



Plumbing Newsflash

Fire Sprinkler Systems

Purpose

Plumbers cannot install any type of fire sprinkler system unless they are licensed to do so. The purpose of this Newsflash is to clarify the:

1. Licensing requirements for installing fire sprinkler systems; and
2. Obligations for local governments when assessing fire sprinkler systems and designs

Interpretation

1. Licensing requirements

Under the *Plumbing and Drainage Act 2002* (PDA) the installation, maintenance and testing of a liquid fire suppression system or fire sprinkler system (which is of commercial or industrial type designed in accordance with Australian Standard 2118.1 – 1999) can only be carried out by holders of:

- A Restricted Water Plumber – fire protection (commercial and industrial) licence; or
- An endorsement - fire protection (commercial and industrial) on a plumber's licence.

It is an offence under the PDA for a person to perform, direct the performance of, or supervise work for which a licence is required unless they hold a licence that entitles them to perform the work (see section 119 PDA).

2. Obligations for local governments when assessing fire sprinkler systems and designs

Local governments must assess fire services under the PDA for matters such as the method of jointing, supporting, or fixing of the plumbing that is the subject of the work. This includes both regulated and minor works. Plumbers are required to give local governments notice once work is completed so it may be inspected by a local government plumbing inspector.

A local government assessment is limited to the following matters under the PDA in terms of compliance assessment of plans or work for fire services -

- Preventing contamination or pollution of the water supply to the premises;
- The method of jointing, supporting, or fixing of the plumbing that is the subject of the work; and
- That each item used in the plumbing is a certified item or an item allowed under section 31 of the *Standard Plumbing and Drainage Regulation 2003* (SPDR).

Roles of building certifiers and hydraulic designers

Fire services are also called up in section 6 of AS/NZS 3500.1:2003. The requirement for fire services and their design is regulated under the *Building Act 1975* in Queensland. It is the role of the building certifier to assess this work. Local governments are empowered by the *Building Act 1975* to take action against building certifiers who do not adequately assess aspects of fire services such as sprinkler systems.

Hydraulic designers of fire services should, as best practice, include their design calculations on the hydraulic plans being submitted to local government as this may assist in assessing compliance.

Contact Officer

For further information, contact Mr Michael McGuinness, Principal Advisor, Plumbers and Drainers Board on telephone 07 3247 3618.

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