

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

TESTING AND TAGGING OF ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

HAS THE LAW CHANGED REGARDING TESTING AND TAGGING OF ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT?

Yes, Simplified safety regulations for electrical equipment in the workplace were gazetted on Friday 28 April 2006. The *Occupational Health and Safety Amendment (Electrical Equipment) Regulation 2006* amends the previous legislative provisions contained in the *Occupational Health and Safety Regulation 2001* (the Regulation). The amending regulation now specifically identifies working environments where testing and tagging of electrical equipment is required, such as electrical equipment used for construction work (as defined in the Regulation) and electrical equipment used in other 'hostile operating environments'.

WHAT ARE THE LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS REGARDING TESTING AND TAGGING?

If you are an employer or self-employed person, you have a duty of care to ensure that employees and visitors to the workplace are safe from injury and risks to health. You must, therefore, manage any safety risks surrounding electrical hazards, in accordance with the requirements of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000* (the Act) and the Regulation.

To support the application of a risk management approach to electrical safety, you must also comply with the specific legislative requirements outlined in clause 64 and 65 of the *OHS Regulation 2001*.

Clause 64 (2) requires,

- all electrical equipment that is used in construction work to be regularly inspected, tested and maintained by a competent person to ensure it is safe for use, and
- all electrical equipment that is used at a place of work where the safe operation of the electrical equipment could be affected by a **hostile operating environment** is regularly inspected, tested and maintained by a competent person to ensure it is safe for use, and
- all electrical equipment at a place of work that is found to be unsafe is disconnected from the electricity supply and is repaired, replaced or permanently removed from use.

Clause 65 (1) requires,

- that an employer must ensure that a record is made and kept of all inspections and tests made and maintenance carried out on electrical equipment.

WHAT IS A HOSTILE OPERATING ENVIRONMENT?

In clause 64 of the Regulation a **hostile operating environment** means an operating environment at a place of work where an item of electrical equipment is, in its normal use, subject to operating conditions that are likely to result in damage to the item of equipment. This includes an operating environment that may:

- cause mechanical damage to the item of equipment, or
- expose the item of equipment to moisture, heat, vibration, corrosive substances or dust that is likely to result in damage to the item of equipment.

DOES ALL ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT HAVE TO BE TESTED AND TAGGED?

No, Clause 64(2) of the OHS Regulation only requires testing and tagging of those items of electrical equipment that are used for construction work or used in a hostile operating environment where the safe operation of the electrical equipment could be affected.

Note: In addition to the above legislative requirements employers may following completion of a risk assessment determine that inspection and testing of identified electrical equipment is warranted.

WHAT HAPPENS TO ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT THAT IS NOT USED IN A HOSTILE OPERATING ENVIRONMENT OR FOR CONSTRUCTION WORK?

Clause 64(1) of the OHS Regulation requires the employer to ensure that any risk of injury from electricity at a place of work is eliminated or, if elimination is not reasonably practicable, the risk is controlled.

A risk assessment must be carried out on electrical equipment that does not fit into the above categories. After the risk assessment, you can then implement a range of control measures to manage the safe operation of electrical equipment that is used in the workplace, including:

- routine visual checks by the equipment user
- formal visual inspections
- maintenance
- repair
- replacement
- use of fixed or portable residual current devices (RCDs) more commonly known as safety switches
- training and instructing employees in the safe use of the electrical equipment
- and, if determined as an outcome of a risk assessment, inspection and testing of identified electrical equipment.

The WorkCover publication entitled **Electrical Equipment Risk Assessment** can be used to help you undertake the risk assessment and comply with the legislative requirements described in the Regulation.

DO I HAVE TO COMPLY FULLY WITH THE INSPECTION AND TESTING INTERVALS DESCRIBED IN TABLE 4 OF THE AS/NZS 3760?

No. The inspection and testing intervals only need to be applied to electrical equipment that has been assessed as operating in a **hostile operating environment** as described in clause 64 of the

Regulation. **Note:** The testing timeframes recommended in AS/NZS 3760 can be varied subject to a risk assessment carried out in accordance with the OHS Regulation.

DO I NEED TO RECORD THE RESULTS OF INSPECTIONS, TESTS AND MAINTENANCE CARRIED OUT ON ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT?

Yes. Clause 65 of the Regulation requires that a record is made and kept of all inspections, tests and maintenance carried out on electrical equipment that is used for construction work or used in a hostile operating environment. The employer is to ensure that the following information is recorded,

- (a) the name of the person who made the inspection or carried out the test or maintenance,
- (b) the date on which or the dates over which, the inspection was made or the test or maintenance was carried out,
- (c) the result or outcome of the inspection, test or maintenance, and
- (d) the date by which the next inspection and test must be carried out.

The requirements for recording the results of inspections and tests carried out on construction sites can be found in the *WorkCover Code of Practice - Electrical practices for construction work*.

Records can consist of documents, logbooks, asset registers or a computerised database. They should be located conveniently so that managers, employees and employee representatives can access the information.

WorkCover inspectors have the right to examine the records of employers, which are required to be kept by the Regulation.

HOW LONG SHOULD I KEEP INSPECTION AND TESTING RECORDS?

Records of maintenance, including (but not limited to) inspections and tests, should be kept throughout the working life of the electrical equipment.

Such records are a useful management tool for reviewing the frequency of the inspection and testing, and ensuring that regular inspection has been carried out.

The Standard AS/NZS 3760 recommends that inspection and testing records be retained for a period not less than seven years.

DO I NEED TO RECORD THE RESULTS OF RISK ASSESSMENTS CARRIED OUT ON ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT?

Although not required by the Regulation, WorkCover recommends that for electrical equipment being used in a non-hostile operating environment that a documented risk assessment be undertaken **or** if there is a change in equipment use/location **or** if an electrical incident occurs at the workplace involving electrical equipment to which the risk assessment relates.

Any such record of a risk assessment should be retained for a period of 12 months.

The WorkCover publication *Electrical Equipment Risk Assessment* can be used to assist you in undertaking an inspection and recording the results of a risk assessment of your workplace electrical equipment.

ARE THERE ANY SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR CONSTRUCTION WORK?

Yes. Due to the hazardous nature of construction work regular inspection and testing of electrical equipment must be carried out in accordance with the requirements of the OHS Regulation. The requirements are outlined in the WorkCover *Code of Practice - Electrical practices for construction work*.

ARE THERE ANY SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR HIRED ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT?

Yes. Hired electrical equipment is used in a diverse range of working environments outside the control of the equipment owner. Clause 124(2) of the OHS Regulation requires that a person who hires or leases plant (electrical equipment) to another person must ensure that the plant is regularly inspected.

The best way of achieving compliance with the above legislative requirement is to regularly inspect and test electrical equipment that is hired in accordance with the provisions of the Standard, AS/NZS 3760.

ARE THERE ANY SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR SERVICED OR REPAIRED ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT?

Yes. Electrical equipment that has been serviced or repaired, which could have affected electrical safety must be inspected and tested in accordance with the provisions of the Standard, AS/NZS 3760 prior to the equipment being placed back into service at the workplace.

ARE THERE ANY SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AMUSEMENT RIDE INDUSTRY?

Yes. Due to the hostile operating environment of the amusement ride industry regular inspection and testing of electrical equipment is warranted and must be carried out in accordance with the provisions of the Australian Standard (AS/NZS 3002) *Electrical installations - Shows and carnivals*.

WHO CAN INSPECT AND TEST ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT?

The inspection and testing of electrical equipment must be done by a “competent person” as defined in Clause 3 of the Regulation.

Regardless of who does the work the personnel must be authorised by the employer and must be adequately trained and instructed to do the work. Moreover, the person authorising the work must make sure that the inspection and testing program is appropriate and adequate for the needs of the

workplace and complies with the legislative requirements described in clause 64 and 65 of the Regulation.

Some electrical inspection and testing tasks require a degree of technical expertise and interpretation of results and, therefore, can only be carried out by appropriately qualified personnel.

If in doubt, the person authorising the inspection and testing program should obtain advice from a person qualified and experienced in electrical equipment inspection and testing, for example an electrician, electrical contractor or specialist testing provider.

Note: The *WorkCover Code of Practice - Electrical practices for construction work* (first published in 1992) indicates that inspection and testing is to be carried out by a licensed electrician. A 'competent person' who has been trained in the use of electrical equipment test instruments including a portable appliance tester (PAT) can also carry out this task. (Refer also to the question – What is a Portable Appliance?).

WHO IS A COMPETENT PERSON?

A competent person (the Regulation, clause 3) is a person who has acquired - through training, qualification or experience, (or a combination of them) the knowledge and skills enabling the person to perform the task correctly. In this context, this task would be that of inspecting and testing electrical equipment.

Whoever is responsible for ensuring a particular task is carried out must determine that the person engaged to carry out that task is competent to do so. In determining a person's competency, due consideration must be given to their qualifications, the training they have received relevant to the task in hand, and their previous experience in doing similar tasks.

Some tasks associated with electrical installation inspection and testing will require a particular competence, such as a formal electrical qualification and/or licence. Therefore a qualified and licensed electrician can only undertake such work.

Other tasks, such as the inspection, testing and tagging of plug-in type electrical equipment, can be carried out by a 'competent person', who does not have a formal electrical qualifications. Such a person must still be able to demonstrate they have the necessary training, qualification or experience, (or a combination of them), to carry out the inspecting and testing task in a competent manner.

CAN A PERSON THAT HOLDS A RESTRICTED ELECTRICAL LICENCE (DISCONNECT/RECONNECT) CARRY OUT 'TESTING AND TAGGING'?

A person that holds a Restricted Electrical Licence issued by the NSW Office of Fair Trading, or equivalent State agency is required to have completed a TAFE qualification following the completion

of a training course of 54 hours duration. The training course covers a broad range of electrical related topics, including the use of testing instruments such as insulation resistance testers and multimeters.

People holding the above licence and who have maintained their level of competency through regular on-the-job use of electrical testing instruments, should be capable of performing the inspection and testing activities outlined in the Standard AS/NZ 3760.

The decision about the competency level of such a licence holder rests with the employer, who must be satisfied that the person is competent to perform the inspection and testing tasks required by the Standard, AS/NZS 3760.

DOES NEW ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT REQUIRE TESTING?

No. With new electrical equipment the supplier is deemed responsible for the electrical safety of the new equipment in accordance with the principles of safe design and manufacture.

It is, therefore, not necessary for to test new equipment but the equipment should be checked to ensure no damage has occurred during shipment or commissioning.

Following the inspection and if the item of electrical equipment is to be placed into service in a hostile operating environment or used for construction work the new equipment should be fitted with a tag marked with the date it went into service.

This action sets a baseline date to work with for future electrical inspection and testing activities.

DOES FIXED ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT REQUIRE TESTING?

No. Fixed or stationary electrical equipment connected by a fixed cable or flexible cord, which is not operated in a hostile operating environment does not require testing.

- **Fixed equipment** is equipment that is fastened to a support, secured in position or otherwise due to its size and mass located in a specific location.
- **Stationary equipment** is equipment having a mass exceeding 18 kg and not provided with carrying handle(s).

WHAT ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT MUST BE INSPECTED, TESTED AND TAGGED?

The following categories, list plug-in type electrical equipment that is commonly used in construction work or in a hostile operating environment that must be inspected, tested and tagged.

Note: This table should be used as a guide only; an employer may have electrical equipment particular to their workplace that requires inspection and testing.

Category of electrical equipment that requires regular inspection and testing. (Includes hired or repaired equipment)	Examples of electrical equipment
Electrical equipment used for construction work.	Portable power tools, extension leads, portable outlet device(power boards), portable lighting equipment, portable welders, electric concrete mixers, etc.
Electrical equipment used in a hostile operating environment where the equipment is subjected to operating conditions that are likely to result in damage to the equipment. (Refer to question, What is a hostile operating environment?)	<p>Electrical equipment used in workplaces where mechanical damage could occur or where the electrical equipment may be damaged by exposure to moisture, heat, vibration, corrosive substances or dust.</p> <p>For example, electrical equipment used in wet or dusty areas, outdoors, commercial kitchens, workplaces using corrosive substances and factory-type environments including assembly, fabrication, manufacturing, refurbishment or repair.</p>

DO I HAVE TO 'TEST AND TAG' MY DESKTOP COMPUTERS AND OFFICE TYPE ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT?

No. Office type equipment such as computers, photocopiers, printers, extension cords sets, power outlets devices (power boards) electrical equipment used in office tea and lunch rooms does not normally present a risk to the user. This is due to:

- the permanent nature of their location
- the low risk working environment in which the electrical equipment is used.

In workplaces like these, a risk assessment must be carried out in accordance with the risk management provisions of the OHS Regulation. If the risk assessment determines the electrical equipment is being used in a **hostile operating environment** it must then be regularly inspected and tested in accordance with the provisions of the Standard, AS/NZS 3760.

HOW DO I TEST 415 VOLT THREE PHASE ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT?

The Standard AS/NZS 3760 covers testing of both 240 and 415 volt electrical equipment, and requires that a range of tests be carried out on the equipment, including,

- earthing continuity
- insulation resistance
- leakage current.

Note: Tests performed on 415 volt electrical equipment will require the use of test equipment appropriate to the task. Most Portable Appliance Testers (PATs) are specifically designed to perform tests on 240 volt electrical equipment; therefore they cannot be used to perform tests on 415 volt three-phase electrical equipment.

WHAT DOES THE TERM, 'MULTIPLE WORKING ENVIRONMENT' MEAN WITH REGARD TO TESTING AND TAGGING ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT?

This term relates to diversity in a working environment where electrical equipment is used.

A factory may have a manufacturing area, lunchroom and a low risk office area – these constitute multiple working environments. Although the workplace is a factory, the electrical equipment that is used at each different location should be assessed separately. If any of the electrical equipment has been assessed as operating in a *hostile operating environment* it must be regularly inspected and tested in accordance with the provisions of the Standard, AS/NZS 3760.

DO LIGHT FITTINGS THAT ARE LOCATED / SUSPENDED IN A CEILING AND FITTED WITH A PLUG AND SOCKET REQUIRE TESTING?

No. The Standard AS/NZS 3760 does not apply to equipment such as suspended light fittings or fluorescent light fittings which are above the floor, and not normally able to be touched by a person.

This type of electrical equipment is often fitted with a flexible supply lead and connected via a plug and socket but due to the location of the equipment does not pose a risk and therefore does not require testing and tagging.

DOES NEW ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT, WHICH IS LOCATED IN A RETAIL/WHOLESALE OUTLET AND USED FOR PRODUCT DEMONSTRATION, REQUIRE TESTING?

No. The Standard AS/NZS 3760 does not apply to new electrical equipment that is solely used for product demonstration. This new equipment does not fall within the scope of the Standard and therefore does not need testing and tagging.

WHAT TESTING INSTRUMENTS CAN I USE TO PERFORM THE TESTS OUTLINED IN AS/NZS 3760?

The Standard AS/NZS 3760 requires that a range of tests be carried out on electrical equipment, including earthing continuity, insulation resistance, leakage current and the operation of Residual Current Devices (RCDs).

Testing instruments that can be used to perform these tests include, an insulation resistance tester (commonly known as a megger), continuity tester, multimeter, Portable Appliance Tester (PAT) and an RCD Tester (for testing the operation of a Residual Current Device).

Note: Tests performed on 415 volt electrical equipment will require the use of test equipment appropriate to the task. Most PAT Testers are specifically designed to perform tests on 240 volt electrical equipment; therefore they cannot be used to perform tests on 415 volt equipment.

WHAT IS A PORTABLE APPLIANCE TESTER (PAT)?

A Portable Appliance Tester (PAT) is an electronic testing instrument designed to perform a range of automatic tests on plug-in type electrical equipment as outlined in the Standard AS/NZS 3760.

The results indicated by a PAT require no technical interpretation, however the instrument must still be used by a 'competent person' trained in its use.

WHERE CAN I GET TRAINING TO BECOME A 'COMPETENT PERSON' TO UNDERTAKE INSPECTION AND TESTING USING A PAT?

Persons wanting to be trained in the requirements of the relevant OHS legislation, the provisions of the Standard AS/NZS 3760 and the use of a PAT should contact a registered training organisation (RTO), which has developed a training course for this subject. For example a number of RTOs have developed a recognised training course that covers this subject including TAFE who provide an eight-hour training course on the 'Safety Checking of Electrical Appliances' using a Portable Appliance Tester (PAT).

HAS WORKCOVER ACCREDITED OR APPROVED ANY TRAINING COURSE RELATING TO 'TESTING AND TAGGING'?

No. WorkCover does not accredit, approve or endorse any training course relating to the inspection, testing and tagging of electrical equipment.

DOES WORKCOVER HAVE TO ENDORSE OR ISSUE A LICENCE NUMBER TO A PERSON CARRYING OUT 'TESTING AND TAGGING'?

No, WorkCover does not endorse, approve or issue a licence number to a person carrying out the work activity of testing and tagging of electrical equipment.

I HAVE COMPLETED A TRAINING COURSE TO USE A PAT TESTER. AM I REQUIRED TO UNDERTAKE REFRESHER TRAINING OR HAVE MY PAPERWORK RENEWED EACH YEAR?

WorkCover does not require a 'competent person' who has completed a PAT training course to undertake refresher training or have their Statement of Attainment or Certificate renewed each year.

If you have completed testing and tagging training, you should ensure that you maintain your level of competency via regular on-the-job application of learnt skills, and through the inspections and tests outlined in the Standard, AS/NZS 3760.

Your competency levels may need to be periodically updated following technological advances in both testing instrumentation, and the electrical equipment that is being inspected and tested.

The decision on the competence or otherwise of a 'competent person' rests with the employer, who must make sure that the person is competent to perform the inspection and testing tasks required by the Standard, AS/NZS 3760.

DOES WORKCOVER HAVE TO ACCREDIT OR APPROVE A COMPANY OR INDIVIDUAL WANTING TO CONDUCT A BUSINESS RELATING TO 'TESTING AND TAGGING'?

No. WorkCover has not accredited, approved or endorsed any company or individual conducting the business activity of inspection, testing and tagging of electrical equipment.

I HAVE TO RECORD A LICENCE NUMBER ON THE EMPLOYER'S TAGS AND TESTING RECORDS. I AM NOT A LICENSED ELECTRICIAN WHAT CAN I DO?

The requirement for recording a licence number is specifically required in WorkCover's *Code of Practice: Electrical practices for construction work*. An employer may also require the person doing inspections and tests to record their details – including a licence number – on records or documentation.

In this case, a 'competent person' who is not a licensed electrician can use an identifying number particular to them. This could be the 'accountable number' recorded on their Statement of Attainment or on the Certificate issued by the registered training organisation that provided the training.

DO I NEED TO USE COLOUR TAGS?

No. A tag may be colour-coded but this is not required other than on construction sites (refer WorkCover's *Code of Practice – Electrical practices for construction work*).

The tag must be durable, non-reusable, non-metallic and must be marked with the name of the person or company who performed the test; and the test date or re-test date. Refer to Section 2 of the Standard AS/NZS 3760.

WHAT INFORMATION SHOULD I WRITE ON THE TAG?

If, following inspection and testing, you find the electrical equipment to be compliant, you must attach a tag marked with the name of the person or company who performed the test; and the test date or re-test date. Refer to Section 2 of the Standard AS/NZS 3760.

CAN I DESIGN AND MAKE MY OWN TAGS?

There is no barrier to you designing and making your own tags. The decision on whether to design and make a tag rests with the employer and would depend largely on the skills and resources available to them. Importantly, any such tag must meet the requirements of the Standard. Refer Section 2 of the Standard AS/NZS 3760.

Note: Tags fitted to electrical equipment used on construction sites should comply with WorkCover's *Code of Practice – Electrical practices for construction work*.

HOW CAN I ACCESS THE LATEST LAWS RELATING TO OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY LEGISLATION?

The Act and the Regulation can be found on the NSW law site at www.legislation.nsw.gov.au.

WHAT GUIDANCE IS AVAILABLE TO HELP ME COMPLY WITH THE ELECTRICAL INSPECTION AND TESTING REQUIREMENTS OF THE REGULATION?

WorkCover's *Code of Practice: Technical Guidance* adopts, without alteration, the Australian Standard, AS/NZS 3760 - *In-service safety inspection and testing of electrical equipment*.

This Standard provides employers with practical guidance on the inspection and testing of, and record keeping about, electrical equipment they may use at their workplace. The Standard does not apply to construction sites.

Electrical practices on construction sites, including inspection and testing of electrical equipment, are covered separately under the requirements of WorkCover's *Code of Practice: Electrical practices for construction work*.

In addition to the above codes of practice WorkCover has produced the *Electrical Equipment Risk Assessment*, which can be used to help you undertake a risk assessment of your workplace electrical equipment and help you comply with the legislative requirements described in the Regulation.

To support the above codes and guidance material WorkCover has also produced a list of frequently asked questions (FAQs) on the subject of electrical inspection, testing and tagging.

To view this guidance material and the FAQs, visit WorkCover's website at www.workcover.nsw.gov.au.

WHERE CAN I GET A COPY OF THE AUSTRALIAN STANDARD AS/NZS 3760?

WorkCover does not sell Australian Standards. Standards can be purchased from Standards Australia either in hard copy format, or they can be purchased as a download from the Standards Australia website.

Contact Details:

SAI Global

286 Sussex Street

Sydney NSW 2000

Customer Service Centre on phone: 131 242

Website: <http://www.saiglobal.com/shop>

DO I NEED SPECIAL EQUIPMENT TO TEST THE OPERATING TIME FOR A RESIDUAL CURRENT DEVICE (RCD)?

Yes. Under the Standard AS/NZS 3760, it is a requirement that the operating time of an RCD be checked by an RCD testing instrument.

WHO IS ALLOWED TO TEST A FIXED RESIDUAL CURRENT DEVICE (RCD)?

A 'competent person' trained in the use of an RCD tester. If it is necessary to access the RCD via an electrical supply distribution board, a licensed electrician may be required to carry out the task.

WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS FOR TESTING AND TAGGING ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT THAT IS OWNED BY RESIDENTS IN AGE CARE FACILITIES?

Testing and tagging of electrical articles owned by the residents would only be required if a risk assessment (carried out by the controller of the workplace) indicated that the items of electrical equipment was being used in a hostile operating environment.

An aged care village/nursing home is commonly broken into three types of areas and the requirements for testing and tagging vary greatly depending on the level of control exercised by the 'controller of premises'.

Who pays for the testing and tagging is for the controller of premises and the resident to agree on, but typically the cost (where it is required) is passed onto the resident.

Situation 1. Retirement village, where the resident has leased or purchased an independent unit and is not provided with any services:

This is not a workplace; therefore it does not fall under WorkCover's jurisdiction. There would be no requirement to have the resident's electrical equipment tested and tagged.

Situation 2. Nursing homes, a ward type of environment, 24 hours care:

The controller of the premises is responsible for having the resident's electrical equipment tested and tagged if a risk assessment indicates that the articles operate in a hostile operating environment.

Situation 3. A hostel, where a resident has a room, but goes into common areas to eat or attend activities, and receives some assistance from nursing staff:

The controller of the premises is responsible for having the resident's electrical equipment tested and tagged if a risk assessment indicates that the articles operate in a hostile operating environment.

WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS FOR TESTING AND TAGGING ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT IN HOLIDAY UNITS?

Holiday units are not workplaces while occupied by holiday tenants. They do not, therefore, come within the scope of the Act or the Regulation.

Although the Regulation does not cover residential-type situations like a holiday unit, the owner of the unit still has a general duty of care to ensure that holiday tenants are not exposed to safety hazards while staying in the property.

The holiday unit and its fittings, including electrical equipment, should be maintained in a safe condition. This does not mean, however, that electrical equipment must be inspected and tested in accordance with the requirements of the Standard, AS/NZS 3760.

WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS FOR TESTING AND TAGGING ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT AT A CARAVAN PARK?

The owner of a caravan park has a number of responsibilities under the Act and the Regulation:

1. The owner has a responsibility as an employer to any employees who work at the caravan park
2. The owner, as a 'controller of premises', has responsibilities to other employers who may use the caravan park facilities (eg a shop leased to another employer)
3. The owner of the caravan park has a general duty of care to the residents, holidaymakers and visitors to the caravan park.

The owner of the caravan park (as an employer and controller of premises) must therefore comply with the specific requirements of the OHS Regulation to ensure a safe electrical installation and safe electrical equipment.

This requirement extends to both the electrical installation, and any plug-in type electrical equipment under the ownership and control of the caravan park owner. The owner must comply with the specific legislative requirements contained in clauses 41, 64 and 65 of the Regulation.

Note: These legislative obligations do not extend to plug-in electrical equipment owned by a holidaymaker that is plugged into the caravan park's electrical installation. There is no requirement for this electrical equipment to be inspected, tested and tagged in accordance with the Standard, AS/NZS 3760.

Regardless of this, WorkCover is aware that some caravan park owners have exercised a site rule (based on public liability requirements) requiring holidaymakers to have their extension lead tested and tagged.

CAN I DISMANTLE ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT TO CARRY OUT INSPECTION AND TESTING?

No. Electrical equipment should not be dismantled to carry out the inspections and tests required by AS/NZS 3760. If, for some reason, electrical equipment must be dismantled to verify the safety performance, the task must be done by a technically qualified person.

WHO IS ALLOWED TO REPLACE A PLUG OR SOCKET?

Plugs and extension cord sockets may be replaced by a non-electrically trained person, provided the person has been trained and found competent to fit plugs and sockets according to the manufacturer's instructions.

On completion of this work, the items have to be inspected and tested. They should also be tagged if they are to be used for construction work or for work in a hostile operating environment.

When replacing extension cord sockets, WorkCover recommends they be replaced with the shrouded type, which offers improved electrical safety.

Note: Electrical safety requirements introduced in NSW in 2005 and administered by the Office of Fair Trading requires that plugs have insulated pins. Only plugs that conform to the new electrical safety requirements should be used when replacement of a plug occurs.

MUST PLUGS BE OF THE MOULDED OR TRANSPARENT TYPE?

Plugs and extension lead sockets used on flexible extension leads and portable power tools used in **construction work** should be of the non-rewirable (moulded) type, or a transparent (clear) type. This is outlined in the *WorkCover Code of Practice - Electrical practices for construction work*.

This WorkCover requirement relates to equipment used in construction work and does not extend to electrical equipment used in other working environments – except the health industry sector, where the use of transparent plugs is required for new equipment, if rewirable (refer to Australian Standard, AS/NZS 3200.1).

Note: Although not mandatory for other working environments, transparent plugs and shrouded-type transparent sockets make it easy to check internal connections at the time of inspection. You should consider fitting such plugs/sockets to existing (ie older) equipment at the time of repair, or if replacing the plug or socket.

