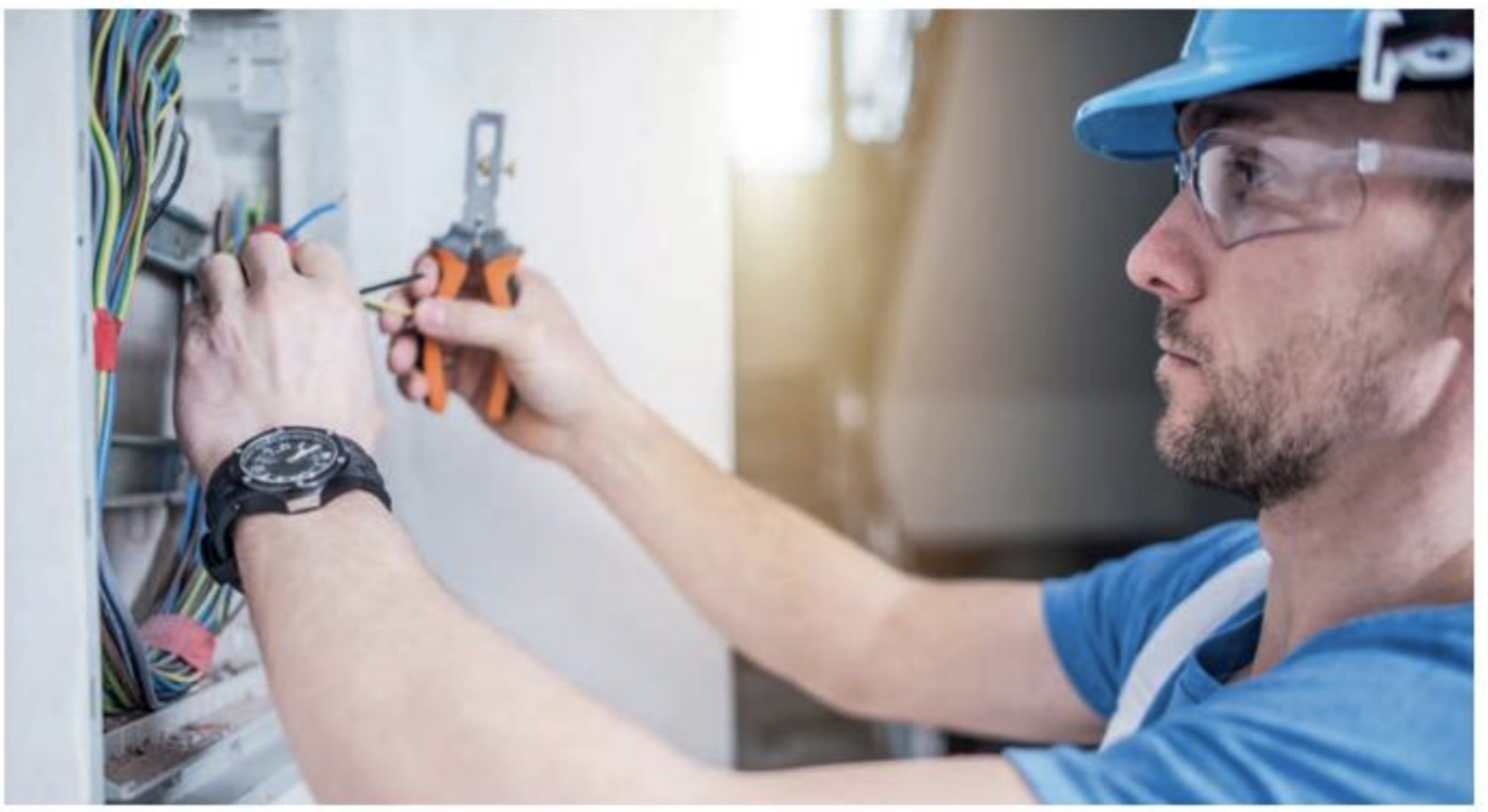
DETA ELECTRICAL

COMPLIANCY CONCERNS

Electrical cable may well all look the same, but does all of the electrical cable currently available in the UK market perform the same? ***Andrew Pegrum****, technical manager,* ***Deta Electrical Company Ltd****, takes a closer look at the issue.*

According to the latest government fire statistics collated by the Home Office, there are over 29,000 accidental fires per year in England alone, of which over 5,241 (c. 18%) can be attributed to wiring or cabling. 2,693 (51%) of these were down to faulty electrical supplies and 1,728 (33%) due to faulty appliances and leads. Not only fires, but sub-standard cabling can result in short circuits and blackouts, posing hassle for homeowners, or, in more extreme circumstances, a reduction in a cable's insulating properties can lead to circuit malfunction and possible electrocution.



PR compliancy

As a result, the focus on fire safety with electrical installations and cabling has never been greater, especially given that nearly a fifth of all accidental electrical fires in England are caused by wiring and cabling issues. It is now one year since the introduction of the new European Construction Product Regulation (CPR) that, in respect to cables, was introduced to address the fire risks associated with power cables used for installation into building and construction works. CPR further extends to the performance of data and communication cables under fire conditions.

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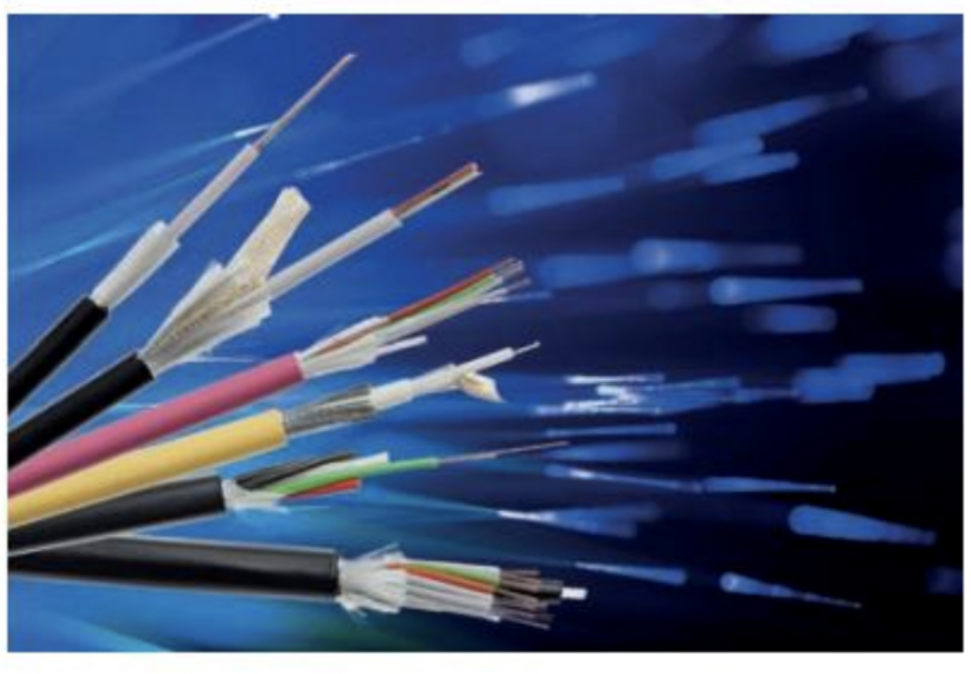

With CPR comes certain responsibilities for manufacturers to include: appropriate testing and classification of cable, making available a Declaration of Performance and ensuring cable carries the appropriate CE-Mark.

Sharing responsibility

Responsibility for conforming to the updated CPR regulations (effective July 1 2017) extends beyond manufacturers to distributors, specifiers and installers, all of whom have a role to play in ensuring fully CPR-compliant cable to an appropriate class of performance is supplied and installed. Whilst the specification of a cable system can and should set out the exact performance requirements, the safety of the installation relies on the cable being fit for purpose and aligned with the performance set out in the system's specification.

Cable standards not only specify the dimensions and materials of a cable, they also require that a range of specific tests are undertaken to prove the construction and performance. Given the competitive nature of market pricing, it is all too easy when sourcing cable products to go with the source that enables a price point to be achieved. But how do specifiers, installers and buyers know they are getting the cable they are expecting and that it will meet the specific requirements they have?

Checklist: what to look out for

- **Cable marking** – check the cable is marked correctly
- **CE marking** – check the CE mark is in place
- **Cable reel labelling** – check the cable reel has a Declaration of Performance label
- **Traceability** – check the product labelling or documentation has the manufacturer's details, year of manufacture and reaction to fire classification.

Partnering with a reputable, high quality brand like Deta Electrical gives contractors, wholesalers, specifiers and installers the security of knowing products are fully compliant, rigorously tested and suitable for the intended application.

Deta Electrical, detaelectrical.co.uk