

Survival Solutions

WHAT IS TEST AND TAG?

Test and tag is the procedure for the safety checking of electrical appliances. Workplaces in NSW must be able to demonstrate safe systems of work, including electrical safety. Portable appliances including power tools, extension leads and vacuum cleaners are items that are frequently handled by workers, and are open to abuse and hostile environmental conditions which can cause them to become electrically unsafe.



Portable appliance tester

Test and Tag is a strategy which minimises the risk of electrical shock to workers. Each piece of equipment is inspected, electrically tested, and then tagged (labelled) at regular intervals. A record of these tests is kept as part of your overall OH&S risk management documentation.

DO I NEED TO HAVE MY APPLIANCES TESTED AND TAGGED?

It is every employer's obligation under the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000 to ensure that they provide a safe place of work for their employees. This includes ensuring that the risk of electric shock from portable electrical equipment and appliances is minimised. There are substantial penalties for employers and all levels of management where inadequate safety leads to the injury or death of a worker. In NSW, sections 64 and 65 of the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation 2001 specify the obligations of employers in relation to electrical safety. Electrical testing and tagging forms a part of your workplace risk management system.



Phase appliance tester

HOW OFTEN DO I NEED TO GET MY ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES TESTED?

There are a range of routines for different environments and equipment usage levels, however Survival Solutions suggest you have equipment inspected at least annually unless required more regularly.



Power tools should be inspected regularly

HOW DO I ORGANISE AN INSPECTION OF OUR ELECTRICAL APPLIANCE?

Survival Solutions office hours are 8.00am to 5pm Monday to Friday.

Bookings can be made by phoning 1300 040 362 or emailing enquiries@survivalsolutions.com.au

We can also make arrangements to visit your workplace after hours or on the weekend to ensure there is minimal disruption to your business.

Tradesman and contractors can bring tools to our factory in 3/14 Reliance Drive Tuggerah and have them tested overnight.

WHAT IS THE RELEVANT AUSTRALIAN STANDARD FOR TEST AND TAG?

Australian Standard AS/NZS 3760: 2003 is the relevant standard for the safety inspection and testing of electrical appliances.

WHAT DOES THE INSPECTION AND TESTING INVOLVE?

Our qualified test and tag technicians come to your workplace at a time that is convenient for you.

Each appliance is disconnected from the power and then visually inspected. This includes examining the plug, the flexible cord and the cord strain reliefs. Depending on the type of appliance, we then use electrical testing instruments to test for invisible flaws such as broken earth connection or flawed insulation. Once the appliance passes the tests, a record is made in the Appliance Test Log database and a compliance tag bearing information about the date of testing is affixed to the cord.

After the completion of testing at your workplace, we will issue you with a copy of the Appliance Test Log for your OHS Risk Management records.

WE HAVE AN RCD “SAFETY SWITCH” INSTALLED. AREN'T WE PROTECTED?

No, not entirely. A "Safety Switch" or Residual Current Device (RCD) only protects against certain types of electrical faults.

It is recommended that all workplaces and homes be fitted with RCDs, and since 2007, the Wiring Rules, AS3000:2007 requires an RCD to be installed on all new circuits which supply power points. The use of an RCD however, is no excuse for complacency when it comes to the regular inspection and testing of your electrical appliances.



RCD's should be checked regularly

DOES OUR “SAFETY SWITCH” (RCD) NEED REGULAR TESTING?

Yes. Your RCDs need to be tested to ensure that they will respond to a fault situation quickly enough, and before there is enough current flowing to give a person a dangerous electric shock. Survival Solutions Appliance Testing can test your RCDs to ensure that their trip time is within the standard.

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO TEST AND TAG?

The time taken to test each device is different. For example, a power-board needs to have every outlet tested individually, and therefore takes longer to test. As a rough guide, we find that 15 appliances can be properly tested by one technician in one hour.

HOW MANY FAULTY ITEMS DO YOU FIND?

About 2% of all items tested are faulty. Many of these faulty items have the potential to cause electrocution and/or electrical fire.

We find that tidy office spaces usually have less faulty equipment than workshops or building sites. This fact is recognised within the Australian Standard, and hence the period between inspections varies, depending on the type of workplace. In some cases it can be as long as 5 years between inspections.

OUR POWER TOOLS AND APPLIANCES HAVE WORKED FINE FOR YEARS/ HOW CAN ANYTHING BE WRONG WITH THEM?

Appliances can still function when they are unsafe. Here are two common scenarios:

- a) The Earth (Green) wire (inside the cord) becomes severed or detached from the metal appliance casing. In this case, the appliance will still appear to function normally. However, if a fault occurs and electrical current flows to the metal casing, a person who touches the appliance will suffer an electric shock.
- b) The cord of a frequently used appliance such as a power drill becomes worn internally. The cord looks normal on the outside, but inside, the copper wires protrude through the insulation, and begin to short circuit. There is a real risk of an electrical fire in this case.

DO WE NEED TO DO ANYTHING TO PREPARE FOR SURVIVAL SOLUTIONS TO TEST AND TAG?

We do suggest that you direct your staff to have a quick look at this website, so they have an understanding of the testing process.

Staff should be made aware that they will need to shut down their computers (excluding laptops) and other sensitive equipment for about 3 minutes each whilst the technician inspects and tests them.

Depending on your location, you may need to provide parking for the technician.

You also need to ensure that the technician will have easy access to all items which need to be tested. If furniture or equipment will need to be moved, please have someone available to do this.

To assist in expediting the testing process all power tools, leads and appliances can be placed in one location prior to technician's arrival.

WHAT KIND OF DOCUMENTATION WILL WE RECEIVE?

All clients receive an Appliance Test Log which is spreadsheet of the inspection and test results for each item we test and tag. We generally issue these documents as an electronic Adobe .PDF file. We can also provide you with an Asset Register in a Microsoft Excel format file if you wish. You will also receive an itemised Tax Invoice.

WHAT ABOUT APPLIANCES AT HOME?

Electrical safety is just as important in the family home as it is in the workplace. You can help to keep your family safe from electrical shock or electrical fire by having your appliances checked. Changing your appliance plugs to the new, insulated pins plugs will help to reduce the risk of electric shock. Survival Solutions can also change the plugs on your 230V appliances from UK, Europe, Hong Kong, etc to Australian Standard plugs, and safety test each appliance.