

<b>Date</b>	23 June 2012
<b>Issue Ref:</b>	HSE Information Sheet -0044
<b>Topic:</b>	Low Risk PAT Testing
<b>Details: Source – HSE Newsletter</b>	<p>Don't waste your money on unnecessary electrical safety tests! That's the message from HSE, as it announced recently revised guidance on portable appliance testing (PAT).</p> <p>It's a common myth that every portable electrical appliance in low-risk workplaces needs to be tested once a year. It's an expensive myth too, with the tests costing office-based businesses around £30 million a year.</p> <p>'We know that low-risk companies are being misled over what the law requires when it comes to maintaining portable electrical appliances, and many are paying for testing that is not needed,' said HSE Chair Judith Hackitt.</p> <p>'Businesses are responsible for protecting their employees, but they shouldn't be wasting their money on unnecessary checks that have no real benefit. 'HSE has always advocated a proportionate, risk-based approach to maintenance. This new guidance is simple and clear to follow.'</p> <p><b>What the law says</b></p> <p>The law simply requires an employer to make sure that electrical equipment is maintained in order to prevent danger - it <b>does not</b> state that every item has to be tested or how often testing needs to be carried out.</p> <p>Misleading advice and advertising, often by companies who offer the testing, is contributing to low-risk businesses, such as offices, shops and hotels, paying unnecessarily for over-the-top maintenance regimes.</p> <p>Testing appliances to make sure they are safe to use can contribute to an effective maintenance regime, but in a low-risk environment most dangerous defects can be found simply by checking the appliances for obvious signs of damage such as frayed cables.</p>
<b>Recommended Action:</b>	<p>In a nutshell:</p> <p>Portable electrical equipment must be maintained to prevent danger.</p> <p>For most portable electrical equipment in a low-risk workplace, a portable appliance test is not needed.</p> <p>Working out what you have to do is not time-consuming or complicated.</p> <p>Simply looking for signs of damage is a good way of maintaining portable electrical equipment.</p>
<b>Links/References</b>	Revised Guide is sent with this Information Sheet – 0044a - indg236
<b>Questions</b>	<p><b>Eight things you should know about PAT</b></p> <p>There are many common myths about PAT testing. To find out the facts, see the answers to the following questions at:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><a href="http://www.hse.gov.uk/electricity/faq-portable-appliance-testing.htm">www.hse.gov.uk/electricity/faq-portable-appliance-testing.htm</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How frequently do I need to test my electrical appliances?</li> <li>● Do I need to keep records of testing and should I label any appliances tested?</li> <li>● Do I need to test new equipment?</li> </ul>

- I have been told that I have to get an electrician to do portable appliance testing work. Is that correct?
- Where can I get more information about maintaining portable appliances used in different environments?
- I run a tool hire business. What do I need to do and are there additional responsibilities for the person hiring my tools?
- Are there any case studies about portable appliance testing?
- Is portable appliance testing (PAT) compulsory?

**Any queries please call Admiral Safety Ltd on 07711 033663 or email – [anelson@admiralsafetyltd.co.uk](mailto:anelson@admiralsafetyltd.co.uk)**

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