

1 STAIRLIGHTING IN TENEMENTS (AN161-2003)

The Environmental and Consumer Protection Department has received requests from solicitors, seeking evidence on behalf of clients who have injured themselves falling down unlit stairways in privately owned tenements.

Up until three years ago, Hydro Electric accepted the responsibility for replacing bulbs and adjusting timers, in what are private systems. This is no longer the case, and the owners of communal stairlighting systems are now to be held responsible for all aspects of maintenance and repair, not just wiring and fitment defects, as was previously the case. Now owners of flats in private tenements with communal stairlighting systems run the risk of being sued if someone falls, due to the lighting not working. This information has been imparted, in letter form, to all the prominent landlords known to this department, in an attempt to heighten awareness of this problem.

The withdrawal of Hydro Electric brings stairlighting into line with other communal repairs in private tenements, eg, leaking roofs and gutters, choked drains etc, the responsibility of the owners of the building.

It is recommended that the Committee endorses the above action, thereby encouraging landlords to take a more active approach to dealing with the maintenance and repair of the City's private tenemental stock.