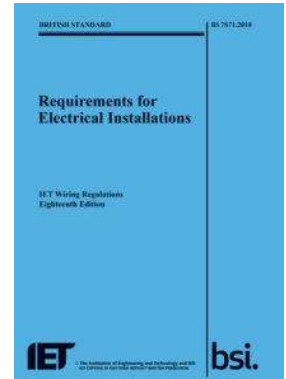


18th Edition Wiring Regulations – essential changes explained.

The 18th Edition of the IET Wiring Regulations (BS7671) comes into force from January 1, 2019. That means construction site managers, health and safety managers, electricians and electrical contractors need to be fully compliant and up to date with the new BS7671 wiring regulations – especially in relation to how cables are supported in the event of a fire.

The new 18th Edition wiring regulations include updates designed to reduce the risk of death from the placement of hanging cables. The aim is to improve installation safety using the adequate placement of metal clips to support hanging cables. Other updates in BS7671 include new RCD protection requirements and recommendations for installing Arc Fault Detection Devices (AFDDs).



If you're a construction site manager or a health and safety consultant or manager, it pays to be fully aware of the new wiring regulations – especially if you're responsible for cable fixing installation across a site. Electricians or electrical contractors installing, hanging or suspending electrical cabling will need to meet full wiring regs compliance by January 1, 2019. This article explains what the new 18th Edition wiring regulations mean in terms of fixing and suspending electrical cables.

Why have the 18th Edition wiring regulations (BS7671) been changed?

Known as Regulation 521.10.202, the aim of the new wiring regulations regarding the fixing of hanging cables is to reduce the risk posed by suspended cables in the event of a fire. The change of wiring regs follows the death of two firefighters at Shirley Towers in 2010 who became entangled in fallen cables. Two firefighters also lost their lives in 2005 at Harrow Court Tower Block (<https://www.fbu.org.uk/news/2007/03/02/fbu-comment-end-coroner%E2%80%99s-inquest-deaths-harrow-court-stevenage-herts>), where one of the firefighters had become entangled in fallen electrical cables.

The 18th Edition wiring regulations aim to avoid similar incidents. This is especially true with high-rise building developments, where fires have devastating potential – a priority for construction site managers or a health and safety consultant or managers.

The risk of fire on construction sites (<http://www.constructionmanagermagazine.com/construction-professional/cpd-fire-prevention-construction-sites/>) should also be a consideration when managing cables. Although not common, when construction sites fires occur the materials exposed and contained within a site mean that fire can spread rapidly. Knowing how cables can be better managed can reduce to risk to workers on site as well as emergency service crews.

What do the 18th Edition wiring regulations (BS7671) require?

The new wiring regs come into effect in January 1, 2019. The 18th Edition states that plastic fixings cannot be used as the sole use of holding up cables. However, the IET states: "*Suitably spaced steel or copper clips, saddles or ties are examples that will meet the requirements of this regulations.*" This means that plastic fixings can be supplemented with metal ones – but that electricians and electrical contractors cannot rely exclusively on plastic clips, saddles or ties.



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