



bathroom safety

As far as electricity is concerned, the bathroom is possibly the most dangerous room in the house. Water is a very efficient conductor of electrical current which makes the combination of water and electricity potentially lethal.

There are special requirements for electrical installations in bathrooms, so it is essential to check whether your bathroom meets them. The consequences of an electric shock are potentially far more severe in a room containing a bath or shower as wet skin reduces the body's resistance.

Socket-outlets

- No socket-outlets, other than specially-designed outlets such as those for shavers, are permitted in bathrooms.
- Shaver units are not splash-proof, so although they are allowed in bathrooms, they must be positioned well away from the bath or shower. Avoid splashing them.
- Portable appliances such as hairdryers and plugged in radios must never be brought into a bathroom, even if they are plugged in outside the room. (Fixed hairdryers, with the hot air delivered through a flexible plastic pipe are permitted.)

Lights

- Light fittings must be well out of reach and enclosed to keep water out. Enclosed ceiling lights are preferable to pendant light fittings.
- Normal wall-mounted light switches may not be suitable in a bathroom as they may allow dampness or water to enter, such as from wet hands. A ceiling-mounted pull-cord switch with a cord made of insulating material is the safest option.

Heaters and towel rails

- All electric heaters and water heaters in a bathroom must be fixed and permanently wired - none must be supplied via a plug and socket.
- Hot water central heating is the safest way of keeping a bathroom warm, but if you do have an electric room heater it must be out of reach of someone in the bath or shower - fixed at a greater distance than 0.6m from the bath or shower.
- Electric heaters should be controlled by a pull-cord or by a switch located outside the bathroom.

Showers

- An instant demand electric shower must be wired back to the consumer unit.

HOME

