

Editorial

I've been on about it for a number of issues but Wanganui District Council has just been granted Accreditation for our Building Control service. This is an incredible feat which was achieved before the amended deadline.

I've just returned from overseas and a couple of work-related issues stand out.

Double glazing – not only is it becoming more prevalent here as a form of energy saving, but in the big cities the sound insulation value is so beneficial in shutting out the traffic noise.

Another stand out for me was the level of recycling.

Most European cities have three or four bins in public places for different recyclable materials and in parts of Britain it is illegal to not recycle.

I've already changed my attitude – I'll be trying harder to recycle.

Jeff Jamieson

Accreditation approval



The Building Act 2004 aims to improve the control of, and encourage better practice and performance in, building design, construction and building control. It sets standards and procedures for people involved in building work to help ensure buildings are built right first time.

The Act also introduced the requirement that territorial authorities and regional authorities be registered as building consent authorities before they can undertake building consent processing, inspection and approval functions.

Here at Wanganui District Council we achieved our Accreditation approval during June, ahead of the amended deadline of 30 June 2008.

This will be granted by IANZ (International Accreditation NZ), then peer reviewed and our Certificate should be presented during July at a ceremony in Wellington at the DBH (Department of Building & Housing).

The Accreditation will help ensure that we undertake the volume and complexity of work approved, and we consistently achieve compliance with building legislation.

Our decision-making processes are improved at critical building consent, inspection and approval stages of the building consent.

This in turn drives national consistency across 'borders' with other councils who are also required to be accredited.

A consequence of this better service is that consent processing and inspection require greater input from staff which in turn drives up the costs slightly.

We have detailed check sheets to record all decisions which form part of the Accreditation process. Our processes are now more robust and detailed.

We in turn now require the designers and builders to take another 'step up' to the next level of professionalism.

By working together, we will achieve the Government's aim to give people better buildings first time.

New insulation requirements Home insulation (H1) & the new requirements that came in effect on 30 June 2008

By now all of us in the building industry should be aware that home insulation values for compliance have stepped up somewhat since 30 June 2008 in zone 2 (our region)

The document that controls this requirement is Code Clause H1 Energy Efficiency and it covers not only home insulation but all forms of energy efficiency in both residential and commercial buildings.

In this brief article I really only want to touch on home insulation and hopefully summarise the issues the builder or home owner would not necessarily be aware of.

Most of us might think of insulation as "Batts" in the walls and ceiling and maybe something under the floor, when in fact H1 has always considered floors, walls, roof and glazing.

There are three methods that can be used as a means of compliance: the scheduled method which selects a set of minimum requirements for floors, walls, roof and glazing; the calculation method if you fall outside the requirements of the scheduled method i.e. very large window areas, wanting to use single glazing etc, and the modelling method which is a computer modelling technique that basically does that calculation method for you.

This article is aimed at covering the first and most common, the scheduled method.

This method may be used when the combined areas of glazing on east, south and west walls is 30% or less of the combined total area of these walls, and the building total area of glazing is 30% or less of the total wall area.

In the past when this criteria was met your likely insulation specification would have looked something like this:

Roof insulation R 2.2 (Batts or similar)

Wall insulation R1.8 (Batts or similar)

Floor insulation R1.3 (draped foil, polystyrene, concrete floor)

Glazing insulation R0.15 (by default single glazing)

Now, with the new requirements, under the same method it will look something like this:

Roof insulation R3.2 (Batts or similar) **Upgraded**

Wall insulation R2.2 (Batts or similar) **Upgraded**

Floor insulation R1.3 (draped foil, polystyrene, concrete floor) Unchanged
Glazing insulation R0.26 (double glazing) **Upgraded**



As you can see, the big changes are thicker insulation to walls and roof, floor remains the same, but windows are double glazed.

Just a note for those of you who have already looked in H1 table 1 and have seen the minimum R values for roof and walls slightly lower than the example above - please keep in mind they are structural R values total, the extra R value for the “Batts” takes into effect the conductivity of wall frames, stud centres etc.

The misconception is we “must have double glazing”. The answer is yes, if you want to achieve compliance under the scheduled method. If, for example, you are doing an addition and wish to reuse some existing windows (single glazing) you would then have to use the calculation method to show compliance and calculate a way of making up the shortfall in the glazing elsewhere.

For this, NZS4218 demonstrates a fairly simple formula for compliance - your designer would complete this as part of your building consent application.

Obviously for new housing and when new joinery is being ordered for alterations, the double glazing method would be the preferred option because of the heating and sound proofing benefits.

Building Safety Week winner

During Building Safety Week, Council announced a small competition where all recipients of a Code Compliance Certificate (CCC) during June went into the draw for BOB (The Building Officials Bear).

Twenty-eight countries took part in Building Safety Week which promoted safety where you live, work and play and aimed to raise awareness of the role Building Control Officers take in protecting lives, property & public safety.

Pictured is Warren Gillespie of Saul Maintenance and Construction Ltd, who was the worthy recipient of BOB, being congratulated by Jeff Jamieson, Team Leader Building Control, Wanganui District Council.



Replacing roofing

There seems to be a degree of confusion out in the field as to whether or not you require a building consent to replace a roof.

The answer is - it depends!

If it is clearly maintenance, then no building consent is required. If it is concrete tiles replaced with iron, or lightweight tiles to concrete, or tiles to sheet rubber, or any of these combinations then a building consent is required.

There used to be a 'like for like' rule which in essence said that if it was a replacement of like for like then **no** building consent was required.

In March 2008, an alteration to the second schedule was made to clarify the situation.



“A building consent is not required for repair or replacement (other than maintenance) of any component or assembly that has failed to satisfy the provisions of the code for durability.”

Simply put, if your iron roof has lasted the required 15 year durability requirement, then it has satisfied the above clause and does not require a building consent to be replaced with iron.

(The above clause is to ensure that some “leaky home” cladding replacements are now documented as consentable work and will then be noted on a LIM (Land Information Memorandum).

Owner builder exemption consultation

Earlier this week, the DBH released a formal consultation document that details the owner builder exemption to the restricted building work regime.

Under the exemption, owner builders will be able to seek an exemption to carry out restricted building work provided they take the same accountability as a professional builder: i.e. the implied warranties under the Building Act.

The proposal for an owner builder exemption was announced by the Minister for Building and Construction in April this year and since then the Department has been working on the details of this.

The aim of the owner builder exemption is to allow homeowners to undertake restricted building work on their own houses while still protecting consumers (future owners of the home).

The consultation document is now available from the Department's website, or you can call 0800 60 60 50 to request a copy.

Feedback is due by 1 August 2008.

Top tips



- Clean and check your solid fuel heater flue to ensure it is running efficiently before winter really sets in
- Clean out spouting and valley gutters – often we get hail at this time of year and it doesn't take much for them to overflow
- Finish off your building project, ring and book a final inspection for your Code Compliance Certificate (CCC) before the two year time limit is reached.
- For those who are building – always check to see what inspections we are requesting to ensure they are all completed (and you have no hassle at the end).
- For those contemplating building – make sure your designer is right up to speed with the new requirements (especially the H1 – Energy Efficiency requirements).
- When retrofitting or adding extra insulation to your house, ensure that the brick cavity is **not** filled, as it is required for drainage and ventilation
- For the engineers – new loadings standards have been cited with substantial modifications (NZS1170 and B1/VM1).

Sub floor plumbing inspections



Historically, we always used to complete underslab inspections but over recent years these were slowly abandoned (for a variety of reasons).

Council has also recently noticed a rise in non-complying underslab work when we have happened to be on site for other reasons.

Our Accreditation process also requires us to have better processes to approve work. Rather than re-impose this inspection at a certain date, we have elected to go through a gradual re-education and implementation phase over time.

The purpose of plumbing and drainage inspections is to provide an *independent* check, as even the most conscientious tradesmen make mistakes from time to time (we have noticed a rise in new entrants to the industry, the changes/more frequent use of AS3500, material choices, building code amendments etc – all have affected levels of compliance).

The gradual re-introduction of this required inspection, over a longer period of time, coupled with the on-site dissemination of information from our inspectors to tradesman, is a sensible way to achieve this goal in this ever changing environment.

Please be sure to read your inspection sheet to ensure that all inspections required for compliance are completed by Council Building Control Officers.

Consultation on simple housing

The Department of Building and Housing is seeking your comments on the proposed Compliance Document for simple housing.

The objective of the Compliance Document is to provide in one place all the information and requirements necessary to produce a simple, affordable house, making it easier for designers, builders and building officials to deliver such projects.

A further objective is to promote simplification, standardisation and appropriate choice of house sizes. The Compliance Document should especially benefit first home buyers (those in the “starter” market), retirees who are downsizing their property, or anyone who wants a standard, simple house.

The proposed Compliance Document is different from existing Compliance Documents in that it includes all the Building Code requirements for this specific building type, rather than providing a means of compliance with individual Building Code Clause(s).

By bringing this information together in a single document, the Compliance Document aims to encourage efficiencies in the delivery of simple houses for which there is an identifiable market need.

Copies of the document can be downloaded from www.dbh.govt.nz and submissions close on 29 August 2008.

New online calculator for toilet facilities in building

The Department of Building & Housing (DBH) has published a new online calculator for toilet facilities in new public buildings and buildings that are undergoing a change of use. The calculator is guidance under section 175 of the Building Act and does not change any of the current requirements which have been in place since 2000.



The calculator simplifies the complex manual calculation provided by Acceptable Solutions G1/AS1. It will help designers calculate the number of sanitary facilities needed in new public buildings and buildings undergoing a change of use. It will also simplify consenting and compliance checking by building consent authorities.

This online calculator uses two methods to calculate the number and type of facilities needed:

- The building type and the number of occupants.
- The building type and occupant densities multiplied by the floor area of the building to get the number of occupants.

The calculator delivers a variety of options, including unisex and single sex facilities. Results can be saved in pdf format or printed.

Acceptable Solution G1/AS1 will still be needed to provide details; for example, where toilets are needed, toilet layouts, privacy and accessibility facilities.

www.dbh.govt.nz/calculator-for-toilet-pans