

Cheshire West & Chester Council
Council Housing Management Service
Electrical safety



Did you know it is a legal requirement to have an electrical test every five years in a rented home?

This is called an Electrical Installation Condition Report or 'EICR' for short.



Cheshire West
and Chester

What is involved in the ECIR electrical safety test?

During an EICR inspection, a qualified electrician or electrical engineer will inspect the electrical installations in your home.

The engineer will carry out a visual inspection, checking for cracks, breaks and signs of overheating. Electrical testing will then be carried out where voltages and currents are used to check the safety of the different circuits. If issues are found, they will be recorded and detailed in the report.

We will let you know when yours is due, usually by sending you a letter.

Here's what to expect when you're having your electrical test.

1. When you receive your letter, call our friendly team on the number provided and book in your appointment.
2. On the date and time of your appointment, a contractor will visit your home to carry out your electrical test.

All the contractors will carry ID, so please make sure they present it to you on your doorstep.

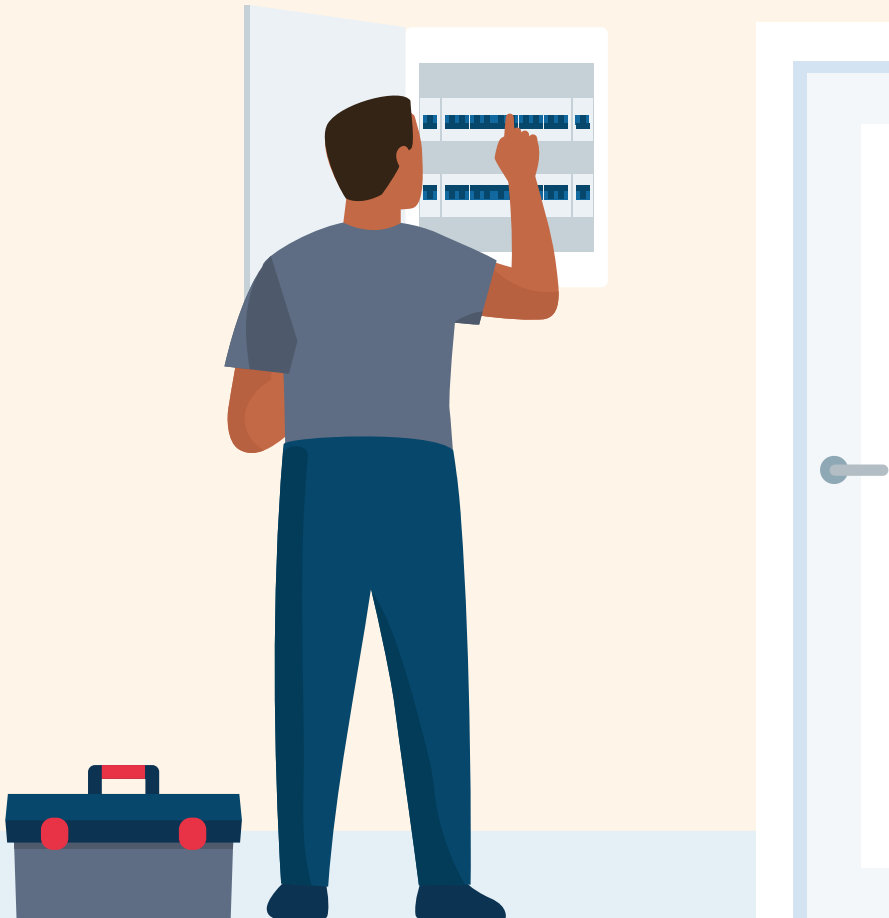
3. The contractor will need access to your fuse board, water stop tap, gas meter and all the rooms in your home. They may ask you to show them where these are all located.
4. Your electricity will be turned off so the contractor can complete the test safely. This is usually no longer than two – three hours.
5. Once the test is finished, your electricity will be turned back on.



Does this mean my home will be re-wired?

The test doesn't necessarily mean your home will need to be re-wired. It may mean that we make some small safety adjustments to keep your home healthy and more importantly, keep you safe.

Following your electrical test, if your home does need a rewire it will be noted on the report at the end of the test. If this is the case, our team can talk this through with you and discuss next steps.



Why is electrical safety so important?

If your body receives an electric shock, it can cause serious injury and potential on-going health issues such as burns, heart problems and breathing complications.

This electrical test is a legal requirement and we're on hand to help you with any electrical questions or concerns you may have, but we also need your help to keep you and your loved ones safe.

For any electrical work always seek the help of a qualified electrician.



Electricity: do's and don'ts

Do



Buy trusted electrical goods – Cheaper, 'unofficial' electrical products such as phone chargers may not meet safety regulations which can increase the risk of fire.



Allow electrical inspections to take place – Regular checks are the best way to be sure that electrical installations are safe, and to spot potential problems before it's too late.

Don't



Do it yourself – DIY wiring can lead to electrical parts overheating, causing fires, shocks and potential serious injury.



Overload sockets – Plugging too many devices into one socket, and over-using extension leads, can lead to overheating and fires.



Power outage

There may be a rare instance where your power goes out.

Follow these steps to keep yourself as safe as possible.

- 1.** Check your fuse box. Your fuse box could be located either inside or outside your home. All the switches should be at the 'on' position, if one or more are off, switch them back on. If all of your switches are already in the 'on' position, turn the main breaker switch off and then back on again.
- 2.** Check with your neighbours if they are experiencing the same issue, there may have been a power outage in your neighbourhood.
- 3.** Call your energy provider. If there has been a power outage in your area, call your energy company and let them know your home is not receiving any power. You will need a charged mobile phone for this. They may already know, but will be able to give you an update on when the power will come back on.
- 4.** Unplug most appliances, excluding your fridge. When your power does come back on, there may be a power surge that could damage some of your major appliances if they stay plugged in.



Appliances

Your home is full of appliances, from the kettle to the television.

Here are some key tips on how to keep yourself and your loved ones safe.

- 1.** Always turn off plug sockets when you aren't using them.
- 2.** Do not overload plug sockets; try to use one plug per socket.
- 3.** Inspect appliances for frayed cords and sockets for scorch marks. If your appliances show signs of these, they will need repairing or replacing.
- 4.** Don't use metal with an electrical appliance. For example, do not use metal cutlery with a plugged in kitchen appliance.
- 5.** If you need to clean an appliance, always make sure the appliance is unplugged and the power cable and plug are kept out of water.

Electrical safety with children and pets

Children and pets aren't always aware of the dangers of electricity, but there are ways that you can protect them against electrical accidents in the home.

- 1.** Cover all outlets with plug socket guards; these can be purchased cheaply from DIY stores.
- 2.** Keep appliance cords out of the reach of children or pets, especially those connected to hot items such as kettles and irons.
- 3.** Don't leave things like mobile phones charging in reach of children or pets in case they bite or chew them.
- 4.** Keep liquids away from any electrical appliances.

Accessing Cheshire West and Chester Council information and services

Council information is also available in audio, Braille, large print or other formats. If you would like information in another format or language, including British Sign Language, please email us at: equalities@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

You can also telephone: **0300 123 8 123**
or textphone: **18001 0300 123 8 123**
website: www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

Contact us on tel: **0300 123 7724**