

DISCONNECTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH CANNABIS

Landlord's responsibility

The Landlord and Tenant's Act 1985 requires a landlord to 'keep in repair and proper working order the installations in the dwelling-house for the supply of water, gas and electricity..'

The discovery of cannabis cultivation is often associated with the discovery of interference with the electricity supply, such that use of electricity at the property is potentially unsafe.

Disconnection

Under regulation 3(1) of the Electricity Safety, Quality and Continuity Regulations 2002 (ESQCR) Western Power Distribution (WPD) has a statutory duty to ensure its equipment is 'constructed, installed, protected (both electrically and mechanically), used and maintained as to prevent danger....so far as is reasonably practicable.'

When WPD attends or is called out by the landlord of a property, the Police or an Energy Supplier, to make a property safe, WPD operatives will carry out an inspection of our electrical equipment. If they find evidence that our equipment has been altered, damaged or bypassed in any way, they will disconnect the electricity supply. This is to prevent danger to anyone living at the property and the wider public. Often this involves removal of the service, and disconnection of the supply in the public highway. Section 17 of the Electricity Act 1989 allows WPD to cease to provide a connection on the grounds that this would be breaking ESQCR safety regulations.

WPD is required to take this action by law to ensure the safety of its equipment, and we have the right to charge the owner or occupier of the property a Disconnection Fee for the work involved.

Reconnection

When an owner or occupier of a property asks for the service to be reconnected, we are required to charge for this work under our Electricity Distribution Licence. The charges are calculated under our published connections charging methodology which is approved by the energy regulator Ofgem.

Depending on the location of the property the charge for reconnection may include the costs of excavation in the pavement and highway, which may require road closures and out of hours working in order to undertake this work.

WPD has the right to charge for reconnection under Section 18 of the Electricity Act 1989, and is required to charge for all connections on a non-discriminatory basis.

We will issue a letter setting out the reconnection charges which includes VAT, and any disconnection fee, and out-of-hours fee. The charges must be paid in full before we will complete the reconnection work at the property.