

Air Conditioning – Energy Efficiency Inspections: Summary of requirements

Legislative Drivers - what is the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive?

The EU Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD) was introduced in the UK from January 2006, with a three year implementation period ending January 2009.

Its objective is to improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions as part of the government's strategy to achieve a sustainable environment and meet climate change targets agreed under the Kyoto Protocol.

Air-conditioning inspections promote the improvement of the energy performance of buildings and form part of the final implementation in England and Wales of the European Directive on the Energy Performance of Buildings.

Why air-conditioning inspections are required

Having your air-conditioning system inspected by an Energy Assessor is intended to improve efficiency and reduce the electricity consumption, operating costs and carbon emissions for your system. Energy inspections will highlight improvements to the operation of your existing systems or opportunities to replace older, less energy efficient systems or oversized systems with new energy efficient ones.

Building owners and managers who control air-conditioning systems now have statutory obligations and duties of care in the operation and maintenance of air-conditioning systems.

When air-conditioning inspections are required

All air-conditioning systems with an effective rated output of more than 12kW must be regularly inspected by an Energy Assessor.

The inspections must be a maximum of five years apart.

The regulations require that the first inspection of the affected air-conditioning systems be carried out within five years of the date when it was first put into service and then every 5 years after that.

If the person in control of the air-conditioning system changes and the new person in control is not given an inspection report, the new person in control of the system must ensure the air-conditioning system is inspected within three months of the day that person assumes control of the system.

Definitions

Effective rated output: One or more air-conditioning units within a building controlled by a single person are considered to comprise a single air-conditioning system for the purposes of the regulations.

The person who controls the operation of the system is the person who controls the technical functioning of the system, not someone who can just alter the temperature.

An air-conditioning system refers to any system where refrigeration is used to provide cooling for the comfort of occupants. This would exclude separate refrigeration provided solely for process applications, such as cold stores, pharmaceutical production etc.