



Plumbing Newsflash

INSTALLATION OF WATER METERS

Purpose

To clarify the *Plumbing and Drainage Act 2002* (PDA) requires water meters to be installed by a licensed plumber, both on and off premises.

Background

The PDA requires a person to be licensed to perform plumbing and drainage work. Generally, the PDA covers plumbing work from the service provider's infrastructure (e.g. the off-premises water main) to work on-premises (that is, within the boundary of a lot).

The *Water Act 2000* (WA) regulates water supply systems including matters relating to service providers' infrastructure. The WA requires workers to meet adequate competency standards, however, the WA does not operate to replace the need for licences under the PDA. Water meters form part of the service provider's infrastructure once installed.

Some local governments, as water service providers under the WA, currently interpret the interaction of the PDA and the WA to allow any work on service provider infrastructure (including the installation of water meters) to be performed by trained personnel who may not be licensed plumbers. With ongoing water efficiency concerns as the drought continues, more water meters can be expected to be installed.

The PDA has recently been amended to clarify the scope of plumbing work. In turn, this provides clarity on the scope of plumbing work requiring a licence. The PDA requires the installation of water meters to be carried out by licensed plumbers both inside and outside premises. Accordingly, under the WA a service provider may only authorise a licensed plumber to install water meters on infrastructure supplying water to premises.

However, under the WA, a service provider may authorise a suitably trained person (who may not be a licensed plumber) to carry out the maintenance of water meters both inside and outside the premises.

Legislation

PDA, Schedule 1 (Dictionary) provides:

“**plumbing** means –

- (a) for water – an apparatus, fitting or pipe **for supplying water to premises from a service provider's infrastructure** or a water storage tank and for carrying water within premises; or
- (b) for sewage – an apparatus, fitting, fixture or pipe, above ground level, that carries sewage on premises to drainage; or
- (c) a greywater treatment plant or greywater diversion device.”

Section 384(1) of the WA provides:

“An authorised person may enter a place to inspect, operate, change, maintain, remove, repair or replace a service provider’s infrastructure at the place”.

Service providers are reminded that section 119 of the PDA provides:

“A person must not perform, direct the performance of, or supervise, work for which a licence is required unless the person holds a licence that entitles the person to perform the work.

Maximum penalty – 165 penalty units”.

Interpretation

Persons installing water meters both on and off premises must hold either a provisional licence or a plumbers licence.

Contact Officer

For further information in relation to this Newsflash, please contact Mr Scott Mowatt on (07) 3237 0368.

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