

News story: Ensure that recladding work meets building regulations advises expert panel

The Department for Communities and Local Government has written to all building control bodies in England highlighting key Building Regulations requirements when cladding work on high rise buildings over 18 metres tall is undertaken.

This followed advice from the Independent Expert Advisory Panel whose members were particularly concerned that further risks are not created in any new works undertaken by building owners.

At their third meeting the Independent Expert Advisory Panel recommended that it would be wise to draw attention to the need to ensure that any recladding work complies with all relevant Building Regulations' requirements. In particular requirements on structural safety, resistance to moisture penetration and build up, and energy efficiency need to be considered – as well as ensuring that the fire safety requirements are met.

Building control bodies are responsible for checking that work complies with Building Regulations' requirements. It is the responsibility of those carrying out the work to ensure that the provisions of the regulations are fully met.

The advice from the Department has been sent to all building control bodies in England including local authorities building control departments and private sector Approved Inspectors. It sets out the Department's view that if building owners consider that they need to re-clad their building, for example following the results of recent screening for identification of the type of ACM cladding in use, this should be considered as building work and therefore subject to Building Regulations' requirements.

The letter particularly draws the attention of building control bodies to the following:

- Approaches to demonstrating compliance with fire safety requirements, for example ensuring that cladding and insulation used are of limited combustibility or that a whole wall cladding system BS 8414 test is undertaken. The British Standard 8414 requires that a wall with a complete cladding system – including panels and insulation – fixed to it, is then subject it to a fire that replicates a severe fire in a flat breaking out of a window and whether it then spread up the outside wall.
- Where panels are removed for inspection or testing purposes, the integrity of the whole cladding system needs to be maintained.

- The structural design of any replacement cladding needs to be checked – it should not be assumed that existing fixings and systems are suitable for replacement systems.
- The need to ensure that replacement cladding systems or components protect the building adequately from rain and condensation.
- Guidance on how to meet energy efficiency requirements when recladding.

Read the [letter to building control bodies on recladding of tall buildings](#)