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IN OTHER NEWS



Dear Editor

Your back must be sore as you should hear what some people say behind your back.

They get the knife into the Federation every chance they get.

For me, I think you are doing a bloody good job and hate to think where we would have been if you guys hadn't stepped up to stop all the bullshit that was going on a few years back.

Keep it up and thanks from me and my crew.

ED:

Thanks for your comments and warning writer. The good thing about the Federation is that we are not answerable to anyone

Are We Our Own Worst Enemy?



If we as an industry want to progress and move ahead we need to walk the talk and lead by example. The Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board have been through huge changes in the last eight months, and are going through this year's round of relicensing where they have given fair warning to those required

to relicense to get it done - or face the consequences.

Practitioners need to remember it is not the Board that makes the law, it's simply their job to enforce it. We as an industry need to support their actions to protect ourselves from the people operating without authorisation in the industry. We shouldn't be sitting back waiting for things to happen - we should be proactive and make it happen!

What screws us up in the industry is the picture in our heads of how it is supposed to be, but most practitioners do nothing to make that picture a reality. As practitioners we need to control the environment we operate it and STOP UNAUTHORISED OR ILLEGAL PEOPLE from taking money out of our pockets. Sure there are some that have an issue with the Board, but as long as they are following the correct processes then they should be fine and get our support where appropriate.

Everyone in the industry should have had their applications for relicensing in to the Board BY 31 March 2016. Here are some figures from the Public Register of Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers.

- Certified Plumbers licensed on 29/3/2015 was 3346 and on 4/4/2016 was 1830.

- Licensed Plumbers licensed on 29/3/2015 was 1585 and on 4/4/2016 was 480.

- Certified Gasfitters licensed on 29/3/2015 was 1493 and on 4/4/2016 was 912.

- Licensed Gasfitters licensed on 29/3/2015 was 630 and on 4/4/2016 was 207.

- Certified Drainlayers licensed on 29/3/2015 was 2869 and on

but our members.

We don't have sponsors, advertisers and the like putting demands on us - so that leaves us free to get on and deal with issues that affect us all.

We don't worry about those who talk behind our back, they're behind us for a reason.

Thanks for your support.

Dear Editor

I take my hat off to you guys for sticking to your guns. Some people just keep talking but don't really get the job done.

You guys just keep chipping away and sure you sound like a squeaky wheel sometimes, but at least you get the oil.

What's next in your sights now that CPD and illegal fees are sorted?

ED:

We are attempting to get the apprenticeships so they meet industry needs and that people actually qualify competent to do the job without supervision.

We want to raise the game of practitioners in the industry so there is an abundance of pride and professionalism.

Obviously we will continue to keep an eye on legislation and regulation that affects the industry and fight the fights as they arise. We'll want to take an active part when the Act is reviewed (this seems to have been put on the backburner at present – or at least we haven't seen anything more

4/4/2016 was 1376.

- Licensed Drainlayers licensed on 29/3/2015 was 264 and on 4/4/2016 was 83.

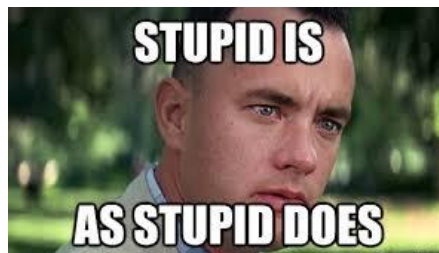
We are led to believe these numbers are up on the same time last year but in saying that there are huge improvements that could be made. The Federation realises a lot of practitioners pay their annual licensing costs themselves and fronting up with the money at licensing time can be a bit of a strain - so perhaps a bit of budgeting and a separate account which you can drip feed the money to ready for next year would work.

Get it started now and you will be paying less than \$10.00 a week. Others ask their employers to deduct the money fortnightly and put it into a separate account, some let staff put it on their tool account, and then we have also heard of employers who pay the licence after a certain number of years' service. All of these things can be discussed with your employer if you are the employee paying for your licence.

The Board have made it clear that they have allowed a grace period but after that you will be risking action against you. "Do the crime do the time" should be ringing in your ears.

Now a word for the wise. Have you ever thought about your public liability insurance while you are operating without authorisation – you won't have any as most of policies don't cover unlawful activities!! Something you and your customers won't ever want to test out we are sure.

Creating Stupid People



The new Health and Safety at Work Act has been getting a lot of coverage and there are varying opinions about its effectiveness, and it reminded us of a quote we once heard:

"They may not look like idiots at first, but eventually they will convince you"

It seems to be the Government has yet again legislated to protect people and the onus has landed on us to ensure it happens. Don't get us wrong, we are all for preventing accidents and ensuring people get home to their families each night - but who has to fund all the time and equipment to ensure all reasonable steps are taken to ensure it does happen?

We have the Government saying they are going to bring the price of housing down, we have the public saying tradespeople charge too much and we have the illegal operators ignoring the legislation we have to adhere to and charging low rates because they don't have our overheads.

on it lately).

We will make sure we take action - as sometimes actions prove why words mean nothing. As always we ask those that are interested to contact us – we always have room on our executive for people – all we need is your time.

Dear Editor

CPD in its old form has gone and we look forward to the new scheme so we can get on to some real training rather than buying points.

Well done to the Federation for pushing the point and helping achieve a result that most people are happy with.

We heard of a few suppliers that still aren't happy which is unfortunate - but that's life.

Keep up the good work guys.

ED:

Thanks writer.

Yes it's good to see the points scheme bite the dust and be replaced by a better scheme.

What we need now is for everyone to get on board and support the new scheme.

There are plenty of options and locations.

Those that have already attended the training speak highly of it and state they left with greater knowledge to help them navigate through the legislation regulating our industry and trades.

Some suppliers are pretty

So where does the money come from to fund the protection of everyone - yes you got it, it comes from our pockets. In most cases it will come from our bottom line pushing wage increases further away for staff. Teaching common sense at school would have been a far better option than waiting until the employer teaches a person how to use a ladder, or not take a drink from a water blaster, to not over extend - what's next do we have to train a person how to tie their boot laces because they are a tripping hazard?

If anyone is in danger of getting hurt – it's every worker drowning in the regulation bureaucracy imposed on us.

The standard of maintenance on buildings will drop as building owners won't be able to afford to take all reasonable steps to protect contractors. We know of an example all ready where a roof repair job valued at \$5,200 was put off because the price escalated to \$12,500 once the price of scaffolding was added. That roof will continue to leak on the tenants so what will that do to their health?

In that case either the property owner will do the work himself or someone will do the job unlawfully and still get the same coverage as a person who does it lawfully.

We don't mind paying the price if the goals are clear and the risk and expense is spread evenly. We all know that if there is an act of stupidity by a staff member that the ripple effect from their action will carry on up the chain and the only companies that will not be held accountable will be the ones that can afford an expensive lawyer to prove all reasonable steps were taken.

We can see it as being a case of guilty until you can prove yourself innocent. This is nothing new to our industry, so keep your wits about you and pass on the costs to the consumer. If we are expected to support this legislation let's do it properly, and let the Government answer the questions about price increases.

Let's make sure we don't reach the stage where we need to go on medication so we can slap stupid people and blame it on the side effects.

As a side comment – we would say that while Worksafe are running all sorts of seminars around the place – and giving some good advice, the constant answer to questions that “the court will decide” is less than helpful when you are trying to assess risk or exactly what level of record keeping is needed.

Those of you who watch TVNZ Breakfast's programme will possibly have seen the lawyer from Minter Ellison talking about “work drinks” and the risks around that for employers. It appears that some companies have decided to ban work drinks as the risk of staff getting pissed and then not being able to get home safely could come back on the employer.

Maybe not even pissed, maybe they only have two drinks but something happens. Just how long is the employer responsible for staff members after work – all the way till they put the key in the door? The questions were asked again about detail and the answer

negative on it, perhaps once they have attended a session their thoughts will change. We all know the good suppliers will continue to offer upskilling courses that practitioners will no doubt support as we all like to learn something new. What has changed is that suppliers will no longer have a captive audience of practitioners who need points, so some may have to up their game.

We commend suppliers like Rinnai, for example, who have excellent courses available for practitioners to do online. These change frequently as new products come on line for installation – this is the sort of example others could follow – the courses are well written, easily accessible, meet the needs of the practitioner (teaching you about the product), and the supplier (they can have faith that practitioners are learning about how to install their products correctly), and you can do it at a time and in a place that suits.

We welcome your feedback on the new CPD once you have had a chance to attend.

“the courts will decide” was mentioned. It is a common theme when pressing anyone in the know about health and safety.

Let us all hope that none of us is the entity/person caught in the “courts deciding” precedent setting decisions. It is just bewildering for the ordinary person to grasp – but one thing you can be sure of – the lawyers will be increasing any sections of their company that deal with health and safety so they can deal with the boom times ahead for them.

Continuing Professional Development

To renew licenses in the licensed and certifying classes for any of the trades, tradespeople would need to have attended the CPD training session part of the 2016 PGDB & Mico Training Roadshow.

45 sessions will be run around the country during the months of June, July, August and September 2016.

For those who couldn't attend the Roadshow, an online version of the training session will be available from 1 October 2016.

Remember this training is for the licence renewals 1 April 2017 – 31 March 2018 licensing year.

Log on to the PGD Boards website and enrol now for your course or speak to the staff at Micos.

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