

Earthquake Prone Buildings (EPB)

Following on from the extensive publicity, Council has recently written to all of the owners of Category B buildings that haven't supplied an IEP to Council before the December 2011 deadline, as outlined in the Council's EPB policy.

An IEP is an Initial Evaluation Procedure which establishes the 'earthquake-proneness' of commercial buildings in relation to a new building. Category B buildings are categorised as 'housing treasures' (museum, art gallery etc), larger gatherings of people (schools, churches, halls etc) and specialist process industries (with chemicals and other dangers etc). [This is not an exhaustive list].

Council will be writing to all owners of Category C buildings (generally standard commercial properties) next year regarding the requirement to provide an IEP by December 2012.

You can check our EPB policy on the Council website (www.wanganui.govt.nz).

Building consents for Christmas

The date to enable building consents to be guaranteed to be issued before Christmas passed a couple of days ago. However, with the spirit of Christmas still in our hearts, if you rush in promptly with your fully complying documentation, we will endeavour to get your b/c approved to enable you to take advantage of the holiday period.

The Council offices will be closed for the three days between Christmas and New Year, but if you require a building inspection please phone before we go on holiday and make a specific request.



Alerts to commercial building owners - Egress stairs safety check

As a result of the technical investigation conducted by the Department of Building and Housing, the Department has requested that all councils alert building owners of the importance of having their main exit stairs formally assessed. This has come about from the failure of the Forsyth Barr building's stairs in the major aftershock in Christchurch on 22 February 2011.

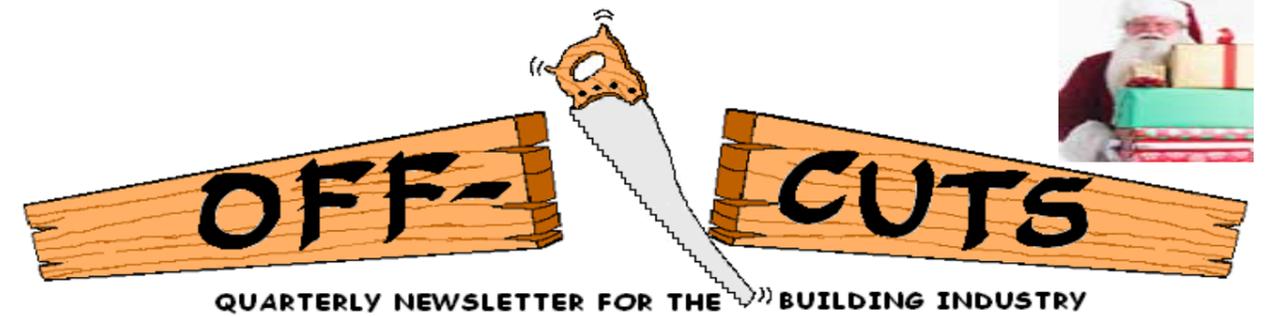
The Department recommends that owners of buildings to which members of the public have access, including office buildings, engage a chartered professional engineer to assess the main exit stairs. This is to ensure they have sufficient allowance for movement. It particularly applies to buildings that have a scissor stair configuration.

The scope of these checks should be in accordance with the Department's Practice Advisory which is available for download at www.dbh.govt.nz/practice-advisory-13.



WDC— QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FOR THOSE IN THE BUILDING INDUSTRY

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Editorial



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As I am writing this editorial, I'm musing over the next raft of changes occurring in our industry.

The Government is trying to instill more confidence in the building industry following the leaky building debacle a number of years back. Part of the master plan falls into place early next year.

The primary focus is that Licensed Building Practitioners (LBPs) will be the only tradesmen who can do certain restricted building work. Coupled with the change is that there is a proposal to allow risk based consenting - where these new up-spec'd

LBPs will be able to "sign off" certain parts of the building consent process. You will note above that I said 'a proposal' - this Amendment 3 initiative has not quite got through the Parliamentary system yet, with one more procedure step to be accomplished before it gets its final ok.

An election intervened, and it may well depend on who gets into power as to when the final step of this next phase of changes finally becomes law.

A search of the Department of Housing register (at the time of writing) showed there are currently 75 LBPs registered in Wanganui. Is this enough to cope with the demand?

I reckon that there will be a great deal of fast footwork between now and next March, as people realise this change is really coming.

Jeff Jamieson

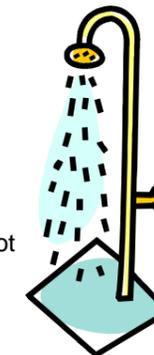
Team Leader Building Services

Wet area showers

An area that is causing some confusion amongst the plumbing and drainage fraternity is with wet area showers, and whether or not they are exempt from consent requirements.

Installing a tiled wet area shower requires a building consent. This is because the construction of the wet area shower includes critical building work, such as waterproof membranes.

This building work is not sanitary plumbing.



Guidance on fire design documentation

Lack of explanation and proper justification of how a proposed fire design complies with the requirements of the Building Code is one of the most common failures of consent applications involving fire safety requirements.

The Department of Building and Housing, Society of Fire Protection Engineers (NZ) (SFPE), IPENZ and others have worked together to prepare the IPENZ practice note 'Guidelines for Documenting Fire Safety Designs'.

The guidance describes the regulatory requirements as they apply specifically to fire design and the recommended content of a fire design sector, which member of the design team would normally be expected to provide the information for the application.

The guidance is available for download from the department's website at www.dbh.govt.nz/building-technical-guidance

Code Watch

Changes you need to know

Department of Building and Housing publication (www.dbh.govt.nz)

Issue 01 - October 2011



There have been several changes to the documents supporting Building Code Clauses B1 Structure and E2 External Moisture. If you are a designer or builder of timber, steel framed or concrete houses and small buildings, these changes affect you.



Changes to the documents supporting B1 Structure

If you use Acceptable Solution B1/AS1 and NZS 3604 to construct houses and small buildings you should use the 2011 version of NZS 3604; that's the version B1/AS1 references now.

But there are important modifications to NZS 3604:2011 in B1/AS1:

You can't use unreinforced concrete slabs-on-ground anywhere. All concrete slabs-on-ground must be reinforced with Grade 500E steel mesh which is tied to perimeter foundation reinforcement. This was introduced for the Canterbury earthquake region in May 2011 and has been extended nationwide. Read guidance on reinforced concrete slabs-on-ground on the DBH website.

In the Canterbury earthquake region the definition of 'good ground' excludes ground with potential for liquefaction or lateral spread. You can buy NZS 3604:2011 from the Standards New Zealand website (www.standards.co.nz).

If you use Verification Method B1/VM1 there are two new referenced documents:

A Standard for restraining equipment in earthquakes – NZS 4219:2009. Visit the Standards NZ website to buy this standard.

A Standard for the design of light-steel framed houses, published by the National Association of Steel-framed Housing (NASH). Visit the NASH website (www.nashnz.co.nz) to buy the standard.



Changes to the documents supporting E2 External Moisture

Acceptable Solution E2/AS1, which deals with the weathertightness of cladding, has been updated to work better with the 2011 version of NZS 3604. The extended wind range of 55m/s allows more buildings to be designed to E2/AS1.

Verification Method E2/VM1, is a way to test how claddings with drainage cavities perform on timber-framed buildings to show that they comply with the Building Code clause E2. E2/VM1 has been updated to work with the revised E2/AS1.

There is a new Acceptable Solution for weathertightness of concrete and concrete masonry construction. This is E2/AS3 which references the Code of Practice for Weathertight Concrete and Concrete Masonry Construction published by the Cement and Concrete Association of New Zealand (CCANZ). Read the document on the CCANZ website (www.ccanz.org.nz).

When do B1 and E2 changes take effect?



They are already in effect.

There is a transition period until the end of January 2012 when you can use either the previous documents or the new ones. From 1 February 2012 onwards you must follow the revised documents to be sure your buildings will comply with the Building Code.

**Already
Licensed**



Licensed Building Practitioner numbers reach 10,000

Media Release – Department of Building and Housing

25 October 2011: A national building competency scheme established to ensure that buildings and homes are designed and built right the first time is this week celebrating licensing 10,000 tradespeople.

The Government's Licensed Building Practitioners (LBP) scheme was launched in 2007 to raise standards across the building and construction sector and consumer confidence in the quality of work carried out. The scheme is administered by the Department of Building and Housing.

"New Zealanders want to know their homes and buildings are properly designed and built by people who are competent to do the job," says Katrina Bach, Department of Building and Housing Chief Executive.

"Knowing that a Licensed Building Practitioner (LBP) is doing their building work gives consumers the confidence it will be done by someone who is properly qualified and can be held accountable for the quality of their work. The LBP scheme takes the guess work out of knowing who is – or isn't – qualified to do the job."

Designers, carpenters, brick and block layers, foundation specialists, site managers, external plasterers and roofers each have a set of competencies to meet before they can be licensed.

For those working in the residential building sector, being licensed will be even more important from 1 March 2012 when only LBPs will be allowed to carry out or supervise certain building work.

Any building work which is structural and/or affects weathertightness of a home will need to be carried out or supervised by a LBP. If not, the building may not be given a code compliance certificate by the building consent authority.

"A strong and skilled building and construction sector is vital to New Zealand's economy and prosperity. The LBP scheme underpins an efficient and accountable sector focused on quality and high standards of workmanship," say Ms Bach.

Further information about the licensing scheme, including the online register of LBPs and restricted building work, is available on the Department's website at dbh.govt.nz

AUTHORISATION CARDS

Hiring a plumber, gasfitter or drainlayer?



First check to see if they are authorised to undertake the work by asking to see their card.

All authorised tradespeople must carry their authorisation card issued by the Plumbers, Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board.

The card also details what a person's supervision requirements are, if any (on the reverse).

You can also check to see if a person is authorised on the Board's online register at www.pgdb.co.nz or phone the Board on 0800 743 262.

