


# info brief

OCTOBER NEWSLETTER

 Plumbers,  
Gasfitters and  
Drainlayers Board

## A word from the Chair

### THE THREE YEARLY REVIEW OF LICENSING FEES AND OTHER CHARGES



I would like to congratulate the Hon Dr Nick Smith on his appointment as Minister for Building and Housing. Joining building and housing together into a single ministerial portfolio would seem to make a lot of sense. The Board looks forward to working with Dr Smith over the next three years.

The Board will soon start the three yearly review of licensing fees and other charges. The review

will be completed about this time next year with any changes to be in place in time for the licensing year that commences 1 April 2016. The last review took effect on 1 April 2013.

It is important that tradespeople take the opportunity to be involved in the review. To make sure that there is ample opportunity to do this, the Board has planned two rounds of consultation. The first of these is about options and that will occur early next year. As part of this tradespeople will be asked to consider various different fee structure options that are possible.

An issue that will be considered as part of this is whether or not photo licence cards should be introduced. There is obviously a cost to photo licences which is why it will be looked at as part of the fees review.

Once the Board has had feedback from tradespeople about the options, a specific proposal will be presented for formal consultation in about the middle of next year. A series of consultation meetings will be held around the country at that time, particularly in the main population centres.

We are also about to commence the review of the strategic plan. Key industry stakeholder groups presented their views to the Board at a meeting this week. The new plan will take effect on 1 April 2015.

Peter Jackson  
Board Chair



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5 | Who reports illegal operators?

Get Realme verified and be in to win a Loaded for Travel Kit worth up to \$1500.

11 | Latest industry updates and online tools.

**“Hamilton City and Waipa District Councils helped identify the hot spots”**

*North Island enforcement action is underway.*

## On the radar

### LICENCE CHECKS IN THE WAIKATO REGION

Enforcement action by way of licence checks in the upper North Island is now well underway. The fourth busiest region in New Zealand for the number of building consents being issued for new dwellings—puts Waikato on the Board’s radar. It is well-placed to cash in on the current multi-billion-dollar construction boom, and this influx of new dwellings is expected to boost employment in the area.

This type of growth can have an adverse effect in attracting those attempting to work without a licence. The Board’s planned enforcement action in this region will help eliminate the potential of non-compliant tradespeople operating in the region.

It’s a large area to cover, and the help of local Councils who have assisted in identifying hot spots, contributes to making this task achievable. The Board encourages Council building consent officers to carry out routine licence checks of the plumbers, gasfitters and drainlayers they meet during their duties.

The recent enforcement action in the Waikato was a very positive first visit and was welcomed by practitioners and site managers. During this initial visit a total of seven people were found working without a current authorisation from the Board.

Comments and observations from sites visited, showed many people seemed overwhelmed with the amount of work they currently had, or what was expected in the future. Several compliant practitioners were worried the current circumstances will attract unauthorised persons to work in the region.

The Board’s response to these concerns is to continue with further licence checking in this region and across New Zealand. If there are people working without a current licence the risk of getting caught is extremely high.

## In this article

Licence checks for the fourth busiest region in New Zealand for the number of building consents being issued for new dwellings.

Seven cases found where people were working without a licence.

The Board responds to practitioner concerns for future compliance.

If you are working without a current licence the risk of getting caught is high.

THE SECOND IN A SERIES OF INTERVIEWS WITH BOARD MEMBERS

# An inside look at the Board

Craig O'Connell, Chairman of the Board's Audit & Risk Committee speaks about his commitment, strengths, industry view and where he sees the biggest challenges.



Craig is the owner and Director of the management consulting firm, Recruitment and Performance (RAP) Consulting Limited. He has also previously served as the acting Chief Executive of the Plumbers, Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board in 2010.

Craig holds a Bachelor of Arts in psychology and a Bachelor of Commerce and Administration in economics. Craig was appointed in July 2011 and is from Wellington.

Craig's commitment to the Board naturally stems from his strong interest in working in the regulatory space.

He believes, that to be an effective regulator you must be able to strike a balance between protecting the public and not imposing excessively on those being regulated.

Knowing this is a difficult balance to reach, Craig has a good understanding of the careful consideration that is required in any decision which impacts on a tradesperson.

“As a lay member of the Board I bring knowledge of many different industries including other organisations in the regulatory space.”

A good example of Craig's strength and experience in this area, was his involvement in the team which set up the Real Estate Agents Authority.

Where Craig would most like to have an impact during his tenure on the Board is helping to change the cost imposition on tradespeople.

“I support the ongoing efforts to reduce costs and believe one likely avenue for efficiency gains is to explore how we can work more closely with others in our field.”

In Craig's view, one challenge that faces the industry is continuing to educate the public about the benefits of using a registered/licensed tradesperson.

He believes keeping the public informed about the risks of using someone who is not registered is important.

“In my experience the understanding of the risks is not as widespread as it could be—there are considerable risks to health and safety, property, and potentially to insurance.

This is an area of concern that the Board continues to push through it's communications strategy to achieve a broader awareness.”

Changing opportunities in training is also something Craig believes is something that is important for the Board to monitor.

“The Board has little ability to influence in terms of training models, but clearly has a strong interest in training and competency development of the industry.”



Another good idea from Waitakere - attach a flyer to your invoices

# 67%

## SQUEEZING OUT ILLEGAL OPERATORS

Of those who responded to last month's opinion poll question 67% indicated confidence in showing the card, rather than waiting to be asked for the card, as another good strategy to help squeeze out illegal operators.

## There are many ways to do it

### NOT EVERYONE DURING THE SIGN-OFF PROCESS KNOWS

In large companies it is not unusual to go through more than one or two people who are responsible for managing and signing off payment for plumbing, gasfitting and drainlaying contracts.

Not everyone during the project management process knows that only registered and licenced tradespeople can legally carry out this work. A new idea that came through to the Board from Waitakere this month, was attaching a flyer

to invoices to help educate and promote the ask-for-the-card message, and licenced tradespeople.

Flyers are great for small scale marketing to catch the attention of prospective customers, and to get a message delivered convincingly to them.

If you would like some ask-for-the-card flyers the Board has plenty. Email [comms@pgdb.co.nz](mailto:comms@pgdb.co.nz) and organise to get some of these sent out to you.



## Hiring a Plumber, Gasfitter or Drainlayer?

Before you do...

Ask to see their card to check they have our authorisation.

Without it, it's illegal for anyone to do this work in NZ.



### ABOUT US

Our drainlayers are certified and registered with the NZ Plumbers, Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board.

In New Zealand you must be a Certified Drainlayer to conduct drainage work. There are many out there who are not Certified Drainlayers and they will try to convince you that they know what they are doing - they don't! Becoming a Certified Drainlayer takes a minimum of four years of training. Cutting corners and quality is not the way to go.

After NZ Drainage has completed your drainage work, you shouldn't expect to see us again about the same issue. Once we fix it, it stays fixed.



You can also check if someone's authorised  
[www.pgdb.co.nz](http://www.pgdb.co.nz) 0800 743 262

Email [comms@pgdb.co.nz](mailto:comms@pgdb.co.nz) for:

stickers • posters • website imagery • flyers • signage artwork



**0800 74 32 62**

**Report an illegal operator**

## In this article

**“Industry practitioner, stakeholder and building inspector reports uncover more illegal operators”**

# It hasn't been easy ... and it's not getting any easier

## SQUEEZING OUT ILLEGAL OPERATORS

For those working illegally within the industry who cautiously navigate the minefield to avoid being identified—things have become a lot tougher.

It is not easy to work without a current licence, and it isn't getting any easier. The risk of getting caught continues to get higher.

The Board and consumers are not the only ones that have been increasing the pressure in their direction and elevating the odds of getting caught.

✓ It can be frustrating for competent, ethical and responsible tradespeople who are working alongside illegal operators in their communities.

The concern for the health and safety of the public is very real in their eyes—they are the ones who are called on to correct the defective work of unlicensed trades. Reputation and competence within the trades is very important.

There are now more practitioners who report illegal operators and do make the effort to ensure the Board has all the evidence required, to initiate the prosecution process.

Who else reports illegal operators to the Board?

✓ Many Council building inspectors also recognise that it is common sense for licence checking to be part of their daily role. The Board and Councils have complementary roles in ensuring the plumbing and drainage components of buildings are provided in a way that protects the health and safety of the public.

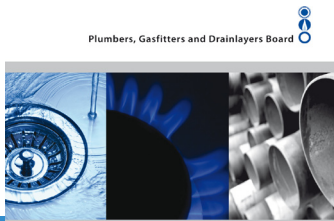
When they do identify anyone working illegally, they notify the Board.

✓ There are also many Government, stakeholder organisations and other regulators within the construction industry that have an interest in ensuring public health and safety. They also notify the Board if they hear of someone working without a licence.

This month eight people were prosecuted in District Courts for working without a licence. Five cases were reported by either a practitioner, stakeholder or local Council and three cases were reported by consumers.

**SEE PAGES 8, 9 AND 10 FOR PROSECUTION DETAILS.**

# Annual Report



Plumbers, Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board

**“The Board’s Annual Report is available for viewing”**

Annual Report  
**2014**

[www.pgdb.co.nz/publications/corporate](http://www.pgdb.co.nz/publications/corporate)

## In the small print

The Board’s 2014 Annual Report shows that allocated overheads are a lot higher than in 2013.

However, the impression that administrative costs have significantly increased from one year to the next is not the reality.

Why is that?

This has arisen as the result of a change in accounting methods rather than an increase in administrative costs. In the year ending 31 March 2013, some staff salaries were treated as direct expenditure in the accounts, but in 2014 all salaries were included within allocated overheads.

A lot of work that used to be carried out by external lawyers (direct expenditure) is now carried out by staff lawyers (allocated overheads) at a significant cost saving.



## Who we are & what we do

**THERE IS STILL SOME COMMON MISCONCEPTION AS TO HOW THE BOARD’S ROLE FITS WITHIN THE INDUSTRY**

**What is the Board’s intended role?**

The Board’s role comes from the Plumbers, Gasfitters and Drainlayers Act 2006.

The role is to protect the health and safety of members of the public by ensuring people working in the trades are competent.

The Board does this by regulating people who are working in the trades to require things such as examinations and CPD.

Unlike a membership organisation such as Master Plumbers, the Board’s role is not to advocate for the commercial interests of tradespeople. The Board is however required to regulate in a way that is fair.

## Making life easier

**MAKING BUSINESS COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS EASY TO FIND, UNDERSTAND AND MANAGE**



Manage key business requirements easily



Whether you’re starting a business or have been around a while, this new tool is designed to give you confidence when it comes to compliance with government requirements.

How? Because it brings requirements from across government into one place.

It’s the first-stop-shop for small business owners and operations looking for advice, information and tools to help better understand and manage business compliance.

Do make a point of checking out Compliance Matters. It has everything from employing staff to exporting overseas, tax requirements to health and safety, and everything else you might need to know about your business obligations.

**“ Make life easier by reducing the time and effort it takes to deal with government ”**

The tool can be found at:  
[www.business.govt.nz/compliance matters](http://www.business.govt.nz/compliance-matters)

# 58%

ESTIMATE

## CPD update

The new licensing year is five months away and already over half of practitioners are well prepared and up-to-date on their CPD points.

Of the total potential tradespeople renewing licences for the 2015 licensing year, in terms of CPD points, 58% have already achieved the required points to renew the licences they currently hold. This is a 2% increase on the same time last year.

Don't get caught short. Log in to your PGDB profile at [www.pgdb.co.nz](http://www.pgdb.co.nz) to find your CPD points summary under "my continuing professional development".

If you are having trouble logging in, or would prefer to speak to someone at the Board, give the licensing team a call on 0800 743 262.

### Why is the 58% only an estimate?

The current statistics do not consider self-directed points which may have also been accumulated.

### What is self directed learning?

Self-directed learning can include reading and researching published material, attending seminars or industry conferences or other non-accredited programmes, and on-the-job training.

One hour of self-directed learning is worth one CPD point and your self-directed points can relate to any trade for which you hold a licence.

Self-directed points must relate to one or more of the Board-prescribed competencies. If you are unsure whether your self-directed learning applies, give the licensing team a call.

The maximum self-directed learning points that can be claimed per licence are, three points for one licence, five points for two licences and six points for three licences.

## The results

### WHICH GOVERNMENT AGENCY IS CORRECT?

The results are in from the multi-choice baffler which featured in the September Info Brief.

In the recent licensed gasfitter examination of those sitting the examination, the majority didn't answer the following question correctly. Below are the results from the Info Brief readers who submitted answers last month.

Q: Which Government agency is responsible for managing the database that contains the compliance declarations for gas appliances?

### BAFFLER RESULTS

16% Plumbers, Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board

**51% WorkSafe New Zealand (correct answer)**

16% Environmental Protection Agency

11% Gas Association of New Zealand

5% Housing New Zealand

### BRUSH-UP ON WHO DOES WHAT



- Worksafe New Zealand  
[www.business.govt.nz/worksafe](http://www.business.govt.nz/worksafe)
- Environmental Protection Agency  
[www.epa.govt.nz](http://www.epa.govt.nz)
- Gas Association of New Zealand  
[www.ganz.org.nz](http://www.ganz.org.nz)
- Housing New Zealand  
[www.hnzc.co.nz](http://www.hnzc.co.nz)

# 7%

## Licence update

The number of authorisations issued this year, after seven months has passed the level it was at after the full 12 months of last year. There are five months to go.

Numbers are 7% up on the same time last year and if that trend continues, total authorisations for the year will stand at about 15200 at the year end.

# No licence leads to prosecution



## Gasfitting prosecution

### CONSUMER REPORT LEADS TO \$3000 FINE FOR LAPSED LICENCE

**A**uckland gasfitter Dharmesh Patel was convicted and fined \$3000 at the Waitakere District Court, following illegal gasfitting work he carried out in Henderson.

Mr Patel pleaded guilty to knowingly carrying out gasfitting work without a current practising licence.

He is a registered gasfitter, however had failed to carry out the CPD required to hold a current practising licence at the time he carried out the work.

Unauthorised gasfitting work, even if no defects are found, can still raise an issue for the consumer in terms of insurance or building consents. This can lead to complaints being made to the Board.



## Plumbing prosecution

### CONSUMER REPORT GETS REPEAT OFFENDER IN AUCKLAND A \$2500 FINE FOR ILLEGAL ADVERTISING

**B**ruce Hume has been convicted for a third time and fined \$2500 for illegally advertising his services as a plumber.

Mr Hume pleaded guilty to advertising his services as a plumber in the North Shore Times when he was not authorised.

He has also been previously convicted for two similar offences in July of last year that resulted in a total fine of \$2000. Less than three months later Mr Hume continued to advertise his services.

Mr Hume was convicted this second time for falsely representing his trade status when he advertised his services again as a plumber in the same paper. He has never been registered or licensed.

Some consumers are becoming more aware that advertising may suggest a tradesperson is legitimate, when in fact they are not. They do check the public register on the Board's website and notifying the Board if they believe any advertising is not legitimate.



## Plumbing prosecution

### COROMANDEL BOAT BUILDER FINED \$1800 FOLLOWING BUILDING INSPECTION

**A** Coromandel boat builder was fined \$1800 in the Thames District Court, following a building inspection by the local Council.

Brett Wright was convicted and fined for doing unauthorised sanitary plumbing.

Mr Wright did work on extending water supply pipework to a bath, shower, toilet and vanity unit. He also installed a shower mixer, and extended waste water pipework from the bathroom vanity to the drainage pipework.

When a Building Control Officer for the Hauraki District Council inspected the property for the building consent, he noticed Mr Wright was not authorised to carry out the plumbing work, and notified the Board.



## FRAUDULENT CLAIM AND ILLEGAL DRAINLAYING WORK IN AUCKLAND LEADS TO \$3500 FINE

**A**aron L'Estrange Corbet has been convicted and fined \$2000 for fraudulently claiming to be a registered or licensed drainlayer.

He was also convicted and fined \$1500 for carrying out drainlaying work without an authorisation.

Mr L'Estrange Corbet signed a producer statement using the details of a certifying registered drainlayer and submitted it to the Auckland City Council.

When the Council noticed the certifier was not authorised they contacted the Board.

He also carried out drainlaying work at a home in Mairangi Bay without authorisation. He installed a foul water drain including extending a sewer drain 15 metres across the property.

Mr L'Estrange Corbet has never been registered, or licensed.

## PRACTITIONER REPORT LEADS TO \$1200 FINE FOR WAITAKERE MAN

**T**erry King of Henderson was also convicted and charged \$1200 in the Waitakere District Court this month. Mr King carried out sanitary plumbing work at a home in Henderson without authorisation from the Board. A complaint was made to the Board after the home owner experienced problems with the shower installed by Mr King and called on the services of an authorised plumber.

Mr King did sanitary plumbing work including, replacing a bathroom vanity, installing a shower, and extending pipework from the vanity and the shower to the drain.

A certifying plumber reported Mr King to the Board when he was called in to repair the showers water pressure.



## PRACTITIONER REPORT LEADS TO \$4500 FINE FOR WELLINGTON PLUMBER

**M**ichael Guy, has been fined \$4500 at the Porirua District Court, following investigation in to work carried out in Westport.

Mr Guy was convicted on a total of three charges.

One charge was for carrying out sanitary plumbing in a manner dangerous to life, and two charges were for carrying out sanitary plumbing without authorisation.

Mr Guy pleaded guilty to all three charges of carrying out sanitary plumbing outside the limitations of his exemption.

He failed to ensure that his work was adequately supervised. His authorisation required him to have

a supervisor to test and check the work was done competently and in compliance with the building code.

In each home, he did work on the hot water cylinders including installing a tempering valve onto the open vent line of a hot water cylinder connected to a wetback. The work did not comply with regulatory requirements and was not checked by his supervisor.

Non-compliant work of this nature carries a high risk of implosion or explosion and serious injury. In one case the hot water cylinder did implode as a result of the tempering valve installed. In this incident Mr Guy reimbursed the property owner for the damaged hot water cylinder.

# Fault notice leads to prosecution of Auckland man

## PRACTITIONER NOTIFIES WORKSAFE NEW ZEALAND

When Hui (Kevin) Ye has been convicted and fined \$5600 in the Waitakere District Court for illegally carrying out gasfitting work at a home in Mt Wellington.

The gasfitting work involved connecting a gas cooker to the gas supply, and connection of a gas water heater to the gas supply.

The gasfitting work carried out by Mr Ye was defective.

A restraint or a stabilising bracket was not fitted to the gas cooker to prevent the gas cooker from accidentally falling over or stressing the pipework. There was also no pressure regulator fitted to the cooker to eliminate the risk of overheating and fire.

The gas cooker was not commissioned to ensure safe start-up and operation, which could have resulted in significant injury to the occupants of the home or damage to the property.

Worksafe New Zealand notified the Board when a certifying gasfitter who had been to the property sent them a fault notice about the gas cooker.



**\$5600 fine for illegal gasfitting.**

## Bathroom renovations cost Auckland man \$2000

Grahame Mills has been convicted and fined \$2000 for illegally carrying out sanitary plumbing without authorisation at a home in Mairangi Bay. The plumbing work involved modifications to a shower unit and installation of a bathroom vanity. He also connected the associated hot, cold and waste water supplies for both units, and installed a water pump to increase water pressure.

The Board received a complaint from the homeowner as the plumbing work was defective.

The pipework connected to the pump leaked and water from the tap in the vanity was a brown rusty colour due to incorrect positioning of the water pump.

Mr Mills pleaded guilty to the charges in the North Shore District Court this month.



A new iBook will help DIYers – and trades people – with improving building access for people with disabilities, with a particular focus on access ways and ramps.

In some cases a building consent is not needed for designing and constructing a mobility ramp. The iBook Improving Access for People with Disabilities came about as a way to make it easier for those wishing to do the work themselves, although any work will still need to comply with the New Zealand Building Code.

[Read more here :](#)

<http://www.standards.co.nz/touchstone/building>

### NOW AVAILABLE FOR COMMENT

DR3500.4 - Plumbing and drainage Part 4: Heated water services (Revision of AS/NZS 3500.4:2003)

This sets out the requirements for the design, installation and commissioning of heated water services using drinking water or rainwater or a combination thereof.

It includes aspects of the installation from, and including, the valve(s) on the cold water inlet to any cold water storage tank or water heater and the downstream fixtures and fittings.

It applies to new installations as well as alterations, additions and repairs to existing installations.

Comments close on 15/12/2014

[Also available for comment](#)

The draft of AS/NZS 5263.1.2 is now available on our website for comment until 5 November 2014.

[Read more here](#)

<http://www.standards.co.nz/developing-standards/comment-on-draft-standards>

Click on joint draft standards.



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  - Travel insurance up to the value of \$500
  - A free passport photo valued at \$20.
- (And if you don't need a passport photo, it can be used by a friend or for your Visa).

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**Step one:** Login to RealMe and set up your verified RealMe account

**Step two:** Email your name, phone number and the receipt number (from your photo taken at a participating PostShop) to [promo@realme.govt.nz](mailto:promo@realme.govt.nz) by 14 November 2014.

[WWW.REALME.GOVT.NZ](http://WWW.REALME.GOVT.NZ)

