

**WDC— QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FOR THOSE IN THE BUILDING INDUSTRY**

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**Stormwater separation**

The Wanganui District Council continues its commitment to stormwater separation within the city. The areas that are not completely separated are Castlecliff, Gonville, City Central and the Central Business District.

Should you own a property in any of these areas, please note that the final date for stormwater separation to be completed is July 2010.

If you require any information regarding stormwater, please contact the Stormwater Separation Compliance Officer.

**Christmas hours**

The Council office will be closed for the three days between Christmas and New Year.

Please organise your site inspections to account for this closure.

People requiring Building Consents early in the New Year should lodge their complete Building Consent documentation early to allow sufficient time for processing.



**Infrastructure bonds**

**Attention: all builders, building applicants and designers**

The Wanganui District Council has significant infrastructure assets in the road corridor. Damage to those assets comes at a cost to the ratepayer of Wanganui.

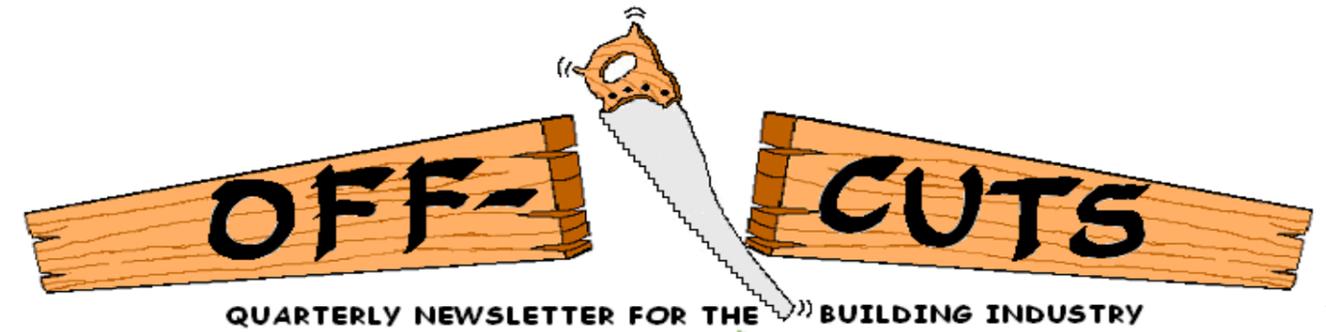
The Wanganui District Council has introduced an infrastructure bond of \$1,500 for all Building and/or Resource Consents in relation to demolition, removal and relocation of dwellings and the construction of new dwellings. The enforcement of this infrastructure bond will become effective from Monday, 30 November 2009.

The \$1,500 bond is refundable at the completion of the work on the proviso that no damage has been done, or any damage that has been done has been repaired to the Council's standards. In addition to the bond, a \$200 inspection and administration fee will be charged

per application, which is non refundable.

Companies with multiple house consents may apply to the Wanganui District Council's Chief Executive to have their bonds reviewed. If granted, the applicant must fill out an Acceptance of Liability form to cover the sites that a bond has not been taken for. The \$200 inspection and administration fee will still apply (for each application), and remain non-refundable.

Infrastructure bond forms will be available from the Customer Services desk in the main Council Building. These forms will be filled out in conjunction with a Building Consent or Resource Consent.



**November 2009:**

**Editorial**



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simple house acceptable solution document is being launched. They are also promoting solar water heating guidance documents.

Companies such as our national plaster board manufacturer have simplified their bracing procedures for designers and builders, which has the potential to save time and money when calculated electronically.

The question still remains—to remain competitive, and on the ball, you have to spend an increasing time on learning to access the electronic mediums, and read lots, and attend those early morning and after work trade functions, and take time to discuss issues with your peers.

Continued professional development is all about keeping up to date.

*Jeff Jamieson*  
*Team Leader Building Services*

**Requests for further information**

When plans and specifications are submitted for a building consent they are assessed for completeness and compliance with the Building Code.

Sometimes there is information missing and we write back to you requesting further information.

This is where the affectionately named 'RFI' letter comes from. Previously this letter was sent back to the designer and

there was a delay in receiving back the answers to the questions posed. Often owners would ring Council to see where their project was in the system — this led to interruptions and often concern for the owner.

To improve efficiency we now send the RFI letters to both the designer and the owner. This keeps everyone 'in the loop' and often speeds up the delivery of an approved building consent.

## Downlights and insulation

We are now very aware of the increased emphasis and benefits of insulation in our houses. An issue that has arisen again is the increasing use of downlights and the 'rules' governing their installation.

All downlights must be installed in accordance with NZECP 54:2001 to ensure there is no heat build up within the structure. NZECP 54:2001 can be downloaded free from [www.energysafety.govt.nz](http://www.energysafety.govt.nz), see 'For electricity industry'.

Selecting the right fitting is crucial in many buildings, particularly housing where the ceiling forms part of the thermal envelope. The required R-value for the ceiling will not be achieved if there is a gap between the insulation and the light fitting, so only light fittings rated A (Abutted) can be installed.

These allow the insulation to be abutted to the light fitting. From NZECP 54:2001 *New Zealand electrical code of practice for the*

*installation of recessed luminaires and auxiliary equipment*, a light fitting for a roof or ceiling that forms part of the thermal envelope must be either CA or RA type.

CA - Closed Abutted, where the insulation can be fitted hard against the perimeter of the light fitting and the fitting has 5% maximum open area.

RA - Restricted Abutted, where the insulation can be fitted hard against the perimeter of the light fitting and the fitting has 5-15% open area.

One of the issues recently noted is that because the ceiling insulation is now generally thicker than before, it is important to ensure the insulation does not cover the top of the fitting - it must butt it, but not cover it. Where the insulation thickness is greater than the height of the fitting, consider installing a proprietary heat can over the light to ensure the insulation does not cover it.

If you are planning to use the schedule method to calculate your ceiling insulation requirements, the rule is for a maximum of 1 downlight/5 square meters. If you are retrofitting insulation, the installers must first ensure that CA or RA type fittings are installed. They may need to be replaced.

If in doubt, please consult your qualified electrician.



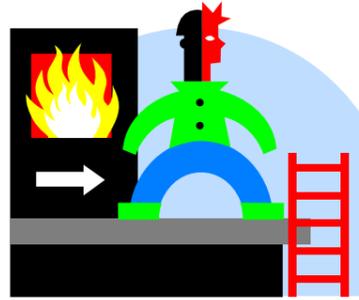
## Passive fire protection systems

In a recent report, and as we are noticing more and more, the passive fire and smoke protection (PFP) systems have been found to be deficient in many cases.

PFP includes all fire and smoke separations and consists of any walls, doors, windows and other features that form part of those separations. When a fire or smoke separation forms part of the means of escape from fire (and there is another fire related specified system in the building), it is a specified system and must be included on the building's compliance

schedule with appropriate inspection and maintenance procedures.

Because PFP is part of a specified system, the building owner is required to provide all the relevant information to Council so that the Compliance Schedule is created correctly to ensure the system is inspected and maintained and is noted on the 12A certificate provide by the IQP (Independent Qualified Person). The owner will then be in a position to supply a correct BWOFF (Building Warrant of Fitness) to Council.



## Commercial building safety

### What is a Compliance Schedule?

Many buildings have operating and safety systems that require regular maintenance; fire alarms are a good example. If a fire alarm is not maintained, it may not work in the event of a fire and lives may be lost. Under the NZ Building Act 2004 you, as the building owner, are responsible for ensuring that these systems are maintained. Your Compliance Schedule lists these systems and how often they require inspection. It also states who is allowed to do these inspections. An owner is allowed to do some inspections. The remainder must be done by an IQP.

### What is a Building Warrant of Fitness (BWOFF)?

Do you know if your building has a BWOFF and if it is current? The annual BWOFF process is the method by which building owners guarantee Council that they have met their legal obligations under the Building Act 2004. As the building owner you are responsible for being aware of any specified system installed in your building and ensuring it is listed on your Compliance Schedule. Further, you are required to ensure any such systems and features in your building are regularly monitored and maintained. This process involves you and your IQP completing the necessary checks during the past year, and recording these inspections in the Inspection

Manual on your premises. You must obtain a form 12A from your IQP for **ALL** features listed on your Compliance Schedule, confirming all checks and maintenance have been completed.

You are advised to ensure that you keep your BWOFF current and record all inspections done. Failure to do so is an offence under the Building Act 2004, carrying a fine of up to \$20,000. For further information please contact the BWOFF Administrator.

## Invested in a spa pool lately?

All swimming pools, whether they are in-ground or above-ground swimming pools or spa pools, are required by law to meet the requirements of the Fencing of Swimming Pools Act 1987.

Do you realise that you are required to obtain a building consent for the installation of your new spa pool, no matter how 'portable' it is. Often, sales people won't tell you that; they tend to say that if it has a 'lockable cover' then it is exempt from complying with the Act. This unfortunately is not true!

Although there has been a new standard written for spa pools that will address this issue, to date that standard has not yet been cited under the Building Act and so you

are still required to comply with the Fencing of Swimming Pools Act 1987.

Please contact the Customer Services desk at Council, or view online at [www.wanganui.govt.nz/Services/BuildingForms/Swimming](http://www.wanganui.govt.nz/Services/BuildingForms/Swimming), for an information brochure listing the compliance requirements for pool fencing.



## Building classifications

A recent clarification by the Department of Building and Housing has seen freestanding garages classified as importance level 1 (low consequence of failure) (as per AS/NZS 1170:2002). To further clarify this, a level 1 building is defined as one with a low risk of loss of human life, and/or small or moderate economic, social or environmental consequences. Examples of this would include structures, fences, and includes single-family dwellings, masts and in-ground

pools etc. A level 2 (ordinary consequences of failure) building is defined as having a medium risk of loss of human life or considerable economic, social or environmental consequences and includes single-family dwellings.

This clarification can have a significant effect on anybody wishing to include a habitable space (such as a sleepout or hobbies room) into a new garage or to convert a barn type building into a house as many engineer designed garages, sheds and barns are designed to the lower importance level.

So what does this mean? If the building has been designed as a habitable space to a non-specific design standard like NZS 3604:1999 or NZS 4229:1999 then the building is deemed to comply with the Building Code and can be classified as importance level 2. If the building is a specific engineered design and is subject to a design producer statement (P/S1) the design engineer will be required to confirm the importance level designed to. In the case of a non-habitable proprietary building design, this may mean that as well as adding the usual requirements of insulation and increased floor height etc, an upgrading of the structural design to comply with the higher importance level (and possibly a higher construction cost) will be required and confirmation of this from the design engineer.

For further information on this topic please contact the building team at the Wanganui District Council.



## Solar hot water drains

As everybody is now aware, December 2007 saw the introduction of NZBC G12/AS2 which is the building code acceptable solutions for the installation of solar hot water heaters. This document has wide range of valuable information and is essential reading for anybody involved in the installation of solar water heaters.

One part of this document often overlooked is section 3.4.2 which requires "water from the installed system must not discharge onto the roof" and "Vent pipes and outlets from pressure relief valves must be plumbed to a suitable drain point".

To achieve this requires some forethought as provision for a relief drain will often need to be provided for at the time the building slab is poured. You will also need to consider the size of this drain because if there are going to be additional relief valves from solar panels as well as hot water cylinder, the relief drain may need to be increased in diameter.

I understand that plans often change and what was originally planned as a gas infinity has now become a solar hot water heater but if the client's needs are discussed before work commences these changes can often be resolved without wasting time and money doing unnecessary work and straining the relationship. In fact an open discussion between the client and the tradesman will often be beneficial to both parties and ensure ongoing business.

If you need more information, please contact the Plumbing and Drainage Officer.

