



The classification of an electrical environment as non-hostile or hostile can be carried out by use of the *Workplace Safety Inspection Schedule*. It is used to fulfil the requirement to assess the electrical classification of a workplace to enable the correct monitoring scheduled to be specified. It is in the form of an A4 poster which is to be displayed prominently as a reminder of when workplaces were last inspected and of the month when the next inspection is due.

NON-HOSTILE WORKPLACES

In electrically non-hostile environments, the *Workplace Safety Inspection Schedule* shows the month when visual checking of electrical leads should be carried out as part of the regular workplace inspection process.

Who is responsible for electrical equipment safety in a non-hostile environment?

Manufacturers are responsible for designing equipment such that, under typical use in a non-hostile environment, it will not present any electrical hazard to users. Users are responsible for carrying out regular visual inspections to ensure that electric leads and the equipment to which they are connected are undamaged and functioning correctly.

The *Department of Commerce, WorkSafe; Guide to testing and tagging portable electrical equipment and residual current devices at workplaces*, other than construction sites, allows for equipment in risk assessed, non-hostile, low risk workplaces to be visually inspected without a requirement to conduct testing and tagging. Visual inspection should be carried out as described in Table1 as part of regular workplace inspections. The same visual inspection is to be completed before putting newly purchased items into use.

Table1:

Step	How
1 Check that the outer sheath is not damaged	Work your way along the lead looking for cuts, abrasions or discolouration indicating possible chemical damage
2 Flex the lead to check the material itself	Confirm that it is not brittle and remains unbroken with no cracking
3 Check there are no exposed wires at plugs	The outer sheath must cover the inner wires right into the plug
4 Confirm that the lead works correctly	Connect the equipment and check that it switches on normally

What must I do if I bring my own electrical equipment onto the campus?

If the equipment is to be used in an electrically non-hostile area and the presence of the equipment will not alter that area status then the equipment may be used. Permission to do so must be given by the area supervisor and the power supply lead is to be visually checked as per the instructions in Table1 to ensure that it is not damaged.

HOSTILE WORKPLACES

In electrically hostile environments, the scheduled month for workplace inspection as shown on the *Workplace Safety Inspection Schedule* is also the month when testing and retagging is to be carried out.

Who is responsible for checking electrical equipment safety in a hostile environment?

Whilst the managers of the workplace are responsible for the equipment safety, in hostile environments, electrical testing and tagging must be carried out by a competent person using the proper testing equipment. Users should regularly check that the electrical leads and equipment remain undamaged prior to use.

What must I do if I purchase a new electrical item?

Prior to use, you must have permission to introduce the equipment to the area and the visual inspection instructions in Table1 must be followed before applying a white, "new to service" tag, available from UWA Safety, Health and Wellbeing.

When will the white tag be replaced with a coloured tag denoting the year of testing and tagging?

The white “new to service” tag is replaced with a coloured tag when the next round of electrical testing and tagging is carried out in the area. This ensures that the retesting month for all electrical equipment in the area remains synchronised, for convenience.

How should I start this process for my area?

Step1: Initially, get all the electrical equipment tested and fitted with tags of the correct colour for the calendar year.

Step2: Organise a workplace inspection to follow very soon after the electrical equipment tags have been renewed.

Step3: Complete and print in colour, a *Workplace Safety Inspection Schedule* showing the month of the next workplace inspection which is also when the next round of tagging and testing in the area is due.

How often does equipment have to be tested and tagged?

On construction sites there is a legal requirement to test electrical equipment and to change their electrical tagging colour every 3 months (advertised on site notice boards). This is to ensure that electrical equipment is regularly checked and known to be safe for use. In other hostile environments, where equipment is normally subjected to conditions which may result in damage and a reduction in expected lifespan, the frequency of testing and tagging is every 12 months provided that the circuit to which it is connected has integral residual current device (RCD) protection (as indicated on wall sockets). For circuits without integral RCD protection the testing and tagging period is 6 monthly.

What colours are the tags used by the competent testing and tagging personnel?

UWA guidance is that tag colours are changed annually in hostile areas (other than construction sites) according to the following annual schedule.

Calendar Year / Colour	2013 = GREEN	2014 = BLUE	2015 = YELLOW	2016 = RED
	2017 = GREEN	2018 = BLUE	2019 = YELLOW	2020 = RED

What should I do if some tags are the wrong colour?

Depending on when the tagging and testing exercise is scheduled for the area, it is possible to find equipment bearing white tags or coloured tags from the previous year. These will be replaced with the correct colour for the calendar year at the next round of testing and tagging in the area.

What about equipment which is brought into area having already been in use elsewhere?

If equipment is brought into an area from elsewhere, it may already bear the correct coloured tags. These will be replaced at the next round of testing and tagging. If such items bear white tags or tags colours of a previous year they must be retested and retagged to the colour for the current calendar year.

What is the advantage of attaching coloured tags in an easily visible location on equipment?

The tag colour denotes the year of testing and tagging. By attaching coloured tags such that they are easily visible rather than to the electrical cable, it is easy to visually check that all electrical equipment is correctly tagged during safety inspections. For equipment where the supply lead can be unplugged from a socket (i.e. computer power supply cables), the tag must be attached to the lead itself but a second, more visible tag can be attached to the equipment itself to facilitate easy visual confirmation that the attached lead has been checked.

What colour tag is used if the circuit is not RCD protected and so requires 6 monthly testing and tagging?

Initially, please bring the lack of RCD protection to the notice of Facilities Management Help Desk (Tel: 6488 2025) to enable it to be registered with a view to modernising. The tag will be replaced by one of the same colour if within the same calendar year.

What if equipment bears an out-of-date tag colour?

The equipment must be taken out of service and marked as such to ensure there is no accidental or continued use until it can be repaired and/or tested and tagged.

What must I do if I bring my own electrical equipment onto the campus?

If the equipment is to be used in an electrically hostile area, you must have permission to do so from the area supervisor and the equipment must have a current test tag attached. The power supply lead must be visually checked as per the instructions in Table1 to ensure that it is not damaged. Retention of such equipment in hostile areas should be discouraged. If encountered during a testing and tagging session the equipment will be subjected to the electrical test and tag process.

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