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IN OTHER NEWS

To Report or Not Report

One of the issues facing the industry is the fact individuals don't want to report offences to the Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board.

The following is a string from the Plumbers Forum:

I've just been to a house to do a new bathroom installation. There's a new hot water cylinder installed 9 months ago. Plumbers used a flexi connector at top of cylinder which goes downhill to vent. New cylinder must have been taller than old one. So effectively the vent is running downhill by about 300mm. This made me investigate more. Plumber had reconnected wetback to cylinder and then found there wasn't much pressure so he gone up on roof and installed a pressure relief valve! I could not believe it. Should I report this? I've told owner not to light fire.....

I say report it. As you have described it it is more than just a mistake. Its time for our industry to help police these issues and stop being nice to the guys doing this type of work. They are costing

Letters to the Editor



Dear Editor

I see what you mean about glimmers of hope with the new Chief Executive of the Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board - but he alone can't improve the Board's reputation. A lot of damage has been done to

the industry and the Board's reputation and really it is only the Board that can change it.

Mr Jackson must be on a different planet, or is he trying to get a response from the industry by saying *"At this date, six meetings have been conducted and very low attendance levels appear to indicate that the industry is comfortable with the fees that will take effect as of April 2016"*

Perhaps we should be asking him – no, in fact the OTHER Board members should be asking him, what exactly has been achieved under his stewardship on the Board - and if he can't answer then they have the power to vote him off as chairperson and vote someone else in. He could do a Maurice Williamson and sit on the sideline for the rest of his term.

Put simply "no change" means "no change".

ED:

Some very direct points there writer - thank you for expressing your views and supporting the Federation. Yes the Board does have a lot of work to do to regain confidence of the industry but it could all be for nothing if this current Minister has his way.

That's the very frustrating thing for the Federation and the industry in that we may provide funding for change and it may amount to nothing as the Minister may change the legislation and we could all come under the regulation of another entity.

We as an industry do not have ONE strong representative body. We have thousands of individuals who are not happy -yet don't want to get involved. Attitudes in the industry need to change, and people need to get involved, or we will just keep on being bullied by the Government and their representatives. If you look at the landscape currently – The Federation has 1100 (in round figures) individual members, Master Plumbers has (in round figures) 750 business

us money and reputation.

hi guys, `Plumbers` you say dose not sound like trained men to me, that is an accident waiting to happen, cheers

Yes Spud, I think you should, it's wrong, you know it and you have made the customer aware too. its never going to be nice but you have to do the right thing or you won't be able to sleep at night. That's my thoughts

yes - I agree this needs to be reported, not only is it simply just wrong but is an extremely dangerous life threatening situation!

Yes definitely, this is not just a few clips missing, or even under pipe sizing, but a serious life threatening situation. Plumbers are responsible "for the health of the nation" and here is a real example of that. It's not dobbing, it's about whoever did this work never doing something like this again. I assume you know the plumber, or at least who he/she is? The owner can also make the complaint if you prefer, but I agree with Watchdog - we need to stand up and be willing to stamp out bad workmanship which causes risks to life and limb. This person clearly does not understand the implications of what they have done. Let us know how you get on.

So there you have it - not one person supported not reporting the issues.

When deciding what to do you

owner members – that’s still a LOT of industry not belonging to anything. What do these people think? What do they want? Are they happy with the status quo? We want to hear from them!

Who's Playing Catch Up and Who's Paying



As an industry we have been hammered over the last decade about changing technology and keeping up with what other professions are doing, but is it the industry that is behind or everyone else?

Over the hundred plus years of regulation of the

plumbing gasfitting and drainlaying industry the industry had become a self regulating, highly skilled industry that was up-skilling itself through personal pride and a pride in being part of one of the best trades in New Zealand, and being part of a trade where we were respected throughout the world.

Enter the bureaucrats and Government with their ideas on apprenticeships, industry training organisations (ITO), continuing professional development (CPD) and other money making schemes for people leaching off the plumbing gasfitting and drainlaying industry.

Our industry has been getting dragged backwards and some believe we are now at rock bottom. We are paying more for less and this is possibly why the industry is shutting off to the regulation of the industry.

For those who are now in their fifties, or above, they can remember when there was a prosperous well trained plumbing gasfitting and drainlaying industry in New Zealand. An industry that people were proud to be part of, an industry that was skilled and knowledgeable.

Those people know what needs to be done to return the industry to the state it used to be but we are rapidly losing those people and will be left in a situation of the knowledge being limited.

We have been told time and time again that technology is changing and we need to continually up-skill but we had been doing that for over a century and had survived just fine until the money making bureaucrats came along and wanted their pounds worth. There are those amongst us who could argue the opposite – and that is some modern plumbing fittings and fixtures have “dumbed” the industry down so that we are nothing more than pipe crimpers – and that this gives rise to those wanting shortened apprenticeships. Some of the “craft” has gone from the skill base that is for sure.

At the current rate of decline within 20 years all we will have is "tall tales of the legendary past". The Federation believes the Government got it totally wrong over the last couple of decades and altered the destiny of the industry on the basis of a few theories.

need to use common sense. Every time something dodgy is done it reflects on the industry. Every time someone bucks the system and doesn't pay you pay more.

If we as an industry want to be well respected then we have to help police the industry, but in saying that we all have to operate in a fair and equitable manner. That's where the Board and Government need to up their game and ensure the legislation and regulations are exactly that fair and equitable.

They should have been following our industry example rather than trying to fix something that wasn't broken.

All we have ended up with is more breaks and more partial fixes. Knowledgeable well trained tradespeople are being wiped out and when they become extinct well who knows what will happen.

Dr Smith and his supporters are all out for the environment and saving streams and swamps but yet they have a trade which is vanishing in front of them and nothing is being done. What's going to happen when there are no tradespeople to keep the environment pristine?

We as an industry have let others suppress our progression and their failures have been laid at our feet. We now pay the price and the public's health and safety will pay the price in the future.

We are an industry with a large number of individuals and very few belong to membership organisations such as The Federation or Master Plumbers. People sitting back waiting for others to do the work and fight for fairness and equality need to wake up.

The Regulators need to show leadership and change the situation before those with the knowledge and skills simply get sick of the situation and walk away.

Perhaps the poor showing at the consultation meetings should be a warning that very few are now interested in the regulation of the industry. Perhaps going back to what worked may be the way to the future.

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