

Metal splashbacks – earthing/bonding

(April 2011) (First issue)



Question

Should metal splashbacks in kitchens be electrically earthed or bonded?

Considerations

- BS 7671: 'Requirements for Electrical Installations (the IEE Wiring Regulations)' requires that certain conductive parts should be earthed, have main equipotential bonding or have supplementary equipotential bonding.
- A metal splashback is not normally part of an item of electrical equipment, hence does not need to be earthed.
- Main equipotential bonding is used to link items such as incoming metal mains water and gas service pipes back to a main earth terminal on the electrical supply. A metal splashback is unlikely to introduce an earth potential hence does not require main equipotential bonding.
- Supplementary equipotential bonding is used to link together items such as metal supply pipes to taps and radiators and is only required in special locations such as bathrooms or shower rooms.
- A kitchen is not a special location. Hence a metal splashback installed in a kitchen does not require supplementary bonding.

Answer

The Institution of Electrical Engineers have confirmed that earthing or bonding is not required to metal splashbacks in kitchens (including splashbacks containing electrical accessories such as socket outlets).