


info brief

MARCH 2015 NEWSLETTER

 Plumbers,
Gasfitters and
Drainlayers Board

A word from the Chair

RELICENSING IS PROCEEDING AT A RAPID PACE



Relicensing is proceeding at a rapid pace with authorisations issued being well ahead of last year at this stage.

There is now a more proactive uptake of the CPD scheme by tradespeople, meaning that there are far fewer people having to scramble to complete this upskilling at the last minute. There are many excellent CPD courses available for those who have still not quite completed it. Details are on the Board's website.

Another success story is the "Ask for the Card" campaign, with more and more tradespeople and organisations getting involved. If tradespeople start to routinely show their licences to customers, this will have a big impact in driving out the illegal operators who of course do not have a card to show.

A recent industry newsletter contained the claim that the Board's current disciplinary levy and offences fee are unlawful.

This claim is absolutely wrong and I can assure you that all of the Board's current fees and levy are completely lawful. I must say that it is disappointing to have to respond to this sort of misinformation.

Peter Jackson
Board Chair

It is with regret that we have accepted the resignation of Max Pedersen, the Board's Chief Executive and Registrar. His excellent service to the Board over the past four and a half years will be sorely missed. We wish Max all the best for the future and thank him for the significant contribution that he has made to the efficient running of the Board.



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Timaru District Council and local tradespeople say zero tolerance.



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HAVE
YOUR SAY

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Call to complete the Plumbers, Gasfitters, and Drainlayers Act survey



0800 74 32 62

Report an illegal operator

Inside this article

Peter Gallagher , a building inspector for the Timaru District Council talks about proactive licence checking and working collaboratively with local tradespeople.

Zero Tolerance

PROACTIVE LICENCE CHECKING MINIMISES THE RISK IN TIMARU

Proactive engagement from building inspectors is essential support that helps accelerate the reduction in illegal operators.

To aid the Board in quality assurance, a lot of Local Councils are also checking the licences of tradespeople and ensuring that they are working within the terms of any supervision requirements.

Why? Building consent authorities (Councils) have a role in ensuring that finished construction work is safe and well built. The Likelihood of plumbing and drainage meeting the required standards is higher, if there is this type of mechanism locally for ensuring people carrying out this work have Board authorisation.

Timaru District Council industry support

Peter Gallagher is one of three tradespeople who work within the Timaru District Council Building Unit.

“I’m a certified plumber/drainlayer and inspector for the Council, says Peter. There are also two other tradespeople working within the business unit.

Another in inspections and one working in planning and process. We all specialise in our own field, hold a current licence, and therefore have a good understanding of the industry.”

Together, the Council and tradespeople in Timaru work hard on displaying zero tolerance for those who try to work illegally.

“Ensuring only authorised tradespeople are working in the industry is a big focus of ours. We have good relationships with local tradespeople and help out where ever we can.”

“There are merchants here who are a great support too. They work with us in reducing the element of risk to the public and provide good support for their trade clientele.”

These relationships are essential”, he continued. If tradespeople from out of town come to the area and work without authorisation— we’re told about it and check up on it.”

“We also have a good understanding of supervision requirements, which is important when checking licence cards. The information is all on the Board’s website—it’s worth taking a look to be fully informed.”

“Insuring consumers are well aware is also important, and we fully support the ask-for-the-card campaign.”

The Timaru District Council has recently helped the public awareness drive by displaying editorial and placing an ask-for-the-card advert in the Council sponsored section of the Timaru Herald.

REVIEW OF FEES AND LEVY [LOOKING AT THE OPTIONS]

Current consultation



DON'T FORGET TO MAKE YOUR SUBMISSION

The preliminary consultation started 25 February for the three yearly review of the Board's fees and levy. You have until the 22 April 2015 to submit your feedback. Later in the year the Board will be holding meetings throughout the country to discuss this important matter.

For more information about the review, timeline details and how to make your submission on the first stage of the process go to www.pgdb.co.nz/consultation/current.html.

If you would like a hard copy of the consultation document and submission form posted out you, email comms@pgdb.co.nz or phone 0800 743 262.

Registrations are now open

JUNE 2015 EXAMINATIONS

Enrolments for the June 2015 examination round are now open and will close on 30 April 2015. Application forms need to be post-marked no later than 30 April 2015 or hand delivered at the Board's office no later than 5pm on Thursday 30 April 2015. Online enrolment for certifying examinations will also close at 5pm on 30 April 2015.

Important information about examinations, including eligibility, is in the examination information booklet on the Board's website here www.pgdb.co.nz/trade/exams.

The examination policy has been amended recently. Trainees can now enrol to sit their relevant registration exams if they have completed the final plumbing or gasfitting block course or the final drainlaying practical assessment. Find the Board's policy here: www.pgdb.co.nz/legislation-policies/policies.

Show-the-card



HELP SQUEEZE OUT ILLEGAL OPERATORS IN YOUR AREA

Newspapers are one of the oldest methods of advertising available that is cost effective, and reaches a lot of readers and potential customers each day.

One of the advantages of using newspaper advertising, as opposed to advertising with broadcast media such as radio or television, is that a newspaper advertisement can be viewed many times. Whereas people might miss or even change the channel on a radio or tv commercial, it is hard for them to ignore a large well-placed ad in a newspaper.

Newspaper advertising can be extremely effective when used properly. These adverts featured, placed by Opotiki Plumbing, Rockgas Gas, a group of Greymouth gasfitters and the Timaru District Council, are great examples of stand-out adverts that were well placed in community newspapers to ensure a broad spectrum of people viewed them.

SMART USE OF THE ASK-FOR-THE-CARD CAMPAIGN BY GREYMOUTH GASFITTERS

Using an umbrella brand such as ask-for-the-card reduces the cost of advertising, as many businesses can promote themselves through one advertisement.

Another advantage—consumers make a positive association with products and services when they are aligned with a public health and safety message.

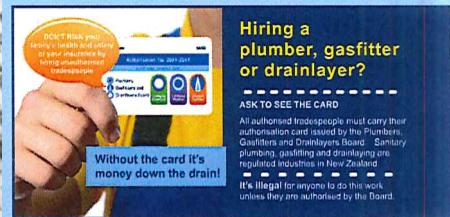
How to check an authorisation card

There are big fines associated with illegal work. For example, unauthorised sanitary plumbing work carries a maximum fine of \$10,000, and unauthorised gasfitting carries a maximum fine of \$50,000.

Homeowners need to be aware that unauthorised work may also affect their insurance policy.

Local Councils and the Board have complimentary roles in working towards protecting public health and safety, and both ensure that construction work is carried out competently by authorised tradespeople. The assistance of local Council inspectors with checking licences and authorisations is invaluable for discouraging cowboys operating in the community.

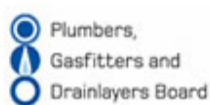
The key message for consumers is to 'Ask for the Card'—check to see if a tradesperson is authorised to work by asking to see their card. The card provides confidence you are hiring a competent tradesperson.



- 1 Ask to see the tradesperson's authorisation card and check the expiry date to see that the card is current.
- 2 Check the icons on the front of the card to ensure that person is permitted to do the type of work they are doing.
- 3 If the tradesperson has a card but is not a certifying tradesperson, check the back of the card for the name of the registered certifying tradesperson who is responsible for verifying that the work is compliant and safe to be used.

If a tradesperson is not carrying their card, consumers can still check up on their authorisation by searching the Board's online public register at www.pgddb.co.nz or by calling 0800 743 262.

Help raise public awareness and squeeze out illegal operators in your area by showing your card to your customers at every opportunity. If you would like campaign stickers, posters, signage options, imagery, or an advert designed for your local newspaper, email comms@pgddb.co.nz.



Without the Card
it's money down the drain



Recent prosecutions

COUNCIL CATCHES SOUTH CANTERBURY MAN SUBMITTING FALSE INFORMATION

On the 26 February, Maurice Dick appeared at the Timaru District Court and pleaded guilty to carrying out, or assisting in carrying out, sanitary plumbing work without an authorisation.

The work involved replacement of polytherm pipes with copper pipes and connection to a bath, sink and toilet, for a shed conversion project Mr Dick was undertaking at his family bach in Marlborough.

When the building inspector for the Marlborough District Council asked for the details of the plumber, Mr Dick submitted false information.

The inspector discovered that the details submitted by Mr Dick were in fact those of a certifying drainlayer, when he later followed up on the information with the Board. The certifying drainlayer also confirmed that he had not done any plumbing work at the property.

Mr Dick was convicted and fined \$1,275 plus court costs and solicitors fee.

IT'S A GAMBLE WITHOUT THE CARD IN AUCKLAND

An Auckland man has been convicted and fined for doing plumbing work without authorisation, misrepresenting himself as a plumber, and falsely advertising himself as a trained plumber on Builders-crack—a popular online forum for the public to seek the services of tradespeople.

Jarron (“Jazz”) Lopez who trades as “Jazz Builders” did not hold a plumbing licence when he completed sanitary plumbing work at a property in Remuera. Mr Lopez engaged with the owners of the property at a local Panmure plumbing merchant store, told them he was a plumber, and provided them with advice on their current bathroom renovation project.

After this meeting, the homeowners hired Mr Lopez to do the plumbing bathroom renovations at the property.

Mr Lopez was convicted in the Auckland District Court, on 10 March 2015, was fined \$1,050 and court costs of \$390.

NELSON GASFITTER NOTIFIES WORKSAFE NZ

ANelson man has been convicted and fined \$4000 for doing or helping to do gasfitting work without authorisation and has been ordered to pay solicitor’s costs of \$113 and Court costs of \$130.

Craig Ashton did not hold a gasfitting licence when he and another person installed an LPG powered refrigerator and extended pipework for a flue in a motorhome.

Mr Ashton’s work was found to be defective by a registered gasfitter, who was called when the owner of the motorhome noticed a bad smell coming from the refrigerator that had made her feel ill and light-headed.

Upon noticing defects in the gasfitting work that he considered immediately dangerous to life, the registered gasfitter notified WorkSafe NZ who then notified the Board.



MINISTRY OF BUSINESS,
INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT
HIKINA WHAKATUTUKI



Review of the Act

A CALL TO COMPLETE THE PLUMBERS, GASFITTERS, AND DRAINLAYERS ACT SURVEY

A reminder that the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's survey for plumbers, gasfitters, drainlayers has been released.

All plumbers, gasfitters, and drainlayers (including trainees and people working under exemptions), have been invited to complete the survey, which runs until midnight Tuesday 31 March 2015.

The survey responses and comments are important, as they will tell the Ministry how well the Plumbers, Gasfitters, and Drainlayers Act (the Act) is working and how it can be improved. The responses will inform a review of the operation of the Act that will be reported to the Minister for Building and Housing and tabled in Parliament.

For plumbers, gasfitters, and drainlayers who have not yet completed the survey, it can be completed on-line, or a paper copy can be printed, at: www.dbh.govt.nz/current-consultations.

If you have any questions regarding the review or the survey please call 0800 242 243, or email info@dbh.govt.nz

The Act aims to protect the health and safety of the public, and the survey is gathering information on:

- the safety of work carried out, non-complaint work and enforcement
- exemptions, particularly work by non-licensed people
- the meaning of supervision for plumbers, gasfitters, and drainlayers
- worker competency and continuing professional development
- the certification of gas installation work and the high-risk gas database.

Disciplinary policy - 1 April 2015

POLICY UPDATE

As part of the Board's function, it has a duty to take complaints from the public about registered people who may have carried out poor quality sanitary plumbing, gasfitting, and drainlaying work.

Poor quality work can negatively affect health and safety, and can also reflect badly on the rest of the industry. Some complaints lead to registered person being charged with a disciplinary offence and appearing at a disciplinary hearing.

The current complaints and discipline process is legal and fair but there are always ways to do things better. For this reason, the Board has been thinking of new ways do this work, keeping the best parts of the current process, and improving the rest.

After careful consideration, the Board has developed a process that remains lawful and fair, and also takes more account of differences in the seriousness of the alleged offending. This should mean that some complaints and discipline complaints can be dealt with faster and at less cost. See the new policy for more information about the process on the Board's website from 1 April 2015.

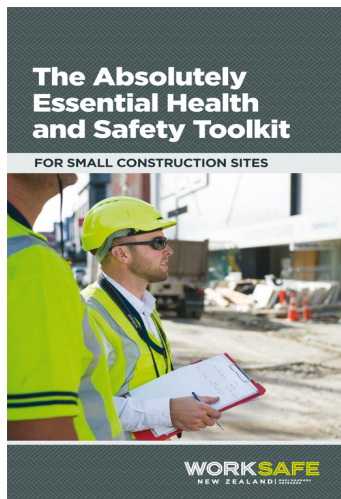
www.pgdb.co.nz/legislation-policies/policies

Compliance made easy

THE ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL HEALTH AND SAFETY TOOLKIT

Worksafe New Zealand has a new safety toolkit that provides a checklist for health and safety issues on small construction sites. Download it at:

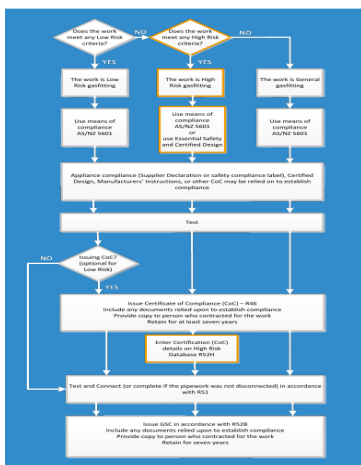
www.business.govt.nz/worksafe/information-guidance/all-guidance-items/toolkit-small-construction-sites



GASFITTING CERTIFICATION FLOW CHART

Still confused about which gasfitting work requires certification? Make good use of the flowchart and check list from the Board's website to aid in understanding gasfitting certification.

Go to: www.pgdb.co.nz/trade/info-for-gasfitters



The Ombudsman

CPD OPINION RELEASED

The Ombudsman has released his opinion on a complaint about a requirement imposed on tradesmen by the Plumbers, Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board to complete continuing professional development courses (CPD courses) each year as a pre-condition to being re-licensed.

Professor Paterson considered that it was reasonably open to the Board to conclude that the gazetted notices publicising the CPD requirements were valid. That the Board had:

- consulted adequately about its proposal to require completion of the CPD courses each year
- and that it was reasonably open to the Board to conclude that the courses were “necessary”
- and did not “impose undue costs” on tradesmen, in terms of section 32 of the Plumbers, Gasfitters, and Drainlayers Act 2006.

The Ombudsman noted that “the public protective purpose of the legislation, and the potential impact on public health, mean that a niggardly approach should not be taken to scrutinising the validity of CPD requirements prescribed by the Board”.

To find more information on the Ombudsman and to read the opinion got to:

www.ombudsman.parliament.nz

RELICENSING

2015 / 2016

The new licensing year is fast approaching

It's illegal for anyone to do plumbing, gasfitting, or drainlaying without the Board's authorisation. Ensure your relicensing for 2015/16 has been completed by 1 April 2015.

RENEWING YOUR LICENCE IS EASY

Two ways



You can renew your licence online if you have an online profile set up. If not, email licensing@pgdb.co.nz to get one organised.

You can also renew your licence by completing a relicensing application form that you can download from the Board website (see link below). Alternatively, give the licensing team a call on 0800 743 262 to request a form to be sent out to you.



APPLYING FOR A LICENCE OR RENEWAL



TIME LINE

STEP 1 Complete the application form accompanied by the information, documentation and required monies as outlined in the application form or online template.

STEP 2 The Board licensing team will process your application. Applications are processed within 5 working days.

STEP 3 If you would like to confirm that your application has been accepted, check the public register on the Board website for your updated details.

STEP 4 Authorisation cards are sent out within 10 working days of applications being accepted.

GO TO WWW.PGDB.CO.NZ/LICENSING ... OR [CLICK HERE](#)

Find more information on licensing in the policies section of the Board's website