

QUESTION

I am currently wiring a new detached garden studio that will contain a small office area and some gym equipment, which will be fed from the existing house installation. Am I required to provide overvoltage protection using SPDs?

ANSWER

There is typically no specific requirement to fit SPDs within a single domestic dwelling; however, it is important that the designer of the installation discusses the potential merits of providing such overvoltage protection with the client. An example of this may be where the value of the installation and equipment therein is considered by the client to justify the cost of providing such protection.

This consideration of value is not concerned solely with the direct cost of replacement of items, should they be damaged by an overvoltage. Due account must also be given to the probability of such an overvoltage event actually occurring, and the frequency of such occurrences.

You must therefore consider:

- the geographical location – and hence the probability of lightning strikes to electricity supply distribution system; and,
- whether the installation might be affected by switching-induced overvoltages caused by neighbouring consumers connected to the distribution network. This is more likely to be an issue if the installation in question is in close proximity to industrial installations.

In some cases, the cost of provision will be significant, and this must also be borne in mind where there is no clear justification for such provision.