

ECI, FISUEL and AIE recommendations on the EPBD guidance for Member States on Fire Safety

The European Copper Institute (ECI), the International Federation for the Safety of Electricity Users (FISUEL) and the European Electrical Contractors Association (AIE) welcome the European Commission's effort to draft a guidance document on the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive with regards to the transposition of the provisions on fire safety.

ECI, FISUEL and AIE advocate for the prevention of fires from electrical origin, since degraded electrical installations or faulty electrical appliances make up 25% of all residential fires in Europe. In this context, they would like to propose 5 recommendations to consider when drafting the guidance.

[1] Develop awareness on electrical safety

An **electrical fire safety awareness campaign** should be setup to improve knowledge on the risks of old electrical installations and appliances and to promote the use of qualified and skilled contractors.

Making occupants aware of the risks of old installations and appliances is one of the most efficient ways of improving electrical safety awareness among citizens, in particular in view of the fact that 'do-it-yourself' work making small modifications on the electrical installation is increasing.

More information: <https://www.nfpa.org/fpw/index.html>

[2] Encourage regular inspections

Initial inspections of new buildings and safety checks at regular intervals are paramount to prevent incidents. **Periodic inspections should take place to check the electrical installations with a limited validity, as recommended by HD 60364-6.** The inspection documents should be made available when the property changes tenant or owner.

Despite a clear recommendation by CENELEC on periodic inspection, only a minority of EU countries have a system for periodic inspection of electrical installations in place. As a result, installations continue to contain features that are considered to be unsafe according to the latest standards. The FEEDS report concludes that periodic inspections, verifying whether electrical safety standards are effectively applied, result in a reduction of the number of fires.

More information: FEEDS report - "[Residential electrical safety - How to ensure progress](http://www.leonardo-energy.org/resources/1136)", <http://www.leonardo-energy.org/resources/1136>

Inspections of electrical installations should be encouraged when:

- Conducting **renovation works**;
- Installing **photovoltaics, heat pumps** or **charging stations** for electric vehicles.

The electrical energy system is rapidly changing and new electrical devices, such as solar panels, heat pumps and electrical vehicle chargers, can introduce serious challenges to the safety of a domestic electrical system. Inspections and checks help identify these issues and improve safety.

[3] Encourage Member States to support the most vulnerable households to upgrade the safety of electrical installations

The guidance can encourage Member States to provide **funds** to those most at risk of energy poverty - namely the elderly, single parents and young people – to upgrade the safety of electric installations.

Multiple statistical sources reveal that population segments suffering from safety poverty are the same affected by energy poverty. Demographic groups with lower living standards run more than average risk of accidents from electrical origin: by focusing their resources on covering basic needs, they are more likely to rent cheaper, older and inappropriately maintained housing with inadequate heating and obsolete electrical installations.

More information: "[Addressing safety and energy poverty to better protect vulnerable consumers](#)", published by Benoît Dôme in EPOV

[4] Reinforce market surveillance for electrical equipment

Market surveillance at EU level for electrical equipment and cables should be reinforced.

Considering that the uses of domestic electricity continue to diversify and develop, and taking into account that 20 to 30% of the total number of domestic fires have an electrical origin, a reinforced market surveillance system for electrical equipment, including cables, can prevent the entry into market of hazardous products.

[5] Invest in fully up-to-date equipment and safety service

The investment in, and the use of, **up to date technologies** for electrical protection devices should be promoted when relevant to reduce fire risks and decrease electrical incidents.

In the past 50 years, the use of fuses, circuit breaker, differential protection and accurate cables has shown its efficiency. Despite a large increase of electricity usage, the number of incidents and fires has decreased significantly. Depending on the practice in each country, a national approach should be promoted.

More information: https://www.onse.fr/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/plaquette_onse_en.pdf

About ECI, FISUEL and AIE

The **European Copper Institute** (ECI)—founded in 1996 and based in Brussels—coordinates a team of professionals based in offices across Europe and works closely with its copper industry members on regulatory matters and market development programs. ECI is part of the Copper Alliance™, which brings together the global copper industry to develop and defend markets for copper, and to make a positive contribution to society's sustainable development goals.

The **International Federation for the Safety of Electricity Users** (FISUEL) represents legal entities with operational responsibility and/or concerns for the safety of electricity users and uses. It aims to increase the level of safety in electrical installations as well as the convergence between systems of reference, by jointly promoting electrical safety at the international level, and encouraging contact and sharing of experiences between countries.

The **European Electrical Contractors Association** (AIE) – founded in 1954 – represents the interests of electrical contractors in Europe, covering 1.2 million jobs, 125.500 companies and 137 billion Euro turnover. AIE mission is to promote high-quality and safe electrical installations in Europe and to promote opportunities for electrical contractors by helping to build a regulatory environment in the EU that embraces the modern electrical contractor.