



Farningham Village Hall

Electrical Safety Policy

v.4 of 27.02.23

1. Policy Statement

1.1 That all FVH **electrical** systems and equipment are suitable and **safe** for their intended use.

1.2 That suitable precautions are taken to prevent danger arising from the use of electrical systems and equipment.

1.3 NB: This policy applies to both Qualified and Unqualified users. For the purposes of this policy the following definitions apply:

a) **Qualified person**: One who has skills and knowledge related to the construction and operation of the electrical equipment and installations and has received safety training to recognize and avoid the hazards involved.

b) **Unqualified person**: A person who is not a qualified person. Any electrical system modification must be reviewed by and approved by the FVH Caretaker and/or subject to an interim Inspection.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 FVH Management Committee is responsible for the periodic review and updating of this policy. It will conduct periodic inspections to monitor compliance with this and other safety related policies, and will arrange for 5 yearly certificated inspections.

2.2 User Groups and Hirers are responsible for the implementation of the policy within their respective sessions. Their attention will be drawn to this policy in connection with Fire Safety and Health & Safety policies. The Hirer shall ensure that any electrical appliances brought by them to the premises and used there:

a) shall be safe, in good working order, and used in a safe manner in accordance with the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989.

b) Where a residual circuit breaker is provided the hirer must make use of it in the interests of public safety.

c) The use of extension leads by the Hirer where one extension is plugged into another is not permitted.

3. PROCEDURES

3.1 Electrical Panels

- a) Electrical panels must be kept free of obstructions with at least 3 feet of clearance provided in front of the panel.
- b) Panel doors must be able to open a minimum of 90° and doors must be kept closed unless work is being done to the panel.
- c) Circuit breaker blanks must be installed in open panel slots.
- d) All panels and breakers must be labelled to indicate the circuit's specific function.
- e) The movement of circuit breaker switches must not be restricted by tape or other material placed across the breaker. The use of tape to restrict breaker movement is not an acceptable method of lock out/tag out.

4. Portable Electric Power Tools

- 4.1 Electric power tools are required to be plugged into a Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI) either at the extension cord, outlet or at the circuit breaker panel regardless of whether they are used inside or outside of a structure.
- 4.2 Handheld power tools are to be inspected before each use for frayed or damaged power cords. Power tools with observed damage shall be taken out of service until repaired by a qualified person or replaced.
- 4.3 Extension cords used with power tools must be rated for the power demands of the tool and have an intact grounding pin. Portable electrical equipment must be handled in a manner that will prevent damage to the electrical cord and equipment.

5. Power Strips and Extension Cords

- 5.1 The use of power strips is allowed as long as they are UL listed; have built in overcurrent protection; have cords that are no longer than necessary for the application; should not be used for appliances or equipment requiring a large electrical load (i.e. microwave ovens) and are used within the manufacturer's guidelines.
- 5.2 Power strips must not be used in series with other power strips or extension cords. Extension cords are for temporary use only. The permanent use of extension cords is prohibited. Temporary, as it relates to this policy, is defined as no longer than necessary, but shall not exceed a 90-day period of time.
- 5.3 Cords must be inspected regularly for damage. External damage to the insulation may be repaired by a qualified electrician. Damage to internal wiring will require disposal of the cord.
- 5.4 Extension cords must not be run through walls, above ceilings, through window openings, under rugs and floor mats or used in any manner that prevents inspection and risks damage to the cord. Extension cords running along or across areas of foot traffic must be secure to prevent a tripping hazard.

6. Checklist

6.1 Electrical equipment and services If you have any fixed electrical installations:

- Are they correctly installed, modified or repaired, then inspected and tested by an electrician or other suitably qualified person before being put into use?
- Are they inspected and tested at suitable (occasional) intervals by an electrician or other suitably qualified person?

6.2 If you own or hire any portable or fixed electrical equipment (eg a cooker or vacuum cleaner etc):

- Has it been visually checked and, where necessary, tested at suitable (occasional) intervals to ensure that it is safe to use?
- Has any damaged electrical equipment been taken out of service or replaced?

7. The Electricity at Work Regulations 1989

These require that all electrical systems and equipment are installed and maintained in a safe condition.

7.1 Installations and equipment should be professionally checked on a regular basis (at least every five years) although installations do not have to be installed and maintained by a business which is NICEIC (National Inspection Council for Electrical Installation Contracting) approved.

7.2 Depending on the type of electrical equipment various **checks may be needed weekly, monthly or annually** and the manufacturers or electricians' instructions can be used to work out the frequency of the hall's system of checks needed.

7.3 The checks should be carried out as appropriate to the nature of the premises and its use and exact details of what is required can be obtained from the various manufacturers and installers.

7.4 These routine checks need not be carried out by an electrically skilled person but should be conducted by someone who is able to safely use the installation and recognise the defects.

7.5 Portable Appliance Testing (PAT) involves a combination of visual checks and using test apparatus. Although not compulsory it is recommended as a means of ensuring that both the Electricity at Work Regulations and the Health and Safety at Work Act are complied with. All appliances that have been tested should display either a pass or fail label. Appliances that fail must not be used until repaired and re-tested.

7.6 FVH committee will arrange to carry out visual checks as part of their routine health and safety checks, at least annually, and have repaired any appliances (including extension leads, fridges etc.) which have damage to insulation on leads or to plugs, loose plugs, or incorrect fuses.

7.7 Any portable equipment brought onto the premises by users should be PAT tested. (Certain types of tests can damage computers and other office equipment and the correct test equipment needs to be used.)

7.8 Users should be encouraged to report any faults or damage to electrical equipment and items reported should be taken out of use (e.g. marked as faulty or the plug removed) until repaired.