

building & consent news

KEEPING YOU INFORMED OF THE BUILDING AND CONSENTS PROCESS

Issue 05 August 2009

Welcome

A reminder to our industry partners that this is also your newsletter, and we would welcome any articles that members of the industry would like to contribute, so together we can ensure future publications are informative and relevant to your needs.

The inspection booking dedicated telephone number service appears to be working well, with favourable comments having been received. Just a reminder that the dedicated telephone number is 06 366 0927 and bookings can be made between 8am

and 5pm, Monday to Friday. If at all possible to do so, we will ensure your inspection takes place within 24 hours of your call.

And finally some statistics: The number of consents lodged for the last 12 months was down on previous years. Our staff granted 88 percent of consents for the year within 20 days (and in the last six months this increased to 99 percent), and they completed 3290 inspections.

Mike Lepper
Regulatory Business Unit Manager

Specified systems

Any building work that involves modifying or adding to specified systems requires Building Consent. The same applies to any building work that can affect either the fire safety design or the structural integrity of the building.

Internal fit-outs to existing commercial and industrial buildings can potentially affect fire safety features currently installed, existing escape routes and structural integrity.

If you are unsure if Building Consent is required, please seek professional advice prior to starting work. Ultimately the building owner is responsible for being aware of the specified systems contained within their building, and ensuring continued compliance with the Building Act 2004.

Further information on specified systems can be found on both the Horowhenua District Council website, www.horowhenua.govt.nz, and Department of Building and Housing website, www.dbh.govt.nz

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If you have any queries on this matter, please contact our Compliance Officer, Ann Clark, on 366 0999 extension 6928.



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Site inspections are a fact of life

Whether you like it or not, there are mandatory site inspections as part of gaining a Code of Compliance and these ALL have to be signed off at various stages of construction of your building.

The specific inspections required for your Building Consent are detailed on

the bright yellow inspection schedule attached to your consent documents.

They are all part of your planning requirements, just like getting your sub-contractors on site at the relevant times.

Please understand that the inspectors don't have x-ray vision to see

underground or inside wall cavities. Opening up completed work or alternative testing to make up for the missed inspection can be very time-consuming and expensive – but easily avoided.

A voice for the industry

The Industry Committee was formed in 2007 on the initiative of industry representatives, as a means of establishing a closer relationship with Council, and as a platform to voice the concerns of the

industry. The committee meets at 4pm on the first Monday of the month, and has been instrumental in bringing about change and understanding between the industry and the Council's building staff.

Pictured below are committee members Nick Spark and Kelvin MacPherson. If you are interested in being part of the industry committee, please contact either one of them.

Kelvin MacPherson

I worked in the wool and leather industry for 23 years before starting as a computer-assisted design (CAD) technician for Jacques Project Management Engineering in 2006.



I then joined Chevron Homes Ltd in 2007, taking up a career in architectural design and draughting in the building industry. My involvement with Chevron Homes and the building industry has provided me with the opportunity to develop skills in general computing, CAD 3D design and drawing, construction management, quantity surveying and sales.

More recently I have been involved with the Horowhenua District Council to help understand and comprehend the huge changes that are happening with licensing and accreditation in the building industry.

Nick Spark

Upon leaving high school, Tararua College in Pahiatua, I joined the BNZ to pursue a career in finance. After numerous moves I ended up in New Plymouth, where having decided banking wasn't for me, I started working for a local builder. I subsequently moved to Auckland, where I worked for 12 years before moving to Levin in 2002, where I bought a site in Duke Street and undertook a four-townhouse development.

It was about this time that "leaky homes" were becoming a real issue around the country and the Department of Building and Housing (DBH) started a huge overhaul of the building industry that filtered down through local bodies and on to individual builders. This was also a time when the building industry saw significant growth, and this combined with extra requirements put in place by the DBH meant the workload of Councils grew to a point where consents were taking months and inspection times were more than a week out.

These delays needed to be addressed, so an Industry Committee was formed to work with Council on ways to improve the turnaround. My personal experience showed that if Further Information

Request letters could be minimised or eliminated, consent processing times would be reduced.

So I chose to be part of the Industry Committee to get a full understanding of what was required by Council and have input on behalf of the industry. Two and a half years and many meetings later, I have learned a lot about "the process" and have seen improvements all-round, benefiting Council and the industry alike.

I am aware that there are still grumblings within the industry and I urge builders to attend the monthly meetings, where individual grievances can be heard. We don't always get our way with Council but always end up better informed with this action. If builders do not feel inclined to attend meetings, I am happy to act as an agent and can be contacted by cellphone 027 485 3632 or email nickspark@xtra.co.nz



Building Code structure

The laws covering new building work and the performance of new buildings are set out in the Building Act and Building Code. The Compliance Documents specify ways the performance requirements of the Building Code can be met. Building to the Compliance Documents guarantees compliance with the Building Code.

Helpful definitions:

1. Building Act 2004 – regulates building work to ensure buildings are safe, healthy and sustainable.
2. Building Code – is part of the building regulations and sets the performance standards for buildings. All new buildings must meet these standards.
3. Compliance Documents – are made up of verification methods and acceptable solutions and are published by the Department of Building and Housing. These documents describe ways that the performance standards specified in the Building Code can be met.
4. Verification Methods – describe ways of proving that a building design meets Building Code performance.
5. Acceptable Solutions – describe ways of constructing a building that meet Building Code performance.
6. Standards – may be used in Compliance Documents and form part of the compliance methods or solutions. A number of Standards may be used in a Compliance Document, each covering a different aspect of building design or operation.

Documents that support the Building Code



Jason's plumbing & drainage quiz

1. List at least five pieces of legislation that may apply to or have effect on plumbing & drainage work:
2. According to B2/AS1 there are two main concepts to be considered when evaluating the durability requirements of a plumbing & drainage product for compliance with NZBC clause B2-Durability. These are:
3. The Plumbers, Gasfitters & Drainlayers Act 1976 defines three registration grades for those people legally able to carry out plumbing work. These are:
4. List four different pipe materials suitable for cold water supply that would comply with G12/AS1:
5. Name the NZ installation standard for Upvc pipework:
6. List the two main considerations for water supply pipework installed beneath a concrete slab on ground floor.
7. What is the maximum working pressure (cold 20deg C) for copper-15mm half hard & polybutylene:
8. List five important roof-mounted header tank requirements:
9. List situations where cold water supply pipework could need to be insulated or otherwise protected:
10. List three specific plumbing items, systems or installations peculiar to commercial or industrial-type buildings:
11. The NZ Copper Council recommends that copper pipes not be installed beneath concrete floor slabs, but if unavoidable, what are the four specified installation precautions:
12. A domestic hot water heating system with an uncontrolled heat source must always be an system.
13. The working valve installed at the inlet to a valve-vented hot water cylinder that controls the pressure in the system under normal operating conditions is a valve.
14. A valve that controls the inlet pressure to a low or medium pressure hot water cylinder is called a valve.
15. Name the four operation & safety devices required by G12/AS1 for a valve-vented hot water cylinder.

Don't compromise your finished floor level

Our building inspectors are finding numerous instances of the finished ground level of the final site works being higher than allowed.

Your consented documents show the required distances between the building's finished floor slab level and the adjacent ground.

This distance is initially checked during the foundation inspection and must

continue to comply after all the ground works have been completed.

When first establishing the finished floor level, please take into account all additional soil, paving or concrete that will be required.

Remedying this problem is difficult and expensive, particularly when it could have been easily avoided.

Development Contributions policy

This is a summary of Council's Development Contributions Policy. The full policy is available in the Long Term Council Community Plan 2009/2019, our website or from the Council.

What is a Development Contribution?

Where any development takes place in a community the local council will have to spend money to upgrade their services to accommodate that development. If it fails to do so then there will be a reduction in the level of its services it provides to the community.

The cost of upgrading services must be paid for either by the ratepayers or developers.

A development contribution is a levy on developers to pay for these costs of growth. The underlying principle is that the costs of growth to a community should be paid for by those causing the growth and not the ratepayers.

Development contributions are required in order to ensure that the existing levels of services provided by a council are not reduced or diluted by ongoing development in the community. Developers who create a demand on infrastructure and reserves should contribute towards the cost of ensuring that there is no loss in the level of service that was being provided before the

development took place. A development contribution may be in the form of land or money as specified in the policy.

Whilst individual developments may not in themselves have a significant effect on the level of services being provided, the aggregate effects of development are considerable and could result, for example, in a new or larger water treatment plant being required.

Is the Council entitled to collect Development Contributions?

Development contributions are provided for under the Local Government Act 2002 (principally sections 197 to 211). The Act requires that councils adopt a policy on development contributions in their Long Term Council Community Plan. Where a policy requires the payment of development contributions the calculation of the amount of the contribution must be done in accordance with the method set out in the Act. The policy is subject to full public consultation prior to it being adopted.

Almost all councils in New Zealand have chosen to collect Development Contributions rather than apportion the costs of growth to their ratepayers.

Quiz answers

1. Building Act 2004, Building Regulations 1992, Plumbers Gasfitters & Drainlayers Act 1976, Local Government Act 1974 & 2002, Resource Management Act 1991, Health & Safety in Employment Act 1992, Health (Drinking Water) Amendment Act 2007.
2. Ease of access and/or replacement; Ease of in-service failure detection.
3. Limited Certificate, Registered Person, Craftsman.
4. Copper, polybutylene, Upvc, galvanised steel.
5. NZS 7643:1979.
6. Areas subject to freezing – insulate or install below the freeze zone. Installed in a manner to achieve a 50yr durability or commensurate with the specified intended life of the building.
7. Copper 6850 kpa, polybutylene 1600 kpa.
8. Seismic restraint; Access for maintenance; Overflow provision (safe tray & overflow); Cover to prevent contamination & vermin entry; Support structure.
9. Outside building thermal envelope, including valves, in freeze zones; In-ground pipework in the freeze zone; Protection against aggressive environments (eg acidic soils); Protection against mechanical damage.
10. Testable backflow prevention devices; Grease or interceptor traps; Fire hose reels or sprinkler systems; Overflow containment for multi-units; Trade waste.
11. Do not use light-gauge copper. 75mm minimum below slab. If jointing required only use silver brazing. Tubes shall be continuous & bedded in river sand or fine soil which is carefully placed & compacted to avoid pipework damage.
12. Open-vented.
13. Cold water expansion valve.
14. Pressure reducing.
15. Temperature relief valve; Pressure relief valve; Cold water expansion valve; Energy cut-off.