

Mains Power in Sheds

The article about providing mains power to an outdoor shed in SPRAT 188 raised a number of concerns from members.

It is important to note that SPRAT articles are written by members to share their ideas and experiences. Articles are not 'peer reviewed' and their publication in no way indicates that they are approved or advocated by the Club. Further details about our publication policy are set out on the Club website.

The article in SPRAT 188 included a number of warnings to check with a qualified electrician; this is sage advice.

Due to the concerns raised, I have consulted a professional within the industry, who is also a licensed radio amateur, for advice on the safety and legality of the arrangements outlined in the article.

The advice was qualified by a number of 'it depends if...' statements highlighting the complexity of Regulations in respect to such installations. It is also important to note that there are different rules in different parts of the UK, and in other countries.

The salient points are as follows:

- All new wiring MUST comply with the current IEE Wiring Regulations, also known as BS7671:2018 (backed up legally by the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989), and the Building Regulations 2010 (as amended).
- Part P of the Building Regulations requires that certain types of work to be carried out by suitably qualified people who can certify that their work complies with the Regulations.
- DIY wiring is permitted, and the scope of that work was extended in 2013 to include, for example, adding spurs to existing circuits.
- Where DIY work is done, some work requires notification to the Local Authority, some does not. Despite this, certification of the work by either an installation certificate or a minor works certificate should always be done to fully test and prove the installation is safe.
- DIY work does not fall under the scope of the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 (EAWR), however work done for friends, neighbours and other fellow radio amateurs will, as by definition this is work done.
- All work carried out must be by a competent person. The Institute of engineers and technicians (IET) who publish BS7671:2018 define 'Competent person' as somebody who is capable of completing a specific task safely and effectively and the EAWR says 'a person having the necessary technical knowledge and/or experience to avoid danger and injury'.
- If any defective wiring work is carried out it highly likely that Home Insurance policies would be invalidated.
- It will more than likely be identified on a condition report needed to sell your property when moving house and could affect the asking price.

The Club stands by the advice to consult a qualified electrician If you intend to carry out any electrical work beyond simple jobs that are within your capability.

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October 2021