



THE SALE OF SECONDHAND ELECTRICAL GOODS

- **Consumer Protection Act 1987**
- **Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 1994**
- **Plugs and Sockets Etc (Safety) Regulations 1994**

The above legislation requires domestic electrical equipment supplied in the course of business to be safe, i.e. have minimal risk of causing death or injury to persons or domestic animals, or damage to property. Secondhand electrical goods are required to meet the same safety standards as new items.

Who do these laws apply to?

The legislation applies to all suppliers and sellers of secondhand electrical goods. The term 'supply' had a very broad definition and includes items contained in rented accommodation and electrical goods loaned or given away by charities.

Who is responsible for checking the goods?

The supplier is responsible for ensuring that the equipment complies with the safety requirements of the above mentioned Regulations.

Must I have electrical equipment tested?

No, the law does not stipulate this, however, we strongly recommend that the items are tested before sale in order to protect your customers from danger. This will also protect you from possible prosecution and civil litigation. If there are any doubts about safety, the item should be removed from use.

Who should do the tests?

The tests should be conducted by a competent electrical engineer using adequate test equipment. The item tested should be clearly identified in a report describing the test/s carried out and the results. We recommend that the engineer should label each item to show whether it passed or failed. These labels could also be dated and initialled as an indicator of test and could be colour coded to avoid confusion i.e. Green (pass) and Red (fail). Cont...

It is good practice to advise all staff in writing that no electrical goods are to be sold unless an indicator label is attached. Keep all test reports for your own reference and for the purpose of showing to enforcement officers, if requested.

What about plugs on electrical appliances?

All electrical appliances must be supplied with a standard plug fitted. The plug must be of an approved type with insulation on the live and neutral pins.

It is important to check that the correct fuse has been fitted in the plug. Electrical items using a lot of power, such as heaters, kettles and irons will usually need a 13 amp fuse, whereas televisions and lamps usually need only 3 or 5 amp fuses.

What happens if I fail to comply?

It is a criminal offence to supply or offer for sale unsafe electrical equipment. The maximum penalty upon conviction is a £5,000 fine.

How can I get further advice?

If you require further information, clarification or advice on any of the above, please do not hesitate to contact the Trading Standards Service at:

222 Upper Street, London N1 1XR

Tel: (020) 7527 3198

Email: trading.standards@islington.gov.uk

**IN OFFERING THE ABOVE ADVICE, THIS AUTHORITY WISHES TO MAKE IT CLEAR
THAT ONLY THE COURTS CAN INTERPRET THE LAW.**