



Guide for Homeowners

Getting Construction Work Done Safely



New responsibilities for homeowners under
Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations 2013

Our vision:

A country where worker safety, health and welfare and the safe management of chemicals are central to successful enterprise



About this guide



This guide tells you what you need to know and do when you are having construction work done in your home. The Health and Safety Authority (HSA) developed this guide in light of **new responsibilities for homeowners** under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations 2013. The regulations apply to **construction work that you pay to get done** in your home. They do not apply to DIY (Do it yourself) jobs.

What do the regulations mean?

The regulations mean that you have to appoint competent people to carry out construction work. For riskier and or longer jobs you must appoint competent project supervisors to oversee and co-ordinate safety. The role of the project supervisors of your work is very important. They co-ordinate the work of designers and contractors and make sure that the work is completed safely.

When works are being done in or near your home, you need to make sure that they don't put you and your family at risk. The new regulations aim to reduce the number of people killed and injured while carrying out construction work. Specific requirements are set out in European law for those who hire people to carry out construction work as well as for construction workers themselves. The Construction Regulations put these requirements into Irish law.

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What is construction work?

Examples of construction work covered by the regulations include:

- building a new house or an extension, porch or garage,
- converting your attic,
- refitting your kitchen,
- re-slating your roof,
- fitting solar panels or a skylight, and
- re-wiring your house.



Tasks that are **not considered** construction work under the regulations include:

- routine home DIY,
- grass cutting,
- tree planting and general gardening work, and
- general maintenance to appliances, and boilers.

What do you have to do?

By law, you have to:

1. determine the competency of people doing paid construction work for you,
2. appoint project supervisors if required,
3. keep the safety file for the work as appropriate, and
4. let the Health and Safety Authority know if your project is going to take longer than 30 days or more than 500 person days (person days mean the number of days the work takes multiplied by the number of people doing the work).

Each of these responsibilities is explained below.

1. Determine competency of people doing paid construction work for you

Anybody you use to carry out design (for example, draw up plans for your house) or construction work must be competent to carry out the work and must allocate enough resources to make sure that the work can be carried out in a safe manner. Resources include time and equipment.

By law, the people you appoint have to demonstrate to you (as their 'client') that they are competent to carry out the work and have allocated, or will allocate, the necessary resources to do the work safely.

How do I assess the competency of contractors?

By law, it is up to your designer or contractor to demonstrate their competency to you. You should also ask some simple questions. The HSA has produced a Competency Checklist to help you assess their competency. See Appendix 1 for a copy.

2. Appoint project supervisors

You must appoint project supervisors if:

- there is more than one contractor involved in the work, or
- there is a particular risk (see below), or
- the work is going to last more than 30 days or more than 500 person days.

What is a particular risk?

The regulations list a range of works involving particular risks to safety, health and welfare of people at work. Works which could be of relevance to a typical construction project in your home include:

- works that put a person at risk of falling from height, for example, roofwork where access is restricted,
- burial under an earthfall, for example, deep excavations in poor soil conditions,
- works near high voltage power lines, for example, building a house on a site which

has existing power lines crossing the site,

- works exposing a person to the risk of drowning, for example, construction of wall beside or near a pond or river,
- work involving the setting up or taking down of heavy parts, for example, installation of precast floors or assembly of steel beams, or
- work involving asbestos.

Example 1 where project supervisors are not needed

You hire a bricklayer to build a wall in your garden. There is only one contractor, there is no particular risk and the work will last five days. In this case you don't need to appoint project supervisors. The bricklayer will have to demonstrate to you that they are competent to complete the work.

Example 2 where project supervisors are needed

You are getting an extension built to the side of your house. There will be a number of contractors and particular risks, and the work is due to take 100 days. You must appoint project supervisors in writing.

You need to appoint two project supervisors, one for the design of the extension and one for the construction stage. However, these two roles can be done by the same person as long as they are competent to carry out the work.

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How do I appoint project supervisors?

When you are appointing someone, you must appoint them in writing at the start of the design process and at the start of the construction stage. The project supervisors must accept these appointments in writing to you. They can use the form for appointment of Project Supervisor Design Process and Project Supervisor Construction Stage in Appendix 2.

Who do I appoint as project supervisors?

If you engage an architect or engineer to design construction work and a builder or main contractor to carry out the work, you would probably appoint the architect or engineer as the Project Supervisor Design Process (PSDP) and the builder as the Project Supervisor Construction Stage (PSCS). Please use the Competency Checklist questions to ask these people, before appointing them, see Appendix 1.

The project supervisors have various safety-related duties they must meet in the project, particularly around co-ordination of the works and the co-operation of the workers.

The new regulations will also affect the practice of building a house by 'direct labour'. 'Direct labour' is where you decide not to hire a main builder and instead organise the different trades people or contractors to carry out the works. The regulations now require that a project supervisor(s) oversees the co-ordination of the various designers and contractors and makes sure that there is co-operation between them so that the works can be carried out safely.

You can, if you like, appoint yourself as a project supervisor; however, you must have the necessary knowledge and competency to be able to do this job. The appointment must also be made in writing. Remember, the project supervisors control key safety

decisions on site and if you don't properly carry out these decisions it could lead to serious and even fatal accidents.

Safety and Health Plan

The PSDP will produce an initial Safety and Health Plan for the project. This must be passed on to the PSCS when they are appointed.

3. Keep safety file

If you need to appoint project supervisors, then the Project Supervisor Design Process (PSDP) must prepare a safety file. This file should contain the information needed to safely maintain the building and or structure and have the information needed to carry out future work on the building or structure.

The PSDP must give you the Safety File when at the end of the works. You need to keep this file and give it to anybody carrying out future works on the building or structure, or pass on the file to any new owner.



4. Let the Health and Safety Authority (HSA) know if your project is due to last longer than 30 days or more than 500 person days

If your project is due to last longer than 30 days or 500 person days, then you must fill in an Approved Form (AF 1). See Appendix 3 for a copy. You can get this from www.hsa.ie, you need to fill it in and return it to us by *registered post* or by email. Our address and email details are as follows:

The Health and Safety Authority
Metropolitan Building
James Joyce Street
Dublin 1.

Email: wcu@hsa.ie

You can find a summary of what you must do under the regulations on page 6.

Common sense health and safety precautions

When you are having construction work done and builders are in your home, your home is their workplace. This can affect your safety and that of your family. You should take the following precautions:

- employ the right people for the work, designers and builders,
- discuss safety with your builder or designer before work starts,
- warn children of the dangers and make sure they stay away from the work,
- separate works from your home life (where you can), and
- make sure that the work area is secured at the end of each day by the contractor.

If you think that works are unsafe, discuss your concerns with your builder. If you have further questions or concerns in relation to construction safety, ring us on **Lo-call 1890-289-389** or visit our website www.hsa.ie



Appendix 1: Competency Checklist

Under new regulations contractors, designers and supervisors must prove their competence to you to do construction work safely in your home. Under these regulations you also have responsibility to appoint competent personnel.

The following checklist of questions will help you determine if designers, contractors or project supervisors are competent to carry out the construction work you need done in your home. If they are, this will mean that in general they comply with legal requirements.

For further information or guidance, ring us on Lo-call 1890-289-389 or visit our website www.hsa.ie

General questions

- Are you competent to carry out this work?
- Have you completed work like this before?
- Have you and your staff received safety training or done any safety courses?
- Does your company have a Safety Statement?
- Can I have references for previous work or visit previous work that you have done?
- Have the Health and Safety Authority (HSA) ever taken enforcement action against you or your company?

Other questions you could ask (not related to health and safety but helpful)

- Have you a tax clearance certificate?
- Have you insurance?

Questions for the Project Supervisor Design Process (PSDP) or Designer

- Do you have a recognised qualification in design or architecture?
- Are you a member of a professional body such as:
 - Institution of Engineers of Ireland (now called Engineers Ireland)?,
 - Royal Institute of Architects of Ireland?
 - Association of Consulting Engineers of Ireland?, or
 - Society of Chartered Surveyors Ireland?

Questions for Project Supervisor Construction Stage (PSCS) or Contractor

- Are you a member of an industry trade body e.g. Construction Industry Federation?
- Do your workers have SafePass training?
- Are your workers professional tradespeople?

These type of questions allow you to assess if your construction personnel are conscientious, competent and reliable and in general compliant too. The HSA have existing advice in this area for homeowners,

Appendix 2: Appointment of Project Supervisor Design Process and Project Supervisor Construction Stage Form

Homeowner's name (Client):

Project description:

.....

.....

Location:

.....

..... is appointed Project Supervisor for the design process for the above project and accepts the appointment.

.....
Signed by or on behalf of Client

.....
Signed by or on behalf of PSDP

Date:

Date:

..... is appointed Project Supervisor for the construction stage for the above project and accepts the appointment.

.....
Signed by or on behalf of Client

.....
Signed by or on behalf of PSCS

Date:

Date:



Appendix 3: (AF 1 Form)

Note: This is a HSA Approved Form and it has not been subject to the NALA 'Plain English' Audit.



Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations, 2013

Approved Form (AF 1) Regulation 10

Particulars to be notified by the Client to the Health and Safety Authority before the design process begins

NOTE:

This form is to be used to notify of any project covered by the Safety, Health and Welfare (Construction) Regulations 2013, which will last longer than 30 days or 500 person days. It can also be used to provide changes in appointments since initial notification of projects.

Any day on which construction work is carried out (including holidays and weekends) should be counted, even if the work on that day is of short duration. A person day is one individual, including supervisors and specialists, carrying out construction work for one normal working shift.

This Notification is to be made by Registered Post to HSA, Metropolitan Building, James Joyce Street, Dublin 1; or as may be directed by the Authority.

- 1 Client:** Provide name, full address, telephone number and e-mail address for the Client. If more than one Client, please attach details of all Clients on a separate sheet.

Name:	<input type="text"/>		
Address:	<input type="text"/>		
Telephone:	<input type="text"/>	E-Mail:	<input type="text"/>

- 2 Project Supervisor Design Process and Health & Safety Coordinator:** Provide name, full address, telephone number and e-mail address for the PSDP and Health & Safety Coordinator for the Design Process.

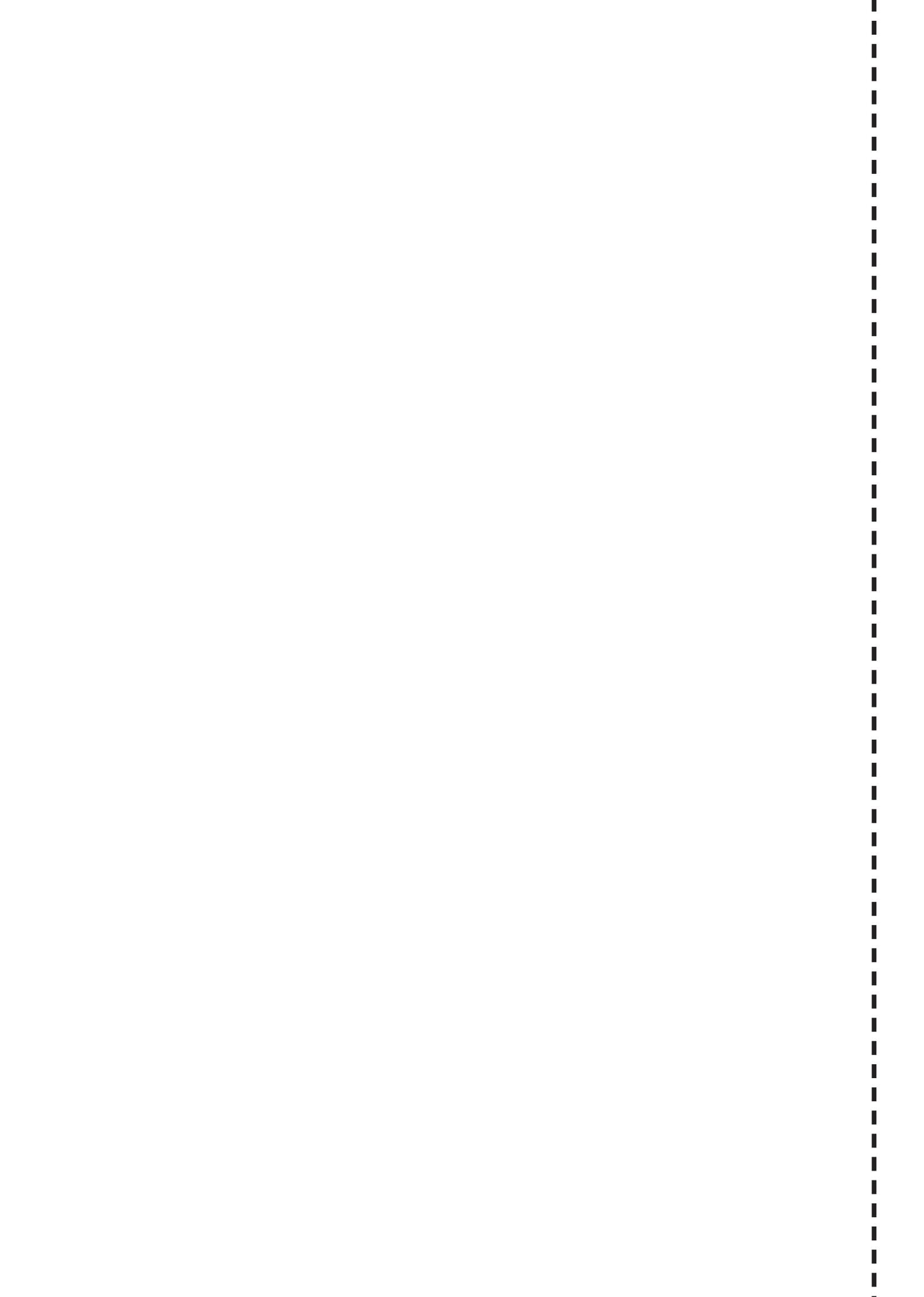
PSDP Name:	<input type="text"/>	H&S C. Name:	<input type="text"/>
Address:	<input type="text"/>	Address:	<input type="text"/>
Telephone:	<input type="text"/>	Telephone:	<input type="text"/>
E-Mail:	<input type="text"/>	E-Mail:	<input type="text"/>

- 3 Project Supervisor Construction Stage and Health & Safety Coordinator, if known:** Provide name, full address, telephone number and e-mail address for the PSCS and Health & Safety Coordinator for the Construction Stage.

PSCS Name:	<input type="text"/>	H&S C. Name:	<input type="text"/>
Address:	<input type="text"/>	Address:	<input type="text"/>
Telephone:	<input type="text"/>	Telephone:	<input type="text"/>
E-Mail:	<input type="text"/>	E-Mail:	<input type="text"/>

- 4 Information on Construction Work:** Please provide your details of the following.

Description of Project:	<input type="text"/>		
Exact Address of Construction Site:	<input type="text"/>		
Signed:	<input type="text"/>	by or on behalf of the Client	
Position:	<input type="text"/>	Date:	<input type="text"/>



**A country where
worker safety, health
and welfare and
the safe management
of chemicals are
central to successful
enterprise**

Health & Safety Authority

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