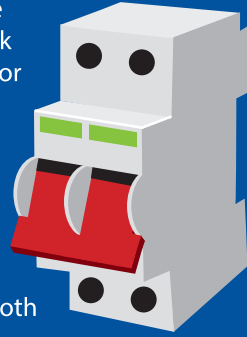


For a consumer unit/fuse box to be installed or replaced safely, it is necessary to isolate the circuit from the mains supply. This can be done by removing the service cut-out fuse. Electricians are not currently permitted to perform this task themselves. Instead, they must contact the energy supplier to arrange for its removal.

This procedure is time consuming, costly and ultimately unnecessary for registered electricians, who have already demonstrated their technical competence.

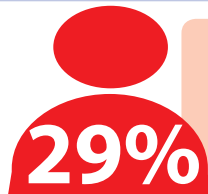
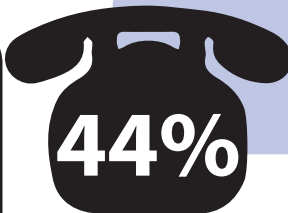
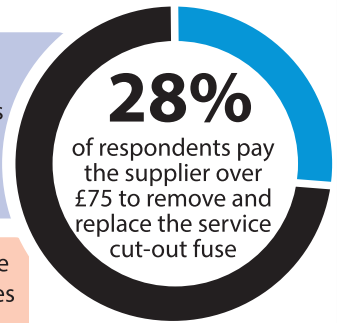
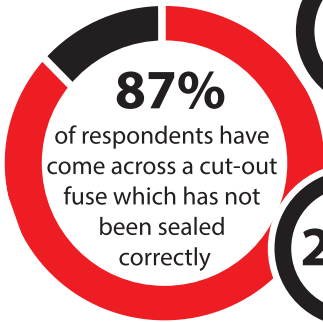
A nationwide solution is necessary to replace this redundant red tape with a simple solution that will save small business and the consumer both time and money, without compromising on safety.



Risk

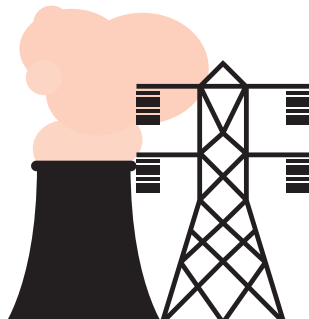
The cost and waiting time for the cut-out fuse removal varies significantly between energy suppliers. Due to the frustration this causes, they are being removed illegally often without being replaced safely, putting lives at risk.

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DNO and Energy Supplier Obligations

Energy suppliers and DNO's have a legal obligation to ensure the electrical equipment they own is safe. This includes equipment which is located in customers homes as documented in section 24 of The Electricity, Safety, Quality and Continuity Regulations 2002. The reluctance to allow those not directly employed by themselves to touch their equipment is one of liability.

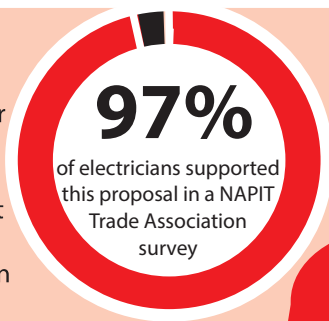


Solution

A nationwide solution for the removal and replacement of service cut-out fuses must be achieved to ensure the safety of electricians and householders.

There are two practical solutions to achieve this which already occur in certain regions, but are not consistently applied across the industry.

- 1 Require the installation of a double pole isolator switch in all homes free of charge, alongside the smart meter roll out or before if required on safety grounds.



"It will enable us to work safely and do work to our own schedule, not the suppliers, saving the customer both time and money."

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- 2 Revisit an industry proposal, presented at a Distribution Connection and Use of System Agreement (DCUSA) steering group, to allow electrical installers registered on an authorised Competent Person Scheme to also register with suppliers and gain authorisation to remove, replace and temporarily re-seal cut-out fuses. This should be built into the Electrotechnical Assessment Specification.

This is a model already used by one major distributor who consider this to be a pragmatic approach that removes barriers but is still rigorously controlled, to help electricians achieve safe isolation. However this has not been rolled out across the industry due to fear of liability although discussions with industry are on-going.