

Special report

Regulation, compliance and certification (continued)

of ventilation systems. This has been hailed by many as providing improved cleanliness levels and ending a source of confusion in the industry by clearly defining what is considered acceptably clean in newly installed ductwork.

Levels of cleanliness in ductwork systems are clarified according to the building use, including a new vacuum test that can apply to circular duct as well as rectangular ductwork.

Clean ductwork is key

"It is crucially important to clean ductwork in new buildings," says Systems Hygienics director Darren Ling. "You would not expect a new car to be covered in a thick layer of dust when handed over to you. However, many new ductwork systems are handed over in this state due to the current confusion and ambiguity about acceptable cleanliness levels.

"The new British Standard has been produced by taking the great and the good from across Europe and provides clear levels of cleanliness for new ductwork, removing any confusion over just how clean newly installed ductwork should be."

The standard also has newly defined limits set against trigger levels for cleaning existing ductwork, which differ from the current guidelines set out in the HVCA's TR/19. The values it recommends for existing ductwork are Low <4.5g/sq m, Medium <3.0g/sq m and High <0.6g/sq m, and for re-circulation and secondary ductwork it specifies Low <6.0g/sq m, Medium <4.5g/sq m and High <3.0g/sq m.

Swiftclean environmental managing director Gary Nicholls also welcomes the new British Standard: "Not only does it clear up the issue regarding the cleanliness criteria for new ductwork, it has also defined trigger levels that are usage specific for cleaning existing ductwork.

"The British Standard recognises that different systems

represent different risk – a system serving an operating theatre should have a higher standard of cleanliness than a factory store room, for example," he says.

The new standard is seen as enabling industry practitioners to provide clear advice to clients on how to comply with health and safety and other regulations.

Mr Nicholls says his company has been involved in the development of most of the leading industry bodies' technical advice and standards. He explains that ultimately the client will be the main beneficiary, with cleaner, safer ductwork and improved air quality in ventilation systems.

Green Deal focus

The Green Deal, due for launch this autumn, will be a major focus of the InstallerLive exhibition's education programme, says commercial director Fiona Davies, and opens up opportunities for competent installers.

"The Green Deal will establish a framework for private firms to offer consumers energy efficiency improvements to their homes, community spaces and businesses at no upfront cost, and recoup payments through a charge in installments on their energy bill," she says.

It will also create new work for installers who hold the right qualifications and accreditations, connected to the right providers and advisers. While the Green Deal is a huge opportunity, the current skills gap threatens its success, says Ms Davies.

A sufficient number of competent, well-trained and qualified installers are essential if the shift to renewable heating technologies is going to work.

"It is important that installers are prepared, where proving individual competence in the Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS) and Competent Persons Schemes will be significant," she says.

"Thanks to our partnerships



"The British Standard recognises that different systems represent different risk"

Gary Nicholls, Swiftclean

with the National Skills Academy, the Micropower Council and others, InstallerLive will provide a valuable training platform for installers to learn new skills in fitting technologies, such as solar PV and solar thermal heating, air-source and ground-source heat pumps, biomass units, micro-CHP (Combined Heat and Power) and wind turbines."

Boosting representation

In line with schemes announced last year to encourage more women to enter the building services sector, awarding organisation for industry qualifications EAL is launching a new qualification to help women progress in typically male-dominated sectors.

Working in partnership with Semta, the sector skills council for science, engineering and manufacturing technologies, the qualification was developed in support of the Career Investment and Progression programme.

The programme has benefitted more than 1,000 female employees in companies such as BAE Systems, Atkins and Johnson Controls Automotive Experience.

The initiative runs until March 2012 and is jointly funded by employers and Semta, through the UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES) Employer Investment Fund.

EAL's Level 3 Award in Career Advancement and Progression (QCF) aims to help individuals manage themselves and have a proactive approach to their career development.

The qualification teaches better time management, goal setting and achieving targets, effective communication skills to different business audiences and the importance of managing a positive personal reputation and image.



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