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IN OTHER NEWS

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor

I have been reading the comments in the Federation newsletter regarding Eddie Makins retirement from the industry. Eddie is a real top bloke who often referred to himself as the "Grumpy Old Pom". I met Eddie way back in the early days as a gas inspector; I took an instant liking to Eddie and we have kept in touch ever since.

Back then we used to have gas inspection seminars where all the inspectors from around the North Island would gather and sort out any problems we may have experienced within the Industry in regard to installations or appliance problems. Eddie's input was always well

Stand up and be counted



This letter to the Editor appeared in the New Zealand Herald on 12th April 2014 and was sent to the Fellow Practitioner as well.

*In reference to **Herald article** that NZ is first equal in the world for water & sanitation.*

I have been in the plumbing industry for approx 40 years and are proud of this ranking which has not happened over night.

Most people thank the new technologies in medicine and science for advancing the health of our nation and they often overlook the fact that potable drinking water and sanitation to the entire population is just as important.

That's why the plumbing & drainlaying industry has been regulated for over 100 years to train and produce first class practitioners to service the industry.

It saddens me that in recent years Government bureaucracy driving through ill conceived legislation has almost brought the industry to its knees.

We have a Minister of Housing and Construction and a Plumbing Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board that seems hell bent on dismantling all what we as an industry have achieved over 100 years.

The Minister has referred to all that oppose the status quo as just a few malcontents.

It's a pity politicians don't have to renew their practicing licence every year based on competency.

Your sincerely

Grant Anderson

appreciated.

When Eddie moved into tutoring at the local polytechnic I was in the area doing my rounds at that time for what is now ESS, and was taken through the gas training area by Eddie, which was a real pleasure to see. People of Eddie's calibre in the Industry are not easy to replace, his knowledge, experience, and dedication has served the Industry well.

Enjoy your retirement Eddie, and if you are ever down this way you know where to find me.

Mac McIvor

From the internet



Carnivorous piranhas found blocking sewers in Shropshire

Severn Trent said they were 'amazed' the piranhas managed to fit down a toilet

Man, they should have a look at things here in New Zealand where the industry is surrounded by piranhas and there is no way they would fit down a loo.

Ed:

Well done to Grant who has summed up the situation in an excellent way. For those that didn't know, the Washington-based think-tank Social Progress Imperative has ranked New Zealand top out of 130 nations on an index of social progress.

Social progress is defined as *"the capacity of a society to meet the basic human needs of its citizens, establish the building blocks that allow citizens to improve their lives, and create the conditions for individuals and communities to meet their full potential"*.

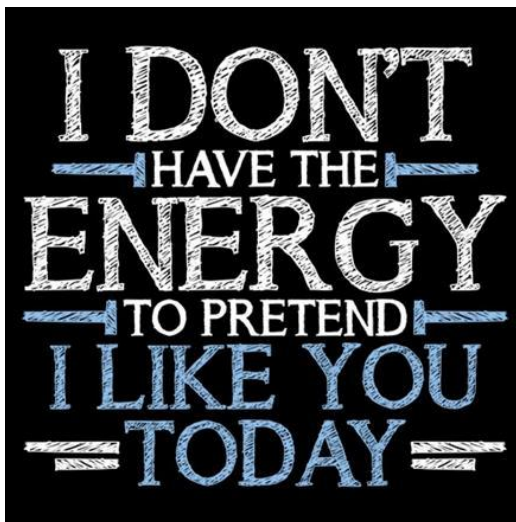
New Zealand and 10 other countries scored the maximum of 100 points for water and sanitation, which includes access to piped water, access to sanitation facilities, and compares rural versus urban access to improved water supply.

We say **WELL DONE** to all the tradespeople out there that contributed to this result. We are thanking you because the Government and Board won't. They will claim it's their policies and regulation that achieved the result whereas we all know it's the professionalism of the tradespeople and the conscientious effort we all make every day of the year!!

When did you last read about the good done by the industry, for example no gas explosions for 12 months, or no towns wiped out due to cross connections and such like - all we ever get is prosecutions, reminders to buy CPD points and reminders to licence.

You have to laugh at this *"Strong personal rights and freedoms helped to propel New Zealand into the top rank of the Social Progress Index,"* but obviously they didn't ask plumbers, gasfitters and drainlayers about our rights as tradespeople and the money unlawfully taken from us along with our rights of appeal.

Dear Editor



This is how I feel about the Board today especially if the figures you have provided for licensing this year are true.

If they are true the Board are **FAILING** the public and us miserably. How can they continue to take money from us to protect the consumer when their actions

and attitudes are exasperating the problem?

Some events just make you laugh



The phone call:

Hello, is that the Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board?'

Yes it is. How can we help you?'

'I'm calling to report my neighbour, Kevin. He's hiding evidence of doing gasfitting inside his firewood!'

'Thank you very much for the call.'

Early next morning, Board investigators descend on Kevin's house in great numbers.

They search the house and then go out to the shed where the firewood is kept.

Using axes, they bust open every piece of firewood but they find no evidence of Kevin doing any gasfitting.

They swear at Kevin and leave.

Ed:

Yes the figures are true based on the public register figures. We get told by government that the public and the industry benefit for our industry being regulated and we believe you are right that the Board is failing and have been for a long time.

It seems they want to force compliance rather than have compliance being voluntary, why else would you employ five lawyers, engage a fistful of investigators and contract out legal work to external law firms.

It may interest you that we are now three weeks into the new licensing year and we are down on last year's total licensing by 41.96%. Now that's no laughing matter.

Let's see what the spin doctors at the PGDB come up with to explain this one away.

When did it become illegal to make a mistake?



When it comes to tradespeople it seems mistakes become offences, but when you are a bureaucrat offences become mistakes, well that seems to be the way it is when it comes to the Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board.

People sit in judgment of our work as tradespeople and call us incompetent because of a mistake. Simple mistakes get blown out of proportion by people who get paid to catch offenders. People who try to justify their existence.

We say don't sit in judgement of us until you have your own functions squared away and legal. If you claim to be a consumer protection organisation then you need to lead by example.

Most tradespeople strive to be as good as they can be and so does the Federation. If you think something isn't right in your dealings with the Board or other Government agency then tell us and we may be able to help - it's a Federation fact check.

Federation Fact Check

We strive for accuracy, fairness and equality. If you see something that doesn't look right, contact us wal.gordon@xtra.co.nz

The phone rings at
Kevin's house.

'Hey, Kevin its Gareth.
Did the Board come?'

'Yeah!'

'Did they chop up your
firewood?'

'Yeah.'

'Happy Birthday bro!'

**Have a good Easter
everyone**

We want to thank all those who do speak up – the Federation numbers are now over 1100 – not just 3 people as is often claimed by our detractors. You see they simply don't want to believe that an organisation like ours can have grown so large, so fast – and that there is a support base of tradespeople and trade supporters who back what we stand for.

The “numbers” are important to Government Departments and others who seem hell bend on wanting to discredit who we are and what we stand for. Yet, amongst all of this – we have yet to be proven wrong.

You see 1100 people feeding ideas and information is quite a large network – and we thank each and every one of you that contribute in some way to the Federation Think Tank.

Keep up the good work!

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