

Building Consents—Christmas deadlines

If you're planning a building project through the Christmas holidays and need a Building Consent, please ensure that you have your complete documentation into Council ASAP.

The official 20-days-to-process deadline has passed, but we **MAY** be able to squeeze it through if you have fully compliant documentation.

Council will be closed between Christmas and New Year.

If you require specific inspections through the Christmas break, please arrange for these well in advance with your inspector.



Estimated building costs

The Building and Housing Group has produced the latest figures providing the cost of building data. Costing information for a series of building types has been collated by a firm of construction cost consultants. A set of authentic construction documents has been used to establish a unit cost that is as accurate as possible. The figures include all necessary internal and external finishes to achieve compliance with the Building Code, all services and provision of standard appliances, and site works. The full table (not included) has commercial and retirement home figures. The costs for houses are provided for one-off speculative houses. These costs do not reflect the economies that may be gained by builders of group houses, or reflect the additional costs normally associated with architecturally designed houses.

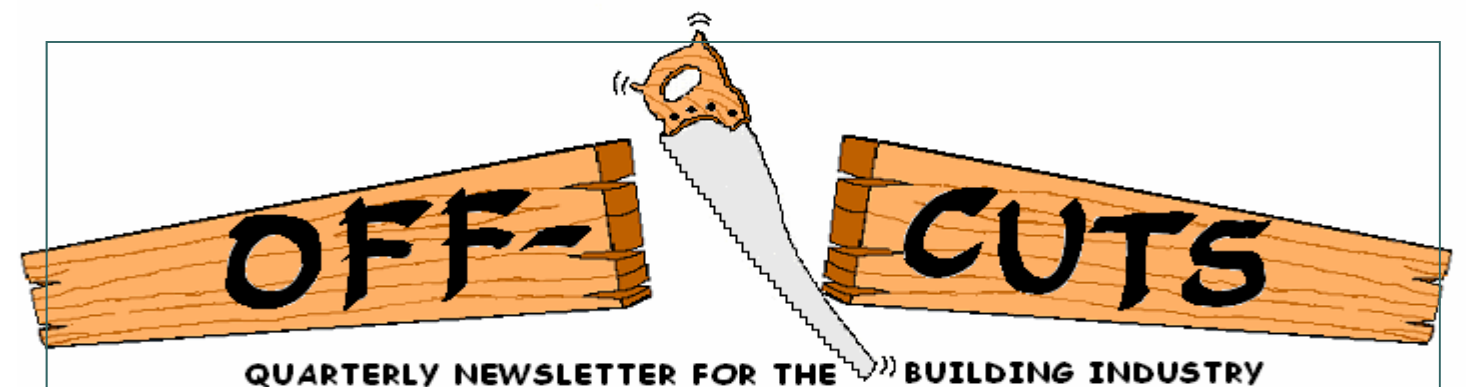
The figures are provided so that territorial authorities can relate them to the estimated costs supplied with building consent applications. For the full table, go to dbh.govt.nz/bofficials-estimated-building-costs

Region	Sml House 145sq.m \$	Large house 202 sq.m \$
1	1,792	1,314
2	1,774	1,298
3	1,795	1,634
4	1,771	1,612
5	1,783	1,622
6	1,768	1,609



WDC— QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FOR THOSE IN THE BUILDING INDUSTRY

Wanganui District Council
PO Box 637
Wanganui
Phone: 349 0001
Fax: 349 0536
E-mail: gina.wroe@wanganui.govt.nz
Website: www.wanganui.govt.nz



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Editorial



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The government has recently produced policy which looks at affordable housing, low levels of industry productivity and perceived lack of available sites for building.

The Productivity Commission's report on housing has the construction sector at lower levels than the late 1970s! The construction industry's Productivity Partnership estimates that 47% of major defects are caused by bad design, 25% by poor supervision & 22% by poor workmanship. In New Zealand, we build the third largest homes in the OECD after Australia and the US. Typically, we build bespoke or purpose-designed homes, and this is part of the high cost involved and we often don't use mass-production techniques - although I do believe group housing is now playing a bigger part in our industry. And if we

Fuel poverty

Through the last winter, there was an increasing use of the term 'fuel poverty'. Fuel poverty is defined as a household that needs to spend more than 10% of its income to keep warm. Previous estimates put the problem of a quarter of New Zealand households living in fuel poverty.

Last year, more than 30,000 households had their electricity cut off just as winter power bills arrived.

The WHO (World Health Organisation) recommended an indoor temperature of 18 deg. People living in low-temperature dwellings contribute to high demands on our already overworked health system.

But what to do? There is the old adage that cutting firewood warms you twice, so now is a good time to get the wood pile stacked, to dry in time for winter.

Now is also a good time to take advantage of the out-of-season sales and get your high efficiency solid fuel heater installed. There is still access to government funding for insulation and heating subsidies.

were looking for ways to improve our housing stock, we should renovate and look after our existing properties. The Building Research Association of New Zealand (BRANZ), in a recent house condition survey, noted that the average cost of essential repairs to houses is \$8000, and \$9700 for rentals. Two-thirds of New Zealand homes were built before 1978 when it became mandatory to install insulation. There are massive opportunities in this industry to prosper, and the introduction of Licensed Building Practitioners (LBPs) is a small initial step to get the industry better educated (as witnessed by vastly improved attendances at courses to get the required training 'points'). Apprentices are also a key component of this housing improvement jigsaw.

Land issues are complex, availability often more so; don't forget to contribute to the District Plan and have your say about what planners propose for our future.

Have a pleasant and restful Christmas.

Jeff Jamieson

Team Leader Building Services



Wanganui workplace safety

There has recently been a huge surge in effort by Department of Labour inspectors to improve on-site workplace safety.

Recently a Wanganui building company was served a prohibition notice requiring the site to be shut down and stay shut until the necessary safety standards were approved by the safety inspector.



The Ministry of Building, Innovation and Employment (MoBIE) is currently targeting poor safety work practices. Working from ladders, no roof edge protection, incorrect scaffolding are just some of the practices under the microscope.

A recent information release from MoBIE found that some builders were considering using ceiling battens for protection - it is obvious that this lightweight element is not designed for a falling person.

Be warned, the DoL inspectors are about to ensure that you, and all of your staff, are able to enjoy this Christmas and many more to come. Jump onto their website to get access to the latest information on workplace safety, and F1—F5 of the Building Code - site fencing is big on the target list for 2013.

Building on new subdivisions

Before you can build on your newly acquired piece of land, you need to ensure that you have 'legal title' (the certificate of title) to it.

Depending on the type of subdivision, it may take some time for the legal title to be issued.

Under the subdivision process which is governed by the Resource Management Act (the RMA), the developer would generally submit a survey plan setting out the location of the various allotments ("lots" or commonly referred to as my 'section').

As part of the consenting process under the RMA, Council may require certain conditions to be completed before signing off the completion certificate e.g. drains put in, roads formed etc.

There are various stages in this process under sections 223 or 224 of the RMA and without the necessary completion certificates, legal title cannot be issued. As a matter of good practice when purchasing a new allotment, or any land for that matter, always ensure that it has a clear title. Such checks are appropriately conducted by your solicitor.



EQPB – Earthquake-prone buildings

We are rapidly approaching the deadline to provide IEPs (Initial Evaluation Procedure) for earthquake-prone buildings (EQPB) in Wanganui. Our policy requires that owners of all Category C buildings (normal commercial buildings) and multi unit housing (two or more storeys containing three or more household units) have the information to Council by December 2012. It is acknowledged that the local engineers are currently overloaded with this work so if you are unable to meet the deadline, then please notify Council of the proposed completion date early next year.

We are still waiting, with bated breath, for the Royal Commission's findings to be announced following the Christchurch disaster.

You can check out our EQPB policy on the Council website at www.wanganui.govt.nz.



Our new building era

Earlier this year, along with the new Licensed Building Practitioner scheme roll out, we also have had a number of detail changes to otherwise well-understood building methods. Although these have been checked by Council at consent processing time, we have noticed recently that now that these projects are under way, builders are forgetting these new changes, and even when well documented on their plans, are constructing in the way they have always been used to, without further thought.

To name just a few that have cropped up and come into mind: control joints in long concrete slabs, incorrect lapping of the new 500e mesh, sill flashings for direct fix cladding, all of which are quite onerous to redo correctly. Whilst on the subject of new, our new Licensed Building Practitioners, be it building or related trades, need to remember that they are required to submit their memorandum of restricted building work to the owner or whoever is collecting this information before the Code Compliance Certificate can be issued. Best approach perhaps is taking nothing for granted and please read carefully your documentation that we have endeavoured to get right for you. Also keep in mind that exempt work must still comply with the new code; and for the LBPs, you are new professionals who need to lead by example.

Swimming pools

The impending longer days and warmer weather bring 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 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 Act. This includes pools bought from chain stores and warehouses.**

Do pools require a Building Consent? All pool fencing requires a Building Consent, including that around spa pools, and pools require consent for the construction of the pool itself. Contact us 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 area immediately around the pool. This area can only include things that are associated with the pool e.g. changing sheds. It must not include things that do not relate to the pool e.g. 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 requirement of the Act.

We have a good information pamphlet available at the counter or online at www.wanganui.govt.nz/services/building

