

Building and Plumbing Newsflash 522

Changes to the notifiable work scheme and other plumbing amendments

Purpose

To advise of the minor changes to the notifiable work scheme and other plumbing amendments that took effect on 12 July 2013.

Background

Amendments to the *Plumbing and Drainage Act 2002*, and the regulations made under the Act, introduced the notifiable work scheme on 1 November 2012. The scheme simplifies the approval process for most plumbing and drainage work, and reduces costs for industry and consumers.

The Act has recently been amended to introduce further changes that support the notifiable work scheme. Amendments of the *Standard Plumbing and Drainage Regulation 2003* will:

- align the Regulation with the changes made to the Act
- require a local government to inspect notifiable work if a plumber or drainer (a 'licensee') asks for an inspection
- allow a local government inspector to give a rectification notice to the responsible person for the work and any licensed contractor involved
- make it clear that compliance assessable work is considered 'completed' when it is operational.

Requests for inspection of notifiable work

The *Standard Plumbing and Drainage Regulation 2003* currently allows a licensee to ask for an inspection of notifiable work by a local government. A licensee might decide to ask for an inspection to seek assistance or simply to have the work checked for compliance. The changes to the Regulation require a local government to inspect notifiable work if a licensee asks for an inspection. Local government can charge a cost recovery fee for providing this service. The changes also set a timeframe of 48 hours (two business days) for carrying out an inspection.

Who may be given a notice to rectify defective work?

The changes allow a local government inspector to give a rectification notice to any licensee who is a 'responsible person' for notifiable work. The changes also allow a notice to be given to a licensed contractor who directs or supervises notifiable work, even if the contractor is not licensed to perform the work.

Compliance assessable work – meaning of 'completed'

The changes clarify when plumbing work requiring a plumbing approval is considered to be completed. Work is considered 'completed' when it is operational (in working order and ready for use) and able to be used for the purpose for which it was installed.

Previously, it might have been argued that because a pipe was not lagged or clips were not fastened, the work had not been completed. Now, if it is capable of being used for the purpose for which it was installed, then it will be considered operational. As a result of the changes, a licensee must request an assessment of the work within seven days after it becomes operational.

This will provide increased certainty on when work is completed, meaning that delays in issuing a certificate of compliance will be minimised and buildings can be occupied earlier.

Legislation

The Standard Plumbing and Drainage Amendment Regulation (No.1) 2013 is available at www.legislation.qld.gov.au/LEGISLTN/SLS/2013/13SL138.pdf

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