



39. Fire - Emergency Lighting - Emergency Lighting Monthly Flick Test

Category:	Fire
Subcategory:	Emergency Lighting
Frequency:	Monthly
Status:	Statutory
Type:	Competent Person
Priority:	Core
Commonality:	Common

Note: This document provides guidance to support compliance but is not a substitute for professional advice.

Why This Task Matters

Your monthly flick tests of emergency lighting ensure that these critical illumination systems remain ready to activate during power failures. By conducting regular checks in educational settings, you maintain confidence that escape routes will be illuminated when needed most. Your systematic testing of these essential safety systems demonstrates your vital role in maintaining continuous emergency preparedness.

Task Summary

Statutory: Monthly flick tests confirm each emergency light illuminates briefly when mains power is cut, providing assurance between annual services. This routine testing involves simulating power failure to verify automatic activation, checking illumination quality, and ensuring system readiness. In education, this ensures corridors, stairwells, and assembly points remain safe if an evacuation occurs during power failure. Regular checks are essential in buildings used after dark or during winter months. The testing includes documenting system operation, checking for faults, and ensuring all units function correctly. Evidence produced includes logbook entries documenting all tests performed and observations, annotated photos showing emergency lights during activation, and any issues identified with immediate actions taken.

Relevant Legislation & Guidance

- **Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005:** Requires regular testing of emergency lighting systems
- **Fire Safety: Approved Document B (Buildings other than dwellinghouses):** Provides guidance on emergency lighting testing
- **British Standard BS 5266: Emergency lighting:** Specifies requirements for emergency lighting testing
- **British Standard BS 9999: Fire safety in the design, management and use of buildings - Code of practice:** Includes guidance on routine testing procedures
- **The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014** (for independent schools): Requires regular testing of emergency systems

Typical Frequency

Emergency lighting systems must be flick tested monthly, with these routine tests continuing throughout the academic year. In educational settings, monthly testing is essential for maintaining system reliability. The frequency cannot be reduced as it is a statutory requirement for ensuring emergency illumination systems remain operational.

Applicability

This task applies to all educational establishments with emergency lighting systems, which is common in virtually all schools and colleges. It is a core statutory task essential for maintaining safe evacuation capability. The task applies to all premises with emergency lighting systems.

Responsible Persons

- **Task Type:** Competent Person
- **In-House Requirements:** This task can be completed by trained facilities staff or fire safety officers who have received appropriate training in emergency lighting testing. Staff should be familiar with system operation and testing procedures.
- **Permit to Work:** May require temporary power interruption and coordination with building users.
- **Delivery Model:** Normally completed in-house by trained staff to ensure regular testing and familiarity with the system.

Key Considerations

- **Timing considerations:** Schedule during term time to maintain continuous monitoring

- **Cost implications:** Minimal cost if completed in-house, though may require occasional staff training
- **Resource requirements:** Access to main electrical supply and system controls
- **Potential disruption:** Brief power interruption may affect lighting in tested areas
- **Risk assessment requirements:** Test results should inform the fire risk assessment

Task Instructions

Prerequisites & Safety

- Ensure tester is familiar with emergency lighting system and testing procedures
- Confirm access to main electrical supply and system controls
- Check that testing can be conducted without endangering building occupants
- Inform relevant staff about potential power interruption

Tools & Materials

- System documentation and test procedures
- Access to main electrical supply controls
- Logbook for recording test results
- Camera for documenting light activation
- Flashlight for working in low-light conditions

Method (Step-by-Step)

Phase A: Pre-Test Preparation

1. Review system documentation and previous test records
2. Identify areas and units to be tested
3. Prepare testing schedule and safety procedures
4. Confirm emergency procedures during power interruption

Phase B: System Preparation

1. Check system status indicators and normal operation
2. Prepare to isolate main power supply safely
3. Ensure test area is clear of vulnerable individuals
4. Confirm communication with building occupants

Phase C: Flick Test Execution

1. Isolate main power supply to simulate failure
2. Observe emergency lights activate automatically
3. Verify illumination levels and coverage
4. Check all units in tested areas activate correctly
5. Time the activation and assess illumination quality

Phase D: System Restoration

1. Restore main power supply safely
2. Verify system returns to normal charging mode
3. Check all status indicators return to normal
4. Confirm no faults are indicated after test

Phase E: Documentation

1. Record test date, time, and staff conducting test
2. Document system activation and illumination quality
3. Photograph emergency lights during activation
4. Note any issues or unusual observations
5. Sign and date the logbook entry

Measurements & Acceptance Criteria

- Emergency lights must activate within 1 second of power failure
- Illumination must meet minimum requirements during test
- All units in tested areas must activate correctly
- System must return to normal operation after power restoration

If Results Fail

Follow instructions on the Compliance Pod task completion form to record remedial/follow up actions and generate Reactive Task Tickets as required. Immediately investigate any units that failed to activate. Escalate issues to facilities management and arrange urgent repairs. Implement alternative lighting measures in affected areas.

Reinstatement & Housekeeping

Restore all systems to normal operation. Ensure power supply is stable after testing.

Completion Checks

Verify that the logbook entry is complete with all required details. Confirm that photographic evidence

shows light activation. Ensure any issues are clearly documented for follow-up.

Record-Keeping & Evidence

- **Upload Process:** Upload any required statutory or supporting evidence to the corresponding task form in Compliance Pod.
- **Statutory Evidence:** Logbook entries and annotated photos must be retained for at least 3 years.
- **Supporting/Good Practice Evidence:** Detailed test observations and photographic records support audit readiness.

Common Pitfalls & Best Practice Tips

- **Common mistakes to avoid:** Not testing all areas, missing activation delays, or failing to document observations with photographs
- **Best practices for efficient completion:** Maintain consistent testing schedules, keep detailed records of previous tests, and rotate tested areas each month
- **Pro tips for educational settings:** Coordinate tests with lesson changes to minimise disruption, use testing as an opportunity to review emergency lighting awareness, and maintain clear records of system performance
- **Warning signs that indicate problems:** Slow activation times, poor illumination levels, or units failing to activate

Quick Reference Checklist

- System documentation and previous records reviewed
- Test areas and units identified
- Power supply isolation prepared safely
- Emergency lights observed during activation
- Illumination levels and coverage verified
- Power supply restored and system checked
- Test results documented with photos
- Evidence uploaded to Compliance Pod

Grouped Tasks

This task is not normally grouped with other tasks.

Related Tasks

- Fire - Emergency Lighting - Emergency Lighting Full Service & Duration Test

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