



Safe Electric scheme promotes need to use registered electrical contractors

Independent research shows 71% of people unaware of their rights

- 30% unaware that there are unregistered electrical contractors working in Ireland
- 58% not aware of the need to look for a certificate of completion
- 71% unaware of their right to seek redress

28th April 2010: A new safety awareness campaign, known as “Safe Electric”, has been launched today by the Commission for Energy Regulation (CER) to make people aware of the need to hire a Registered Electrical Contractor when getting any electrical work done in their home and to ask for a certificate when the work is complete. By hiring a Registered Electrical Contractor, people can ensure that any work carried out in their home is completed by a competent contractor who is insured and inspected as part of the Safe Electric campaign.

Independent market research conducted on behalf of the Safe Electric campaign has shown that 30% of people surveyed were not aware that there are registered and unregistered electrical contractors working in Ireland.

The campaign was launched by Eamon Ryan TD, Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources and is being promoted by the CER in its function as the safety regulator and is supported by a nationwide strategic media rollout campaign.

Speaking at the launch, Minister Ryan stated:

“I am pleased to launch the Safe Electric campaign on behalf of the Commission for Energy Regulation. Electrical safety is of paramount importance and the goal of this campaign is an important one. Members of the public should be aware of their rights when hiring an electrical contractor and they should always look for someone who is registered with Safe Electric and ask for a certificate when the work is done.”

Electrical faults are the cause of at least 4 fires per week in Ireland, according to statistics from fire authorities around the country and published by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government. By hiring a Registered Electrical Contractor to carry out repairs and installations on their behalf, people can guard against the potential for a fire caused by an electrical fault in their home.

The research also showed that while 36% of people surveyed had hired an electrician in the last two years, 45% of those were not aware if they had hired a Registered Electrical Contractor or not. Of those people who had hired an electrician, 37% were very satisfied with the work completed. However, 13% of people who hired an electrician stated that the work required further attention.

58% of those surveyed were not aware of the need to look for a certificate of completion when the work was done. This certificate represents a legal declaration that the work carried out, and the equipment and materials used, meets the required electrical safety standards.

And indeed, 71% of people were unaware that they had the right to seek redress for electrical work carried out by a Registered Electrical Contractor which does not meet the required safety standards.

Garrett Blaney, Commissioner for Safety at CER stated:

“Electrical contractors who are registered with Safe Electric are required to adhere to rigorous standards in their work and they are subject to inspection at least once per year. By hiring a Registered Electrical Contractor you will have peace of mind that any electrical work carried out in your home has been completed by a contractor who is competent, insured and inspected.”

He added:

“Our advice is that you should consider hiring a Registered Electrical Contractor for anything but the most minor of electrical work, such as rewiring a plug or fitting a light switch. Hiring a Registered Electrical Contractor protects you and your family from risks caused by shoddy electrical work.”

A voluntary registration scheme has been in place since 1992 and is now on a statutory footing since 2006. The Safe Electric campaign aims to raise awareness about the need for consumers to use a Registered Electrical Contractor and their rights when they do so.

Details of Registered Electrical Contractors all over Ireland is available through www.safeelectric.ie. The website also provides information for consumers on why it's important to use a Registered Electrical Contractor and advice on how to seek redress for work which does not meet the required safety standards.

ENDS

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Notes to Editor:

For further information on the Safe Electric Scheme, visit:

www.safeelectric.ie or www.cer.ie/electricity/safety

About the Commission for Energy Regulation

The Commission for Energy Regulation (CER) is the independent body responsible for regulating the natural gas and electricity markets in Ireland in the interest of customers.

This includes the regulation of gas and electrical safety. More recently this function has extended to the regulation of Electrical Contractors and Gas Installers.

The CER has appointed two safety supervisory bodies to oversee the implementation of its safety function in relation to the regulation of Electrical Contractors, namely the Register of Electrical Contractors of Ireland (RECI) and the Electrical Contractors Safety and Standards Association of Ireland (ECSSAI). These bodies carry out inspections of all Registered Electrical Contractors at least once a year to ensure that their work is in compliance with the relevant National Standard.