



ASHBURTON BUILDING NEWS

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Plumbers Night Well Attended

Our first Plumbers night was attended by about 45 local tradesmen on the 12th of May. The night was co-sponsored by the Ashburton District Council and Plumbing World and was a chance for tradesmen to get information on changes and updates.

Peter Gallagher, a specialist plumbing and drainlayer inspector, of the Timaru District Council was invited along for the evening to provide technical expertise. With a number of our tradesmen providing services in both districts, Pete was able to give an insight on inspection procedures and help answer technical questions. The Council would like to offer their thanks to Pete for his help.

The night was also a chance for the Council to voice our support for the tradesman in the district. Legislation sets out what work is required to be carried out by a licensed tradesman, and it is part of the Council's responsibility to insure work is carried out by the appropriately qualified people. The Council will actively check registrations during inspections, and drainage plans will have the tradesman's name and registration included when provided to the Council.

Our thanks to all who attended, Mr. Gallagher, and to Plumbing World for a great night.

GIB Training Provided

Dale Mersen, GIB technical advisor, came to Ashburton to provide guidance on the changes to GIB's bracing systems. Dale explained the changes to the EZYBrace software for bracing design and installation of bracing panels.

Also covered in the afternoon meeting was the requirement of cavities to all exterior clad firewall systems. Because a firewall is required to have a 50 year durability and there is a possibility of an undetected cladding leak a cavity is always required.

More information is available from the GIB website (www.gib.co.nz) including downloadable technical manuals and software.

Changes to Ecoply Bracing

Carter Holt Harvey has launched new bracing specifications aimed at simplifying the design and construction of elements using ply, by itself or in conjunction with GIB® plasterboard. The changes have reduced the number of bracing element types, allowed for a single hold down system, and added a bracing element to soffit height. CHH has tried to simplify the selection and installation of plywood bracing in an effort to eliminate confusion at both the design and construction stage.

One matter that has come to light is the hold down capacity of the bottom plate fixings. The fixing to the floor must have a rating of 15kn in order to comply with the manufactures specifications. Be sure to check on the type of fixings you are going to install for its hold capacity.

More information is available at [Ecoply: Bracing Specifications](#) and [GIB® Handibrac](#)

New Forms For Building Consents and PIMs

In an effort to get as much relevant information as possible the forms used to apply for Building Consents and PIMs has had some changes. Form 2 is the form used to apply for a BC/PIM and has had a section added for PIM information such as are there new connections needed or new road access.

Changes have also been made to the application form for minor works building consents. Minor work is being defined as work that is residential and does not increase the foot print of the building. This type of work generally does not require extensive detailing but you need to be sure your plans show compliance with the Building Code. The Minor Works Form can also be used for marquees.

Make sure that when you submit your applications that they are completed and signed. Incomplete or unsigned forms will be rejected or returned and will cause delays in lodging your application.

Do I need A Building Consent?

Changes to Schedule 1 of the Building Act 04 made changes to what work requires a Building Consent. The DBH has published a guidance document that helps explain when work can be carried out without the need of a Building Consent that is available from their website ([Exempt Building work](#)). This publication is a good guide but if you have any doubts contact the Building Services Department to be on the safe side.

The other issue that comes up with exempt work is that when the owner goes to sell their house and there is a LIM requested. Those of us who are informed will have a good idea of what requires a Building Consent, but lawyers seem to have some difficulty with this. The Council often is asked to look at building work which was done with out a consent only to find out that there was no requirement for one. The issue is that what is on site does not match the plans on record and the lawyer may have concerns. One way to get around this is for the owner to submit a plan of the work to be filed on the building file. The Council will make note of the work, scan the plan to the electronic file, and place the original in the building file for storage. There is one catch, since the Building Services Dept. is self funding and receives no funds from rates there is a charge for this service of \$75.00.

STORMWATER AND SEWER CONNECTIONS

In the past there have been occasions where the stormwater has been connected to a gully trap or directly connected to the house sanitary sewer. Whether this was done to save costs or someone just couldn't be bothered making a new connection doesn't matter. What does matter is that this is not an appropriate way to dispose of the stormwater and causes problems to the sewer system.

In the near future the Council will be carrying out a survey to locate inappropriate connections and will require building owners to correct the situation. This may require a building consent for drainage work and possibly to installation of soak holes.

If you notice downpipes draining into a gully trap or sewer drain on a project you are working on you should consider advising the owner of the situation.

Building consent needed for wet area showers

Installing 'wet area' showers* is work that requires a building consent. However, the Department of Building and Housing has become aware that a number of building consent authorities (BCAs) are inconsistent in their approach. This article provides background information for BCAs to consider when approving wet area showers.

The Department has also published guidance 'Building work that does not require a building consent: A guide to Schedule 1 of the Building Act 2004 (November 2008)'.

In this publication, exemptions (a) Alterations to Sanitary Plumbing and (af) Improving Access for People with Disabilities clearly state that wet area showers are not exempt from requiring a consent. An example provided under exemption (af) states 'Installing a wet area shower requires a building consent. This is because the construction of the wet area shower includes critical building work, such as waterproof membranes'.

* The floor of 'wet area' or 'level-entry' showers is a continuation of the floor of the bathroom, rather than a separate raised shower tray or cubicle.

Level-entry or wet area showers are installed for a variety of reasons, such as:

- adapting a house for a person with a long-term disability
- after an accident when a person has a temporary disability
- for elderly parents who have come to live with their family
- because a homeowner chooses to.

Installing wet area showers is not exempt building work because it is not 'low risk'. This is because a number of critical design elements (such as the substructure for the tanking or the waterproofing) need to be carefully considered, and the consequences of not getting it right are significant.

A wet area shower must be constructed so that water cannot enter the building fabric, which could cause dampness and a health hazard and could eventually decay, affecting the structural integrity of the house.

In addition, the installation of a wet area shower is more complex than work which is exempt under Schedule 1 of the Building Act 2004, such as:

- replacing an existing shower with a stand alone or ready-made shower
- replacing sanitary fixtures in the same room
- moving a toilet.

Wet area showers require more building work than when a stand alone or ready-made shower is installed, for example:

- floor, subfloor and walls designed for protection from additional water exposure
- containment and fall to shower floor waste, which may require furring of joists
- tanking membrane under the floor covering and behind shower wall coverings
- waterproof finish to shower walls and floor, such as tiles over a tanking membrane or vinyl.

The building consent and inspection process provides an assurance to homeowners that the building complies with the Building Code

ACCESSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Providing facilities for people with disabilities is not a Building Code requirement for houses.

This means a wet area shower installed in a house is not required to meet all the provisions of G1/AS1 or NZS 4121. The shower can be designed to suit the disabilities of the person intending to use the shower, for example it may not need a fixed seat.

Level-entry showers can be, but are not always, accessible showers