Doorway width issues

When building are being altered the issue of achieving suitable access within the building sometimes causes issues.

For commercial buildings where section 118 (Accessibility) relates then section 112 (Alterations) or section 115 (Change of Use) of the Building Act 2004 requires accessible routes and accessible facilities to be addressed.

Sometimes existing corridor widths are less than the required 1200mm. Is there an answer to this issue?

Yes, it is contained in Appendix C of NZS 4121.

C5 Doorway in corridor wall (refer to 7.3.4.1) The clear width of doorways is governed by the existing circulation space. i.e. the width of the corridor. The following table shows the increased door width required with narrower corridors such as may be found in existing buildings.

Clear width of doorway

Existing circulation	Doorway clear opening
900mm	1200mm
1000mm	1000mm
1200mm	760mm

Please note that full compliance for accessibility is required for all new work.

Header tanks

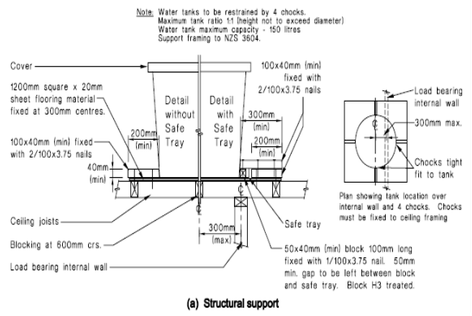
A lot of homes use low pressure hot water cylinders. The supply of water to the hot water cylinder comes from a header tank. A header tank is usually situated in the ceiling space but may also be situated (in very old homes) on the roof.

These header tanks are usually constructed of concrete (in older homes) or plastic. A header tank usually holds between 150 litres to 300 litres of water. This is a lot of weight that could potentially crash through the ceiling. A suggested measure of restraining a header tank is noted below. In addition it is suggested that either timber stays or wire straps are fitted to the top of the tank back down to a structural timber member.

The drawing comes from the NZ Building Code Clause G12/AS1, figure 4.

Note that this is the method for support for header tanks up to 150 litres. Council would recommend if you have a header tank without the above support, that you fit supports as per the diagram, plus additional support from the top of the tank to supporting framing on the four sides.

Also if your header tank is redundant, Council recommend you remove it. This may mean breaking it apart if it is a concrete tank. It would be better if heavy objects such as concrete header tanks are taken away completely.



(a) Structural support

WDC— QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FOR THOSE IN THE BUILDING INDUSTRY

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OFF-CUTS

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FOR THE BUILDING INDUSTRY

May 2011

VOLUME 1 ISSUE 65

Inside this issue:

Editorial

When I wrote my last Editorial the big Christchurch Earthquake hadn't happened. We all now know of the tragic human loss and significant loss of property caused. We immediately sent staff to assist with the mammoth task of assessing damage. Some items become important such as business continuity and accessing basics such as water, and what to do with waste and debris.

There will be significant ongoing work for at least a decade - but where will the skilled trades people come from? Pundits are already suggesting we import specialist trades from overseas (Ireland & Europe as examples), but can we train our own people fast enough?

Apprentices get trained by Industry Training Organisations (ITO's), and they come under Government financial scrutiny at the moment. I've said it before, but there is a great future ahead for building and building related trades. The builders have been legislated to become licensed by next year and the Christchurch rebuilding programme is only hiring licensed builders now. There is still a huge gap in licensed builders in Wanganui, and when the pendulum swings back to more buoyant times (as it always does) then some people might miss out as the potential exodus heads South.

There is never a better time to build than now. Check your builders credentials and get started.

Jeff Jamieson

Facades and Parapets

As part of the Council's Earthquake Prone Building (EPB) policy we indicated that future work would be required on facades and parapets.

This initially became an issue following the Gisborne earthquake, but has recently come to the fore following the Christchurch events where we saw plenty of buildings lose their frontages. To upgrade these features to withstand a higher level of seismicity is a relatively simple matter. But the question remains as to how many do we have in Wanganui and how many buildings are affected.

Shortly Council will be conducting a field assessment of the Central Business District (CBD) and Old Town Conservation Overlay Zone (OTCOZ) to confirm the quantum involved. This information will then be collated and submitted to a Council workshop where a policy with timeframes will be developed to allow public consultation before implementation.

You don't have to wait for Council - you may wish to consult with your engineer and upgrade your façade and parapets which provide a business and social benefit when it comes to business continuity just think how you might cope if you were in the Christchurch Red Zone!

BWOF Audits

We are currently putting more effort into the BWoF (Building Warrant of Fitness) process to improve the safety of our commercial buildings.

Council has written twice to all building owners who have BWoF's and also to Independent Qualified Persons (IQP's) - the professional people that ensure the systems and features inside your building are working properly (eg fire alarms, auto doors, emergency lighting etc).

This extra level of communication is to ensure that we are able to help us help you to be fully compliant.

We have commenced our random audits of commercial buildings - this will incur a fee of $120.00.

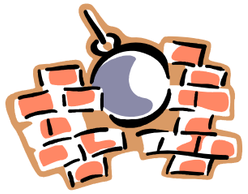
Demolition of brick chimneys

Following the Christchurch Earthquake a significant amount of damage was caused by falling brick/masonry chimneys.

A number of Councils, including us, are promoting the demolition of brick chimneys as exempt work if they are no longer required. There are a range of options to promote this safety move - demolish the chimney down to below the roof line and then re-roof the exposed opening (this option preserves the ability to install a future inbuilt or gas heater).

Other options include full demolition and gain the benefit of extra internal floor area. If it is an external chimney then you are responsible for addressing any weather tightness/ recladding issues.

Remember that bricks are worth money, and you have potentially saved yourself a headache!



New 3604

Our new 'Builders Bible' - NZS 3604:2011 has finally been released.

A big thank you to all of the industry people who attended the recent seminar to upskill on this vital document. We are waiting for this version to be cited (officially registered as a complying document in the Building Code). Until this version is cited, it is able to be used as an Alternative Solution.

On a purely technical basis the older 1999 version is still current, but we encourage you all to use the new version (you can't mix and match the old and new).

THINK PINK

Enclosed timber framing is now **PINK.**

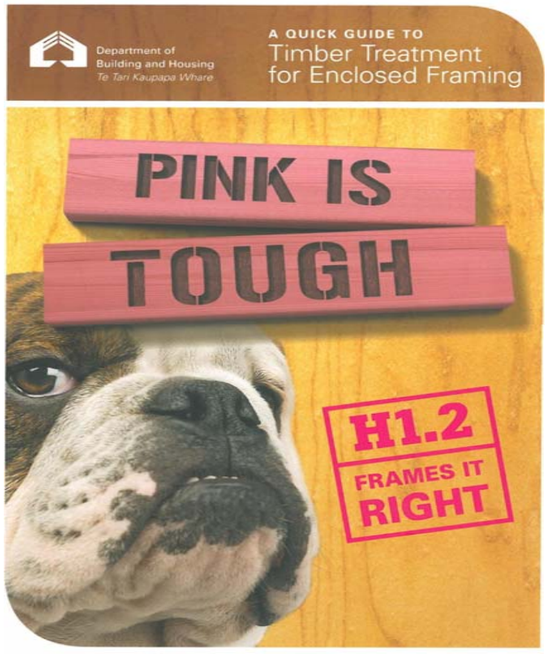
The Acceptable solution B2/AS1 has changed. The timber treatment hazard class H1.2 is now required for radiata pine and Douglas fir timber in buildings where it is protected from the weather (i.e enclosed timber framing).

Research has shown that H1.2 boron treated colour-coded **pink** framing gives good protection from decay. For any owners planning an 'eco' house or 'green' house, then untreated Douglas fir can be used in houses of a defined *low risk* design.

Cantilevered enclosed decks are the exception requiring H3.2 radiata pine, and H3.2, H4 and H5 are still required as previously (and to keep you on your toes H3.1 is required for cavity battens). This new system starts on 1 July 2011 when only the new B2/AS1 can be used as an Acceptable Solution.

Until 30 June 2011 the 'old' and the 'new' B2/AS1 can be used.

The DBH has produced a good guide which is downloadable or pick up a copy at Councils Customer Services counter.



Commercial CfPU's

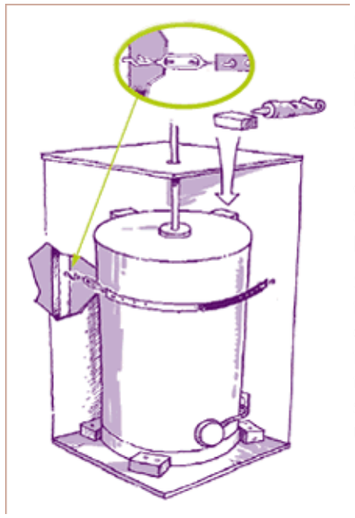
A Certificate for Public Use (CfPU) is the document that owners require if they want to start using their commercial premises before a Code Compliance Certificate (CCC) is issued. A CfPU can only be issued if a Building Consent has been issued for either a new building or work within an existing building.

If any kind of work is being conducted in an existing premises and if any of the building work, even right from the start, affects any access for the public or any systems or features then a CfPU is required for the construction phase (with all of the details of how the public is to be protected required - this also relates to the contractors health and safety plan).

The other common issue is when a new commercial job is nearing completion and the owner is keen to occupy, and start the business but there are a small number of items holding up the CCC. If the building will be safe for the public then the contractor/owner can apply for a CfPU with all attached information showing how the building is to remain safe until the CCC is issued.

The CfPU can apply to all or part of a building and does not relieve the building owner of their obligation to apply for a CCC when all of the building work has been carried out.

Hot water cylinders



Even small shakes can cause hot water cylinders to rock enough to crack pipes, often causing expensive and messy water damage. In larger earthquakes the cylinder can tip over completely, with hot water becoming a hazard. Both can deprive you of your largest source of drinking water after a disaster. Securing a hot water cylinder is surprisingly easy.

The Strap Method The best method of securing the cylinder is to use wooden blocks and a metal strap. The straps can be bought as part of a special kit from plumbing supply or hardware stores or you can buy perforated strapping (approximately 25mm wide x 1mm thick).

Screw or nail timber blocks to the floor or shelving (make sure shelf is fastened). Cut timber blocks to size so they fit snugly between the top of the cylinder and walls and glue them into place. Ensure blocks are against wall framing. Screw two 8mm screw hooks into studs on either side and near the top of the cylinder. Attach a 6mm turnbuckle to one hook and the end of the strap. Cut the strap to the length required, connect it to the other hook and use turnbuckle to make it tight.

The NZ Building Code Clause G12/AS1 figure 14 also has seismic restraints of water cylinders.