



<p>Fire Safety Technical Guide</p> 	 <p>FIRE FIGHTER'S SWITCHES - LUMINOUS TUBE SIGNS & OTHER ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT</p>
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1.0. REGULATORY REFORM (FIRE SAFETY) ORDER

- 1.1. The **Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order** (known as the **Fire Safety Order**) **Article 37**: requires that luminous tube signs or electrical equipment using a prescribed voltage must be fitted with a cut-off switch (Firefighter's Switch).

2.0. HIGH VOLTAGE ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

- 2.1. **Fire-fighters' Switches for Luminous Tube Signs etc** - prescribed '*High Voltage*' apparatus consisting of luminous tube signs (Cold Cathode Lighting etc) or **Laboratory electrical equipment**¹ designed to work at a voltage normally exceeding the prescribed voltage. The '**prescribed voltage**' means:
- 1000 volts AC or 1500 volts DC if measured between any two conductors;
 - 600 volts AC or 900 volts DC if measured between a conductor and earth;
 - No apparatus is to be installed unless it is provided with a cut-off switch on the low-voltage side of the facility, to be closed down in an emergency normally through some form of **Firefighter's Switch**;
 - These switches are generally provided at the main fire alarm panel or fire brigade control point, but may be provided locally to the hazard where necessary. The controls **MUST** comply in position, colour and markings of the current **Institution of Electrical Engineers** regulations for these types of switches. The switches should also be provided with simple explanatory diagrams or notices etc., as appropriate;
- 2.1. No apparatus to which this Article 37 applies is to be installed, unless it is provided with a cut-off switch.

¹ This includes electrical experiments and test rigs in laboratories designed within the prescribed range high voltages may also apply to Photovoltaic (PV) equipment where they generate prescribed voltages.

- 2.2. Not less than 42 days before work is begun to install apparatus to which Article 37 applies, the **'Responsible Person'**² must give notice to the **Fire and Rescue Authority** showing where the cut-off switch is to be placed and how it is to be coloured or marked.
- 2.3. If a cut-off switch complies in position, colour and marking with the current regulations of the Institution of Electrical Engineers (IEE) for a firefighter's emergency switch, the fire and rescue authority **may not** serve a notice in respect of it.
- 2.4. Where notice has been given to the fire and rescue authority regarding the proposed position, colouring or marking of the switch, is deemed **not** to satisfy the requirements of the fire authority, the Fire Authority may serve notice on the 'Responsible Person', that their requirements are not satisfied.

FIRE FIGHTERS SWITCHES FOR HIGH VOLTAGE ISOLATION

1. The switch must be mounted in a conspicuous position not more than **2.75m** from the ground.
2. It must be coloured red and have a label in lettering at least **13 mm high 'FIREFIGHTERS SWITCH'** (or similar wording). On and off positions should be clearly marked, and the OFF position should be at the top. A lock or catch should be provided to prevent accidental re-closure.
3. For exterior installations, the switch should be close to the load, or to a notice in such a position to indicate clearly the position of the well-identified switch.
4. For interior installations, the switch should be at the main entrance to the building;
 - be coloured red;
 - be accompanied by a durable notice with the wording as shown below. The lettering should be in 36 point;



- have its **ON and OFF positions clearly marked** such that it is legible to a person standing in a position to operate the switch;
- have its **OFF position uppermost**;
- be so constructed such that it cannot be inadvertently switched to the OFF position;

² In this Order 'Responsible Person' means the employer in relation to a workplace, if the workplace is to any extent under his control. At UCL and in this context, this term will mean the Director UCL Estates or the Heads of Academic Institutes or Director of Student Halls of Residences where works are being carried out in their buildings or areas of responsibility.



for external use

