

## HCC Guidance Document

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### HCC Guidance on Installation, Maintenance and Removal of Festive Lighting, Decorations & Column Attachments September 2017



Including extracts from the Institution of Lighting Professionals “Guidance on Installation and Maintenance of Seasonal Decorations and Lighting Column Attachments” PLG06.

Revised: September 2017

## Contents

Introduction .....	2
Health and Safety .....	2
Competency and Training .....	3
Structural Considerations .....	4
Column Testing and Inspection .....	5
Electrical Considerations .....	6
Initial and Periodic Testing .....	6
Decorations .....	6
Maintenance Arrangements .....	6
Traffic Management Considerations .....	7
Festive Lighting in Trees .....	8
Other Considerations .....	9
Recommended Timetable for Applications .....	9
Useful Contacts .....	9
Definitions .....	10
Contacts .....	12
Process for Managing Licence Applications for Festive Decorations (Revised)	
Introduction .....	13
Step 1 Licence Application Made to HCC .....	14
Step 2 Licence Application Processed .....	14
2a Attached to Lighting Columns .....	14
2b Not attached to Lighting Columns .....	14
Step 3 Licence Issued for Erection and Testing .....	15
Step 4 Testing .....	15
Step 5 Final Licence Issued .....	16
Footnotes .....	16
Operator Role .....	16
Recommended Timetable for Applications .....	17

## Introduction

These notes have been developed to assist those planning attachments to street furniture, such as lighting columns or buildings, for the purposes of festive lighting or other, similar, attachments.

This Guidance Document is to be read in conjunction with the Institution of Lighting Professionals (ILP) 'Guidance on Installation and Maintenance of Seasonal Decorations and Lighting Column Attachments' PLG06.

## Legislation

A licence is required. This is issued by HCC as Highway Authority in accordance with section 178 of the Highway Act 1980 giving permission to the Operator to erect, maintain, operate and remove decorations on, or above the Public Highway.

The Operator is responsible for the installation, operation, maintenance and removal of the decorations. The risk remains with the Operator.

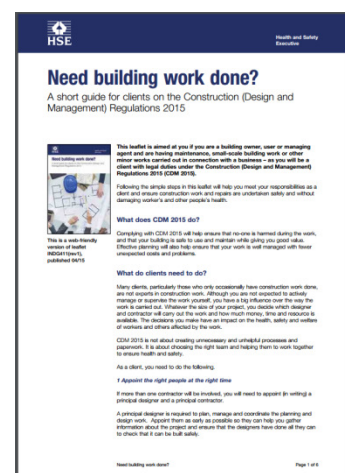
Our licence specifies that a certificate of insurance, indemnifying the Highway Authority against any third party claims due to installation, operation and/or removal of the decorations and any consequential damage to Highway Authority property by the Operator. The minimum level of insurance indemnification is currently £10 million pounds in respect of any one incident.

## Health and Safety

Any works carried out in the public domain must be compliant with the current edition of the Construction, Design and Management (CDM) Regulations. These regulations place responsibility, and a legal duty, on the person organising, or project managing, works for ensuring the right people are engaged on the various aspects of the work. This includes ensuring:

- The people engaged are competent.
- There is sufficient time allowed to undertake the work.
- Information about risks, hazards or other special arrangements, are shared with all parties.
- Risk assessments and method statements are in place before works commence.
- Where necessary a principal designer and principal contractor are appointed.

A short guide for clients on the CDM regulations can be downloaded at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg411.htm>



## Competency and Training

A competent person is someone with the skill, knowledge and/or experience of the particular type of work to be undertaken so as to identify and avoid danger.

The competence of a person should be supported by underpinning training. Persons involved with site works should only work within the scope of their evidenced competence. Both organisational and employee competence should meet the key principles of CDM.

Typically the industry standard for training and assessment of competence on or near the highway is the Highway Electrical Registration Scheme (HERS) which is a requirement of the National Highways Sector Scheme 8 (NHSS 8). However other alternative schemes are also available so it's down to the Operator to satisfy themselves as to the suitability of the people they employ.

All HERS registered operational staff carrying out work on site should be in possession of valid ECS HERS Cards at all times whilst on site Those registered to other Competency schemes should be able to produce similar documentation. Any operational staff unable to produce valid documentation, on request, must be asked to leave site immediately. The incident must also be reported as a Near Miss to the Highway Authority.

A list of all HERS registered organisations can be viewed at:

<http://direct.thehea.org.uk/>

## Structural Considerations

Festive lighting, and other such attachments, are invariably installed at places with maximum exposure to the public and lighting columns are the most common form of chosen support to display these. The risk of personal injury following failure of a lighting column is linked to the numbers of people using the space and any additional load imposed on a lighting column increases the risk of failure. Similarly catenary wires are frequently strung across streets between structures of poor or unknown strength with inadequate knowledge of the loads imposed.

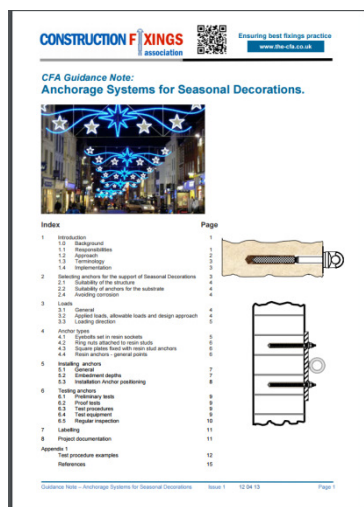
In Hertfordshire the majority of lighting columns were designed to accept standard signage up to 0.3m<sup>2</sup>. However, care should be taken when considering other attachments, in lieu of standard signage, as the mounting positions become critical.

It is rare for a lighting column to have been designed to accept catenary lighting and decorations must not be strung between columns unless the columns were designed for this from the outset (*PLG06, Page 21, 4.1 Guideline recommendations, paragraph 2*). When fixing such catenary wires to buildings the “Operator” must ensure the fixings are capable of withstanding the load and that the fabric of the structure is strong enough as well (*PLG06, Page 34, 6 Catenary structures*).

Catenary cables **must not** be strung from lighting columns / buildings to trees / Christmas / Festive trees or between trees as neither structure is stable in high wind conditions. Applications proposing such arrangements will be declined and works to phase out existing sites must be completed by July 2020. All tree / Christmas / Festive tree power supplies must be taken from ground level (PLG06 Pages 6, 7, 10, 11, 34, 39 & 40 refers).

**You must consult a competent structural engineer.**

The Construction Fixings Association (CFA) has produced a free download Guidance Note: “Anchorage Systems for Seasonal Decorations” which can be downloaded from <http://www.the-cfa.co.uk/publications-and-downloads/guidance-notes/>.



## Column Testing and Inspection

Adequate consideration must be given to how attachments, or other additional loadings, will affect the structural performance of the lighting column.

The majority of lighting columns in Hertfordshire are more than 25 years old and a structural assessment to ensure their suitability for any proposed attachment must be arranged by the “Operator”. However, there may be circumstances where specialist advice is required either from the column manufacturer or a Professional Structural Testing Organisation.

There are strict conditions to be adhered to, insofar as the Licence will be “null and void” if:

- The additional loadings are fitted to the column outside the specified Licence period.
- The additional loadings are not consistently fitted at the approved mounting height on the column.
- The attachment differs in size or weight from that which was originally approved.

Further details on anchorage systems, catenary structures, testing and inspection can be found in the “Guidance on Installation and Maintenance of Seasonal Decorations and Lighting Column Attachments” (PLG 06) published by the Institution of Lighting Professionals (ILP).

N.B. The maximum period between structural tests is normally 30 months before retesting is required. It is, therefore, important that adequate budgeting provision is made for this in advance.

## **Electrical Considerations**

Electrical equipment used for temporary installations must be to the same standards as those for permanent installations. Every person undertaking such work must be competent and not cause danger to themselves or others. Failure to comply with these requirements could result in criminal proceedings.

The majority of temporary installations are fed via an unmetered electricity supply where energy is accounted for by calculating use from the electrical load and operating hours. This will involve the applicant holding an appropriate Estimated Annual Consumption Certificate with an approved energy supplier. Failure to do so could be construed as theft and could result in penalty or prosecution.

Confirmation that adequate arrangements for the payment of energy are in place is part of the Highway Authorities licencing requirements.

## **Initial and Periodic Testing**

All installations must be inspected and tested before being commissioned.

Each individual decoration should be subject to an electrical conformance (PAT) test which should form part of the electrical test documentation submitted to the Highway Authority. This documentation will also include the initial installation and commissioning electrical certification certificates.

Test labels, indicating the date of test and type of test, must be clearly evident in the electrical compartments for each decoration.

Where equipment has not been correctly connected to its electricity supply it shall be disconnected.

## **Decorations**

All decorations should be designed to be fit for purpose and have an Ingress Protection (IP) of at least IP66.

No decorations that contain flashing red, yellow or green lamps will be allowed within 10m, or within the motorist's sight lines, of a set of traffic signals, light controlled pedestrian crossing facility or zebra crossing.

## **Maintenance Arrangements**

Licensees of decorations must, at their own expense, maintain the decorations and associated infrastructure in good repair throughout the period of operation, including its installation and removal.

Arrangements must be made for a weekly visual inspection and to keep a log of such inspections in addition to other structural or electrical inspections.

Any damage caused to Highway Authority equipment, including damage to the protective coatings, by the Licensee, their agents or contractors will be repaired at the Licensee's expense.

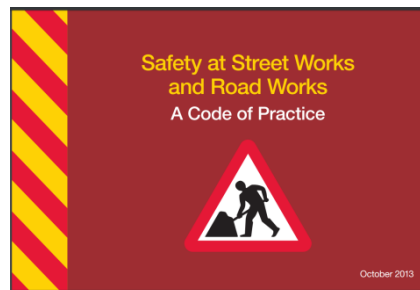
Adequate competent persons must be available at all times for emergency attendance within two hours of being so requested.

The Highway Authority, or Ringway as Hertfordshire County Councils representative, reserves the right to disconnect and remove any or all equipment that, in the opinion of the Highway Authority, is unsafe or dangerous. The Highway Authority will not accept responsibility for vandalism or accident damage.

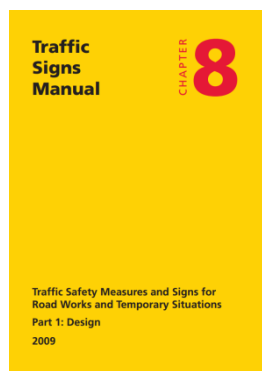
## **Traffic Management Considerations**

The industry standards when undertaking works on the highway are Chapter 8 of the "Traffic Signs Manual" and "Safety at Street and Road Works: a code of practice". Both are available from [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safety-at-street-works-and-road-works>



<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/traffic-signs-manual>





## Festive Lighting in Trees

Additional consideration should be given when installing lights/decorations in trees / Christmas / Festive trees. Reasons for this include:

- During windy/storm events, the significant movement of the tree/branches can damage the lighting.
- If the tree or part fails during high winds the electrical apparatus can result in a safety hazard for the public and the tree teams who may attend to address the tree failure.
- If a tree fails during windy weather, the reason for failure and any subsequent claim may be attributed to the lights being attached.
- There are strict rules in relation to working near electrical apparatus i.e. tree pruning operations by HCC. The voltage of such apparatus won't be known to the tree teams and as such, significant delays can occur while the electrical apparatus is confirmed as 'dead'.

Often festive lights are installed in trees and then left all year round.

- The above applies throughout the year.
- Damage to trees from the attaching of lights
- There have been a number of incidents where HCC has attended a site to address a tree safety issue, only to find that the tree has festive lighting still attached. This has led to delays and, in some case, 'difficulties' in getting the district council to remove their lighting to enable our maintenance of our trees.
- To work on trees that have lights left in all year round, the electrical risk remains and there is a risk that the lights will be damaged.

If festive lighting is attached to highway trees:

- The lights must be attached to the tree in a way that doesn't damage the tree.
- No pruning is carried out to the tree to facilitate attachment of the lights.
- The Operator responsible for installing the lights is aware that for any subsequent tree failure (normally during windy weather) they could be implicated in any subsequent claims.
- If the lights are present between January and November, HCC may remove and dispose of them without warning.
- If HCC need to work on a tree during November through January and damage occurs to the lights, HCC will accept no liability for damage to the lights.

## Other Considerations

Section 178 of the Highways Act 1980 enables the Highway Authority to control the erection of apparatus on or over the highway, including festive decorations, by way of a licence. Issues governed by licence conditions may include:

- Time limitations (period of installation)
- Emergency arrangements
- Maintenance arrangements
- Public Liability Insurance

## Recommended Timetable for Applications

- |             |                            |
|-------------|----------------------------|
| • July      | Applications received      |
| • September | Part 1 Licence Issued      |
| • November  | Electrical tests submitted |
| • November  | Part 2 Licence Issued      |
| • December  | Equipment energised        |
| • January   | Equipment removed          |

## Useful Contacts

HCC Street Lighting – [streetlightingdesign.herts@ringway.co.uk](mailto:streetlightingdesign.herts@ringway.co.uk)

## Definitions (PLG06 Pages 10 & 11 refers)

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<b>Attachment</b>	A decoration, flag, banner, bracket, hanging basket or similar to be fixed by means of bolts, banding wires or the like.
<b>Catenary</b>	Wire or rope attached between two or more buildings or items of street furniture (lighting column, traffic sign post or the like).
<b>Competent Person</b>	A person employed by Contractor, Distribution Network Operator, The Operator or Highway Authority having approved knowledge, training and acquired expertise to deal with a defined range of tasks.
<b>Distribution Network Operator (DNO)</b>	The Electricity Company in whose franchise area the installation exists.
<b>Electrical Test Certificate</b>	A certificate issued by a suitably qualified and experienced person confirming that each circuit at each Supply Point is compliant with the requirements of BS7671: Requirements for Electrical Installations
<b>Emergency</b>	Any situations where there is a potential danger to life or limb from the installation, operation or removal of the festive decorations. Such situations shall be attended to Immediately they are notified to the Responsible Person
<b>Energised</b>	The connection of the festive decorations to the electrical supply at the Supply Point
<b>Festive Decorations</b>	Any decorations, supports, lighting and associated wiring etc. which is installed to celebrate a particular event.
<b>Highway Authority</b>	The Authority with statutory responsibility for the provision and maintenance for highways.
<b>Immediately</b>	To attend the site of the Emergency within two hours of notification by the Highway Authority, Police or DNO.
<b>Ingress Protection (IP Rating)</b>	The ingress protection rating describes how well an enclosed is sealed to prevent dust or dirt entering it, described in IEC/EN 60529
<b>Licence</b>	A document issued by the Highway Authority to the Operator under Section 178 of the Highways Act 1980 giving permission to erect decorations and associated infrastructure on, or above, the Public Highway
<b>Licensee</b>	The person, or organisation, licensed under Section 178 of the Highways Act 1980 to install, maintain, operate and remove Festive decorations on, or above, the Public Highway

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<b>Operator</b>	The person or organisation responsible for the installation and maintenance of festive decorations.
<b>Public Highway</b>	Areas of land such as roads, paths and verges where the Highway Authority is responsible for its upkeep (maintainable at the public expense)
<b>Responsible Person</b>	A person nominated by the Operator to be responsible for the safety of the festive decorations, to be contacted by the Highway Authority, Police or DNO in the event of a fault or dangerous incident. The Responsible Person shall also be a Competent Person in dealing with an Emergency situation

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## Contact for Festive Decorations

Your Hertfordshire County Council contact address for all third part attachments is [streetlightingdesign.herts@ringway.co.uk](mailto:streetlightingdesign.herts@ringway.co.uk) .

All applications for attachments should include the following information;

- The specifications of attachments i.e. dimensions (height, width, weight and mounting height).
- The method of fixing to the column
- A layout plan identifying the column numbers and position of any proposed attachments.

Documents to be included;

- Highways licence schedule
- Structural test report stating that the columns are structurally satisfactory for the proposed attachments

We request a minimum of 2 months to process third party attachments however repeat permissions or extensions may be processed sooner.

## Process for Managing Licence Applications for Festive Decorations (Revised)

### Introduction

This guide is intended to give advice as to what actions need to be taken various parties involved in processing licence applications for the hanging of Festive Decorations over the highway including:

- HCC Street Lighting Team (HSL),
- Regional Electricity Companies Distribution Network Operator (DNO)

This paper supplements but does not supersede the guidance given in PLG06:

It should be noted that there are differences in application handling where Festive Decorations are attached to street lighting furniture and where it is not i.e. where it is hung between buildings or other independent supports.

In all cases where Festive Decorations are to be powered from the public street lighting system approval to take power in this way is required from your energy supplier. Evidence must be provided to confirm the “Operator” is paying for any energy being used. It is a criminal offence to take power without prior approval.

### Step 1 Licence Application Made To Hertfordshire County Council

- The applicant applies to the HCC who will examine the application for suitability and confirm that the necessary Public Liability Insurance etc. is in place.
- HCC/Ringway will collate as much information about the proposed Festive Decorations at this point, e.g.
  - the nature/type of Festive Decorations and proposed source of supply
  - the lighting columns involved (if any)
  - the proposed Licence period
  - points of contact for HCC/Ringway and the “Operator”
  - details of any Operators or other agents that the applicant intends to use the purpose of installing the festive attachments.

### Step 2 Licence Application Processed

- Applications for the attachment of Festive Decorations on receipt by HCC/Ringway will be entered on the Festive Decoration Register

#### 2a Attached to Lighting Columns

- Where Festive Decorations are to be attached to the County Council’s street lighting apparatus, the applicant must agree the Attachments with HCC/Ringway. As part of this process, HCC/Ringway will require the applicant to enter into an agreement confirming the limitations of Attachments.
- **NO** Attachments can be erected until such approval has been given
- It is incumbent on the applicant to ensure that the Festive Decorations will not obstruct the highway or give cause for any other safety hazards.
- The source of power for the Festive Decorations should also be noted and any supply taken from a public supply must have the agreement of the DNO.

#### 2b Not attached to Lighting Columns

- Where there is no attachment to street lighting apparatus, it is incumbent on the applicant to ensure Attachment points are structurally sound and that the Festive Decorations will not obstruct the highway or give cause for any other safety hazards.
- The source of power for the Festive Decorations should also be noted and any supply taken from a public supply must have the agreement of the DNO.

### **3. Licence Issued for Erection and Testing**

- Once the requirements of the Licence are met HCC/Ringway will issue a Part 1 Licence to authorise the erection and testing of the Festive Decorations
- Energising will only be approved after Electrical Test Certificates have been submitted and a Part 2 Licence issued.

### **Step 4. Testing**

- On receipt of the Part 1 Licence Festive Decorations can be erected and tested
- The testing MUST be completed by a Competent Person who is required to provide their registration details on the Electrical Test Certificate(s).
- The Electrical Test Certificate(s) are to be submitted to HCC/Ringway who will enter on the Festive Decoration Register.
- HCC/Ringway will check that the Electrical Test Certificate safety declaration has been signed by a Competent Person confirming all Festive Decorations have been installed in accordance with BS 7671.



### Step 5. Final Licence Issued

- HCC/Ringway will now issue the Part 2 Licence allowing the Festive Decorations to be Energised for the duration of the Licence period. A copy of the Licence will be retained.
- A laminated copy of the Licence is to be provided by the Licensee and displayed on site in suitably visible location. This will also display the Emergency contact number of a Responsible Person and the period of validity (the Licence period)
- At the end of the License period all Festive Decorations will be de-energised immediately and removed from site within 10 business days.

## Footnotes

## Operator Role

The “Operator” must ensure that:

All works, Operators, Attachments, Festive Decorations and other associated equipment comply with all current legislation including, but not limited to, the Construction, Design and Management (CDM) Regulations, Electricity at Work Regulations and Guidance on Installation and Maintenance of Seasonal Decorations and Lighting Column Attachments (PLG 06) published by the Institution of Lighting Professionals (ILP).

## Recommended Timetable for Applications

- July Applications received
- September Part 1 Licence Issued
- November Electrical tests submitted
- November Part 2 Licence Issued
- December Equipment energised
- January Equipment removed