

More rules on inspection of air conditioning systems

Air Conditioning systems account for up to 40 per cent of a commercial building's energy use. In a drive to lower the UK's carbon emissions air conditioning inspections have been designed to provide the building owner or system operator with good practical advice on how to improve its efficiency and reduce electrical consumption, operating costs and carbon emissions.

In England and Wales, Part 5 of the Energy Performance of Building Regulations which implements Article 9 of the European Energy performance of Building Directive,

now requires all air conditioning systems with a rated output of more than 12 KW to be inspected by an accredited engineer at intervals of not greater than five years.

Buildings with air conditioning systems over 250 kW should already have had their first inspection completed by January 2009, and now all other systems over 12 kW must commission a first inspection to be completed by 4th January 2011.

The rated output of an air conditioning system is the total rated output of all systems within a building irrespective of whether the individual units are linked

to a common control system. This means that even low capacity 'through the wall units' and split systems will need to be assessed where the total cooling capacity in the building exceeds 12 KW. All building owners and building managers should now be checking their total output to see if they now fall under the remit of the law, says Brian Rickerby of consultancy energyTEAM.

"The penalty for not being able to produce a certificate on request is £300, but the costs to the business of running inefficient systems could be much higher," says Mr Rickerby.