e.g. air conditioning, lifts, etc, which are constructed and tested independently of the “main” part of the installation. These specialist contractors must use ETCI sub system certificates (see ET101 Cert No.3) to record the results of their respective tests.

The white copy of each respective sub system certificate should be given to the contractor responsible for issuing the LV Industrial/Commercial Certificate. This contractor should record the respective area of the installation covered and the relevant sub system certificate serial numbers on the LV Industrial/Commercial certificate. He/she should then store the sub system certificates as test record sheets. These actions ensure that the LV Industrial/Commercial certificate covers the entire LV installation.

The white copy of this certificate is now given to the MV contractor who in turn records the relevant detail (cert number and installation description) on the MV certificate. If this process has been followed correctly then at this stage of the proceedings all parts of the electrical installation should be covered by the MV certificate. If any query arises there should be adequate traceability in the certification procedure to pin-point the documentation that covers the particular area in question.

In an MV installation the MV contractor is normally considered to be the main

Jim Keogh, Chairman, Irish National Wiring Rules Committee, Electro Technical Council of Ireland



Minister Dempsey with Jim Keogh

contractor. For LV only installations the main electrical contractor for the purpose of this requirement is normally the electrical contractor engaged to install, test and commission the majority of outgoing cables/circuits from the main distribution board to final circuits or to sub distribution boards.

Consequently, the MV electrical contractor is usually responsible for the provision of the electrical completion certificate required by ESBN for the connection of electricity. For the purpose of this requirement it is called the main completion certificate. It is the responsibility of the person engaging the various contractors e.g. project leader, to ensure the MV electrical contractor is supplied with the correct test documentation for all the parts of the electrical installation not constructed by him/her. This test data shall become part of the main contractors test record sheets.

If any of these requirements cannot be fulfilled then the main electrical certificate may be considered defective.

Sealing Isolator Switch

The installing registered contractor should seal the combined meter/isolator switch after he has carried out the required post connection tests. The intention is to discourage the house owner or other person from tampering with the isolator switch.

It is noticeable that in many cases this sealing is not being carried out by the installing contractor. In some cases even the cover of the unit is missing. This is a safety matter and registered contractors are requested to make sure that they carry out the sealing operation on all relevant installations.

The RECI sealing pliers stamps the contractors identifying number on the plastic seal when it tightens the sealing wire. In the event of an accident occurring in the future the contractor will know whether the isolator switch has been activated or not since he sealed it. Contractors should ensure that they have a sealing pliers and seals and use the RECI label to encourage home owners to have their installation checked periodically by a registered contractor. Inspectors will take a strict view on this matter from now on.



ALWAYS SEAL AND LABEL

List of Common Faults

RECI maintains statistics of the frequency of the types of breaches of the Wiring Rules identified during inspection visits to electrical installations. This information is useful for alerting contractors to the most common faults so they can take steps to ensure that these faults do not occur in their installations. The following is a list of non-compliances and faults which appear most frequently on Inspectors reports:—

- Unsatisfactory standard of testing;
- Test record sheets not available for inspection;
- Inadequate main bonding;
- Distribution board not labelled;
- No separate RCBO for electric showers;
- Incorrect cable core colours;
- Immersion switch incorrectly located;
- I.P. rating standard ignored;
- No denzo tape on earth electrode connection;
- Loop impedance readings too high;
- No isolation for motorised valves;
- Earth continuity missing;
- No RCD for 5 A sockets;
- No interlock for two electric showers.

Thermography Association Formed



The Irish Thermography Association (IRLTA) was established in 2005 to highlight and advance the use of thermography for electrical and mechanical preventative maintenance. Its core aim was to compile a database of qualified thermographers operating in Ireland and to have this available to any interested parties who wish to employ a thermographer for preventative maintenance inspections.

IRLTA are currently looking for new members and invite anyone in the thermal imaging industry interested in joining to contact our secretary Stephen Fox at Stephen@rfe.ie

Make Sure You Get the Correct Cable Core Colours

RECI Inspectors quite often find cables installed with the wrong core colours. Particularly four core NYMJ or SWA and four core flexible cable which do not have a blue neutral. Contractors should always specify to the wholesaler the type of cable, the number of cores **and the required core colours**. When the cable arrives on site the core colours should be checked before work commences not at some later stage when a lot of wiring has been completed or when RECI come to inspect the installation.

Core colours are an important part of the Wiring Rules and safety of electrical installations. Always make sure that your order to your wholesaler is accurate and check that you are supplied with the correct cable.

Wiring of Smoke & Heat Detectors to BS 5839 — Part 6

RECI Inspectors have discovered several cases where contractors have used protective conductors, ie “earthwire” as signal wires between smoke and heat detectors in domestic installations. It was also discovered that the protective conductors were then accidentally connected to the earthing system of the installation. Contractors are reminded that under no circumstances should protective conductors be used as signal wires between smoke or heat detectors.

Certification of Existing Installations

Some contractors are not aware that there is an ETCI completion certificate for existing installations, ETCI CERT NO.4. It was first published in 2004 in conjunction with the National Rules for Inspection and Certification of Existing Electrical Installations ET 107.

For example contractors should use this certificate for certification of licensed premises for the Fire Authorities or for certification of installations requested by insurance companies. It must also be used for certifying installations which have been disconnected for more than 6 months and require reconnection. Of course the completion certificate cannot be issued until any electrical faults have been rectified and the installation complies with the requirements of ET 107.

ESB Networks Contact List

Division	Area	Telephone Number
South West	Cork City (Design)	021 - 484 4201
South West	Bandon	023 - 42351
South West	Dunmanway/Bantry/Castletownbere	023 - 55834
South West	Fermoy/Mallow/Midleton/Youghal	025 - 49705
South West	Killarney/Kanturk/Caherciveen/Kenmare	064 - 20521
Midlands & West	Athlone/Loughrea	090 - 647 9394
Midlands & West	Castlebar	094 - 903 8707
Midlands & West	Galway (Metering)	091 - 741 933
Midlands & West	Galway (Design)	091 - 741 945
Midlands & West	Mullingar/Kells/Enfield	044 - 35535
Midlands & West	Tuam/Claremorris	093 - 60101
Midlands & West	Tullamore/Newbridge	057 - 932 8416
Mid West	Ennis/Kilrush	065 - 686 5601
Mid West	Limerick	061 - 430 435
Mid West	Newcastle West	069 - 66731
Mid West	Roscrea/Nenagh	0505 - 24501
Mid West	Tipperary/Thurles	062 - 82211
Mid West	Tralee	066 - 714 5742
South East	Arklow	0402 - 29202
South East	Clonmel/Dungarvan	052 - 83118
South East	Enniscorthy	053 - 923 2600
South East	Kilkenny/Carlow	056 - 776 0420
South East	Portlaoise (Design)	057 - 867 0104
South East	Portlaoise (Construction)	057 - 866 5794
South East	Waterford	051 - 305 686
North West	Ballina/Belmullet/Swinford	096 - 60202
North West	Cavan/Monaghan/Carrickmacross	049 - 437 2514
North West	Killybegs/Falcarragh	074 - 974 1505
North West	Letterkenny/Buncrana	074 - 916 7536
North West	Longford/Roscommon	043 - 43706
North West	Sligo/Carrick-on-Shannon	071 - 914 9338
Dublin Cen / South	South Lotts Road (Dublin Central Design)	01 - 604 2680
Dublin Cen / South	South Lotts Road (Dublin Central Metering)	01 - 604 2602
Dublin Cen / South	Leopardstown/Bray/Tallaght/Naas (Dublin South)	01 - 604 2864
Dublin North / Dundalk	Finglas (Design/Construction)	01 - 604 2248
Dublin North / Dundalk	Finglas (Design/Construction)	01 - 604 2742
Dublin North / Dundalk	Finglas (Metering)	01 - 604 2228
Dublin North / Dundalk	Dundalk/Drogheda (Metering)	042 - 937 0648
Dublin North / Dundalk	Dundalk/Drogheda (Design)	042 - 937 0622
Dublin North / Dundalk	Drogheda (Metering)	041 - 980 2317