

# Let The Games Begin! Support Team GB and throw an Olympic party – safely!

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Britain is taking prime position on the world stage during 2012, by hosting the 30th Olympic Games. Winning a few gold medals on our own turf would be the icing on the cake, but if you haven't managed to secure tickets to any of the events, why not throw a street party? Or get your friends together for a barbeque to watch the games and cheer on Team GB!

To help you organise a London 2012 bash worthy of a gold-medal, Steve Bratt, Group CEO at the Electrical Contractors' Association (ECA), gives his top electrical safety tips to make sure your gathering runs as well as our athletes:

- Prevent hurdles – Trailing wires and leads are one of the most common causes of trips and falls around the home. Ensure that any cables or extension leads are not left across pathways, and cannot be easily grabbed by children and pets. However, you must ensure that cables are fully unwound, as they can overheat and potentially cause a fire if they are left coiled on a reel.
- Don't let the threat of rain halt play – Summer will be in full swing, but you can never guarantee the great British sunshine will play ball! Watching the games outside will be fantastic if the rain holds off. But, just in case, make sure you protect your television, stereo and other electrical equipment from sudden showers with a gazebo or canopy. This will prevent electrical items from coming into immediate contact with water, giving you enough time to unplug them.
- Correct apparatus – If you are taking your support to the streets, make sure you are using cables that are specifically designed for outdoor use and take care when feeding through doors or windows to avoid causing cable damage. Always read the instructions and inspect any electrical tools or equipment closely before use – frayed or loose wires could cause a nasty accident.
- Do not strain your (plug) sockets – Do not overload sockets as this too could result in overheating, electric shocks, short-circuiting and could also potentially cause a fire. A Residual Current Device (RCD) should be used for sockets that are being used for outdoor equipment.
- Olympic torch – If your party is continuing into the evening, outdoor lighting should be low voltage (either 12V or 24V) or alternatively, be protected by an RCD that will automatically kick into action and break the circuit in the event of a fault.
- Consult a spark – If in doubt with electrics, always call on the advice and services of a qualified electrician. To find a local ECA member, please visit <http://www.eca.co.uk/find-an-eca-member/>.

ENDS

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Notes to editor

#### About The Electrical Contractors' Association (ECA)

The ECA is the UK's largest trade association representing electrical engineering and contracting companies. The electrical contracting industry employs 350,000 operatives and 8,000 apprentices. Our 3,000 members range from local electricians to national companies with several branches employing thousands. Our members carry out a range of work, from domestic heating and lighting to cutting edge temperature control technology.