

What is Air Pressure Testing?

The current edition of Building Regulations Part L came into force in 2003 and introduced pre-completion testing (PCT) as a means of demonstrating the air tightness of all residential properties and compliance with the initial SAP calculation. The test is mandatory and there is no alternative method. LABC NHW is able to provide fully accredited air tightness testing service.

Who can carry out the test?

Accredited (licensed) Air Pressure testers will carry out all testing..

What does the test involve?

The testing involves raising the air pressure inside the property by 50 Pascals (a very small increase in air pressure) using a large fan inserted in the entrance doorway. The rate by which the internal air pressure returns to normal is then measured which indicates how airtight the building is. This has a major effect on the thermal performance of the property. The result from the APT is incorporated in the final SAP calculation and production of the EPC for the property.

What buildings need to be tested?

All residential new buildings and commercial buildings in England, Wales and Northern Ireland need to be tested. In Scotland, the use of approved details and a reasonable standard of workmanship are deemed to satisfy the required minimum level.

Do you need to test all properties on the development?

No. If the development has been built to Accredited Construction Details, just one test for each type of construction is required. However, if the development has been built without the use Accredited Construction Details, Building Regulations Part L states that the following will be required:

Number of instances of construction type	Number of tests to be carried out on the construction type
4 or less	One test
Greater than 4 up to 40	Two tests
More than 40	At least 5% of the construction type, however if the first 5 units of that type pass the test then this is reduced to 2%

A construction type refers to a particular group of properties that are built to a similar size and using the same construction materials and techniques. Building Control makes the final decision on what constitutes a similar construction type. **If in doubt, you should refer to Building Control.**

How does this link in with the SAP assessments?

The SAP calculation for the unit contains an air tightness figure that must be achieved. For building regulation requirements, the test result should be not more than 10m³/m²/hr. Achieving lower results in your air pressure test will improve the results of the SAP assessment. This, in turn, will contribute towards the Code for Sustainable Homes assessment and the final code rating of the development.

How is the test result communicated?

The test result is communicated by a certificate and a brief report. It also confirms to what degree the regulations have been met or failed and will indicate the build quality of the property. Your SAP calculation includes a value to achieve building regulations and this must be met by the air pressure test.

What happens if the result is a failure or inconclusive?

If the test has failed, a retest will be required. The technician will confirm the actual test result and provide a full report on the results of the testing and will give indications as to why failure may have occurred.

How do I get a quote?

Contact our friendly services team on **0151 650 4308** or visit us online for more information.

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