

## **EDITORIAL**

I know that I've said it before, but the new accreditation process is creating an even bigger demand on our resources than we ever imagined.

The Government realised the huge impost on local councils and extended the timeframes for compliance.

IANZ (International Accreditation NZ) has also realised its liability to ensure we are all up to a certain standard and is 'raising the compliance bar' dramatically, which in turn requires us to do more work and delays the time when we will be ready.

But enough of that. The big story is the Government is really pushing the Energy Efficiency message in New Zealand and has committed millions to ensuring that older houses eventually get upgraded and rated for efficiency. The legislation is being changed to ensure that new houses and commercial buildings will be more energy efficient which will save us all money and reduce the reliance on diminishing resources.

Jeff Jamieson

## STORMWATER DRAINAGE



Building Consents are required for all stormwater drainage except soak-pits installed under the stormwater separation programme.

Stormwater drainage is required to comply with NZBC clause E1 surface water and is to be laid by a registered drainlayer with a current licence.

Stormwater drains are required to be laid to the same standards as sanitary sewer drains. Pipe grades, depths and sizing can be found in NZBC, E1.

Producer statements from certified installers are accepted for residential properties only. Commercial/ industrial properties require inspections of the drain by council officers. All connections for commercial/industrial jobs are charged at cost.

Soak-pits constructed under a Building Consent will have to show how they will meet NZBC E1/VM1 (verification method).

All soak-pits should have a point of overflow relief as pressure build-up in the system can cause the soak-pit to blow out or water to overflow the spouting/gutter and possibly enter the building.

Footpath openings are to be fenced or otherwise protected at all times to ensure the safety of the public.

## CHANGES TO H1 REQUIRE BETTER ENERGY EFFICIENCY



New requirements in the Building Code announced in May 2007 will lower power and gas bills and make homes warmer and more comfortable.

H1 is the route to energy efficiency. The Building Code includes all the required provisions for building work. H1 is the clause that spells out the minimum requirements for energy efficiency. The H1 clause has been updated and includes new minimum provisions for insulating new homes and major extensions.

The changes to H1 will deliver better insulation for new homes, resulting in about 30 percent less energy needed to achieve comfortable indoor air temperatures.

The new requirements for Wanganui come into force on 30 June 2008 but you should consider the installation of better insulation now.

Improved efficiency of lighting in new and refitted commercial buildings, and certain other large buildings, will reduce the average power consumption of lighting installations by around 33 percent. The requirements came into force on 31 October 2007.

Easier approval of solar water heating systems across New Zealand is being introduced through a new Compliance Document. This specifies a way of installing solar water heaters to comply with the Building Code. It includes all necessary features and requirements.

Please refer to a separate article in this edition that details the solar requirements.

## HOW LEGIT IS YOUR PLUMBER, GASFITTER OR DRAINLAYER?



Most plumbing and drainage work needs a Building Consent to get started and a Code Compliance Certificate at the end to show that the work complies with the Building Code.

Without a Code Compliance Certificate, some banks may withhold the balance of a mortgage and some insurance companies may not pay out on claims. So it's an important piece of paper.

To get a Code Compliance Certificate, you need a licensed tradesperson. But how can you tell?

Every registered plumber, gasfitter and drainlayer must get a new practicing licence every year. Their names, and whether or not they have a current licence, are listed in a public register at [www.pgdb.co.nz](http://www.pgdb.co.nz), the website of the Plumbers, Gasfitters, & Drainlayers Registration Board.

So check the register next time you need a plumber, gasfitter or drainlayer. It could save you tears in the long run.

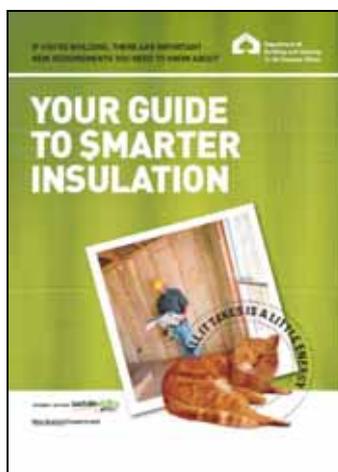
## YOUR GUIDE TO \$MARTER INSULATION

As a nation, we are committed to using energy wisely and efficiently. As a New Zealander, you can do your bit to help. Improving the energy efficiency of your house means both lower power bills and a warmer, more comfortable home.

Much of the energy we use in our homes and buildings is wasted or could be reduced. A booklet produced by the Department of Building and Housing, *Your guide to a \$marter home*, tells you how to cut your power bill (available online at [www.smarterhomes.org.nz](http://www.smarterhomes.org.nz) or by ringing 0800 242 243).

Another booklet – *Your guide to \$marter insulation* – provides more detailed information on important Government initiatives to reduce energy use in new homes and buildings.

This booklet is a companion to ‘Your guide to a \$marter home’ featured in the last issue of *Offcuts*.



## ANOTHER BOOST FOR SOLAR WATER HEATING



The Department of Building and Housing (DBH) has published a new Compliance Document which clarifies what homeowners need to do to have a solar water heating system approved by our council.

From December 1, the Compliance Document will be effective for most solar water heating systems installations.

The DBH says the new document will simplify consent processes and allow consents to be processed more quickly.

It spells out just what a solar water heating installer has to do to get a system signed off by the local council. It means everyone in the industry will be able to follow a specified standard. The publication of a Compliance document for solar water heating installations is a significant step forward in the Government's programme to encourage more New Zealanders to install solar water heating systems.

As well as the benefits for homeowners, the Compliance Document will provide certainty to the building, plumbing and solar water heating industries which are all involved in putting solar water heating systems in buildings.

Copies of the new Compliance Document (G12/AS2) are available on the Department's website [www.dbh.govt.nz](http://www.dbh.govt.nz).

### Solar water heating questions and answers

**Q. What is a Compliance Document?**

A. All new building work in New Zealand must comply with the Building Code, which sets general health, safety and quality requirements (for example, the Code says buildings must not leak or collapse). To provide more detail on how to comply with each code requirement, the Department publishes Building Code Compliance Documents, of which Acceptable Solutions are part. An Acceptable Solution is a ready-made solution, often with drawings, that shows how to comply with one or more Building Code clauses. It is not compulsory to follow Compliance Documents and Acceptable Solutions. However, councils must accept building work which meets them. Councils may also accept other solutions as long as they satisfy Code requirements.

**Q. What is the purpose of the new Compliance Document for solar water heaters?**

A. The new Compliance Document will provide a clear, uniform example of how to install the most common solar water heater. Councils will be legally obliged to accept installations based on the Compliance Document, leading to simpler and sometimes cheaper consents. This will remove an important obstacle to adopting this technology with all the benefits it provides in reducing energy costs and demand.

**Q. Which solar water heaters are covered?**

A. All the most common solar water heaters are covered as long as the tank is below the roof and the collector area is less than 4m<sup>2</sup>. The full scope is further explained in the

document.

**Q. What will be the benefit to the homeowner?**

A. Consents for solar water heaters will be easier, and in some cases cheaper, to get. Special care has been taken in the new Acceptable Solution to provide high quality installation detail. Advice is provided on how to avoid common installation mistakes, such as similar metals coming into contact and causing corrosion. This should lead to better quality installations and systems that are more durable.

**Q. What will be the benefits to installers and councils?**

A. Installation and inspection of systems built according to the Compliance Document will be easier. This will lead to better quality installations and easier consent processing.

**Q. Are there any extra costs?**

A. Following the Compliance Document is voluntary. However, it is likely to become the de facto standard for the industry, leading to some installers having to improve installation practices. This will ultimately result in better-installed systems.

**Q. When does the new Compliance Document become effective?**

A. The Compliance Document has been published. It became effective on 1 December 2007.

**Q. What provision has been made for protecting people from Legionella bacteria that can grow in hot water systems?**

A. Legionella bacteria, which causes the potentially fatal Legionnaires Disease, can grow in hot water storage tanks, including those attached to solar water heating systems. The Building Code requires hot water systems to protect adequately against Legionella growth. In storage systems, this is normally done by heating the water to a certain temperature for a certain time. The new Compliance Document provides three options for Legionella control in solar water systems that are technically achievable and consistent with the requirements for electric water heaters. The purpose of such requirements is to protect people from Legionnaires Disease.

**Q. What else is the Government doing to promote the uptake of solar water heaters?**

A. The Government is encouraging solar water heating as part of its broad approach to promoting energy efficiency and renewable sources of energy.

The programme includes:

- Motivating demand through independent information and promotion;
- Providing financial assistance to homeowners – for details see [www.energywise.govt.nz/solar](http://www.energywise.govt.nz/solar);
- Working with the building industry to encourage solar water heating on new housing, particularly volume-build developments;
- Working with the solar industry to improve information and capacity issues;
- Encouraging solar water heating systems on publicly owned buildings;
- Encouraging new ideas through an Innovation Fund.

More information can be found on [www.dbh.govt.nz](http://www.dbh.govt.nz) and [www.energywise.govt.nz](http://www.energywise.govt.nz).

## SWIMMING POOLS

The impending longer days and warmer weather brings thoughts of getting existing swimming pools ready for plenty of summer use.

Now is the time to spray the pool fence and gate latching mechanism with a good release agent (CRC or similar) and to carry out any necessary repairs to achieve compliance with the Fencing of Swimming Pools Act 1987.

Remember, it is the property owner's responsibility to maintain pool fencing in good working order at all times.

### **The Fencing of Swimming Pools Act**

The Fencing of Swimming Pools Act 1987 is to protect young children from the danger of drowning in unfenced swimming pools. It does this by requiring owners to fence their pools. If your pool has the capability of water depth greater than 400mm (16 inches) then it is required to be fenced in accordance with the Fencing of Swimming Pools Act.

**NB: This includes blow up and temporary pools. All pools, no matter when they are installed, must comply with the Fencing of Swimming Pools Act. This includes pools bought from chain stores and warehouses.**

### **Do pools require a Building Consent?**

All pool fencing requires Building Consent, including that around spa pools, and pools require consent for the construction of the pool itself. Contact your local council if you have any questions about the information needed for a pool-related Building Consent.

### **Where the fence must be situated**

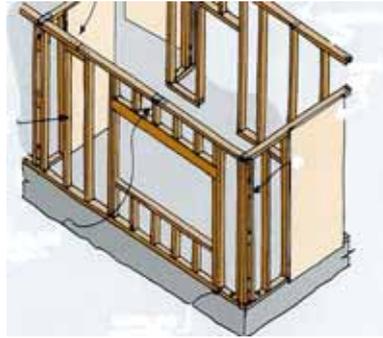
The fence must only surround the pool and the area immediately around the pool. This area can only include things that are associated with the pool - for example, changing sheds. It must not include things that do not relate to the pool - for example, clothesline, vege gardens and children's play equipment.

Buildings may form part of the pool fence provided they comply with the Act, and any doors opening to the pool must comply. Boundary fences may form part of the pool fence provided they meet the requirements of the Act.

We have a good information pamphlet available at the counter or online at [www.wanganui.govt.nz/services/building.asp](http://www.wanganui.govt.nz/services/building.asp).



## LINTELS



### **Information required on Building Consents applications**

From 1 March 2008, Building Consent applications will need to show all wall lintels sizes on the plans, either individually or on a lintel table easily identified on the plans (not just tucked away in the specification somewhere).

It's noted that many designers and framing/truss detailers are doing this already.

In the past as long as the lintel would fit somewhere within NZS3604, that would suffice and we only asked for the larger spans, normally the likes of 4.8m wide garage doors.

Now with the reduced span tables of amendment two NZS3604, the new timber gradings, the greater use of LVL beams (Hyspans etc) and larger roofs with point loaded girder trusses, lintels down to 1.7m can be outside the scope of NZS3604.

To add to that, the site inspectors have to carry a small library of different information to check compliance on site. With total compliance expected on consented plans, this is probably a well overdue requirement.