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PlaceMakers[®]

FOREWORD VIEW FROM THE GM OPERATIONS

BACK ON THE JOB



With many of you back on the job, it makes sense to get straight into 'get-er-done' mode

become fans.

While it would be ideal if it were never needed, insurance is an important component of our industry. This issue, we look at what mandatory insurance would mean for builders and clients, if the Government chose to implement it, and we also hear from BuiltIn about a key timing element when claiming on existing insurance.

Looking ahead, it's important we continue to nurture new talent into the industry. Apprentices are the future, which is why PlaceMakers supports their journey to becoming qualified builders through the PAC initiative. This issue, we hear from Apprentice of the Month Elisa Fisher, newly qualified graduate Kane Nisbet, and the winner of the Apprentice of the Year competition Andrew Hopley. They have all faced and overcome challenges with smart thinking and innovative approaches.

Ensuring that newly qualified and younger builders have access to lessons learned from years of experience is a great way to ensure the success of the industry moving forward – check out the story on page 22 to see how Certified Builders is establishing cross-generation connections with its members.

into 2020.

Gary Woodhouse

*Competition valid from the 31 st January to 20th June 2020. Terms and conditions apply. See puntforprizes.co.nz for details.

As we begin the new year with the sun shining and most of our time off having drawn to a close, I hope you managed to take a break and enjoy some of your holiday season with family and friends

While 2019 is fast disappearing behind us, it was a big year for reforms within the building industry. We take a look at the major legislative changes that occurred, many of which will continue to develop and affect the industry this year and going forward. Hopefully many of you will have provided input on these proposed reforms and I encourage you to keep doing so when the opportunity arises. It is your knowledge and expertise that is needed to inform these and future changes.

With many of you back on the job, it makes sense to move straight into 'get-er-done' mode, but making sure your customers are happy in the midst of all this is arguably even more crucial. Business coach Graeme Owen explains that doing the little things well is key to ensuring your clients

I hope that, as always, you will find this content useful as we move

General Manager Operations

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- 36 SKILLS MAINTENANCE Record your LBP skills maintenance you've earned it!

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FEEDBACK

BUILDERS' BUSINESS

TINY HOMES – CONSENT CONCERNS

Builders' Business is a column by builders for builders. Its objective is to provide a forum, particularly for small business operators, in which to share knowledge, experience, tips and ideas

Q: What do you think about tiny homes on wheels and should they require a building consent?

Firm: Broswick Builders Limited **Principal:** Todd Wickenden Location: Auckland **Staff:** 13

Firm: Glenn Grant Builders **Principal:** Glenn Grant Location: Nelson Staff: 5

I definitely think tiny homes should require a building consent. I've seen a couple from the side of the road on some land while driving around. I think with people living in them, they should be up to code like any other building. That includes having appropriate materials, insulation, plumbing – all those things.

As far as people trying to classify them as vehicles, some of these tiny homes would struggle being towed behind a truck. If they're fully operational as a vehicle, can withstand proper transport for decent distances, and have a Warrant of Fitness, then there's an argument there. However, that shouldn't mean that they can avoid being built correctly and using approved construction methods.

For people looking at owning a tiny home, I think they need to be careful to make sure it adheres to the Building Code and ensure it can be approved under any of the classifications they're listing it under.

First off, I think tiny homes are a great idea. We've been involved in building small houses, not tiny homes, but houses that are only 80m², with all the essentials, and more and more people seem interested in building houses with smaller footprints.

Many people look at building a tiny home because they want to save money. However, that sometimes involves trying to navigate around needing a consent. In my mind, this shouldn't be allowed, as tiny homes incorporate most of the same structural elements as normal houses - framing, plumbing, weathertightness. Legally, all buildings need to comply with the Building Code, whether they need a consent or not, but if someone doesn't get a building consent and these homes are so popular with people who may not be builders, how can a council ensure they are building to code?

Basically, just because it's 'tiny' doesn't mean it's not a home, so it should have to adhere to the same regulations.

NOW HAVE YOUR SAY...

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THE GOVERNMENT'S PROPOSED REFORMS ON MODERN METHODS OF CONSTRUCTION (ALSO KNOWN AS PREFABRICATED BUILDING)? ANSWER THIS QUESTION TO ENTER OUR QUARTERLY PRIZE DRAW

Email your answer with your full name, contact phone number, company name, number of full-time staff and the city or town in which you're based to editor@pmundersconstruction.co.nz. All responses must be submitted by 25 February 2020. The answers to this question will be published in Under Construction April/May 2020.

Firm: Karl Kampenhout Builder Limited Principal: Karl Kampenhout Location: Hamilton **Staff:** 10

Tiny homes have a place in the construction environment and provide affordable housing for people seeking ways to enter the market. However, there's obvious confusion. It appears councils are going different ways on regulating them, and builders and aspiring homeowners might look at one success somewhere but then run into issues with their respective council.

I believe tiny homes need to meet the same building and engineering compliance as regular builds require. A blanket rule that eliminates the confusion and standardises compliance rules would be beneficial.

I understand some tiny home building companies advertise that tiny homes don't need consents because they're vehicles, but from what I've seen, not many appear to be equipped for longdistance travel. Motorhomes must meet their own set of rules for compliance, so it could be worth having the same kind of thing for tiny homes that are claimed to be road-ready vehicles.

PAC NEWS

PLACEMAKERS APPRENTICE CREW



QUALIFIED AND KANEING IT

Our apprentice column provides an opportunity for PAC members to share their views, experiences and ideas, while providing insight for builders who employ them. This month's question is:

Q. What was key to successfully completing your apprenticeship?

Newly qualified builder Kane Nisbet reflects on the challenges of his apprenticeship, and how a great mentor, an understanding employer and PAC helped secure his success

Recent carpentry graduate ... Nisbet works for Kane Building Group in Auckland. While the ecent carpentry graduate Kane Nisbet works for Kane Building shared name is just a coincidence, Kane likes to run with it when the opportunity arises.

"Sometimes people think I own the business, and I like to play on that as a bit of a laugh. It's even easier to do that now as, since graduating, I've received a company van, which has my name on the side in big orange letters!"

Graduating with a New Zealand Certificate in Carpentry (Level 4), Kane won PlaceMakers Apprentice of the Month three times during the four years of his apprenticeship, a goal that kept him on his toes.

"Knowing that my work is going to be assessed and that I could win the award motivated me to keep my standards high. It's made me a better builder and it's been great to be recognised for my hard work."

Kane has also seen other benefits to being part of the PlaceMakers Apprentice Crew.

"It's useful to read about other apprentices' experiences to help confirm I'm on the right track. Also, it's not cheap to kit yourself out with a full-blown set of quality tools, so the discounts are a real help, and the prizes even more so."

Thinking about his time as an apprentice, of it".

a couple of things stand out for Kane - at the top of the list is his mentor,

experienced builder Jason Williamson.

"I'm so grateful to have had Jason's help during my apprenticeship. He really went out of his way and I don't think that is always the case for apprentices – I've learned so much from him.

"I would love to be able to give back and pass on knowledge and skills to apprentices in the same way."

Kane is also grateful to his employer, who allowed him the time to do his bookwork during the working week.

"With a four-year-old and a one-year-old, it was a struggle to study at home in the evenings," he says.

A key learning Kane is taking with him from his time as an apprentice is to get the right answer.

"I firmly believe that you should always ask questions, but you also need to do your own work to get the right answer - for example, you're best to read the manufacturer's instructions on how to use a product before asking other builders how they use it."

Kane has also enjoyed an aspect of being an apprentice that he didn't anticipate liking quite so much: "it turns out I like being thrown in the deep end. It sounds stressful and I can't say I love stress, but I love the responsibility

While he's just graduated and now has his name on the new company vehicle, he's not sitting back just yet: "my wife works for a real estate company and they're looking for a handyman, so I'm going to start my own small company for that, just a day a fortnight, and take a supervisor's course through BCITO".

"I want to continue to develop my skills, and even though I like to joke about owning the company, I'm very happy where I am, so I see myself staying right here and keeping on doing what l'm doing." 🔳



Kane at work on the first build he's been fully responsible for

PAC NEWS

PLACEMAKERS APPRENTICE CREW

NOVICE WHO NAILED IT

The top apprentice of 2019 credits Apprentice of the Month with giving his own work focus

ndrew Hopley, a 3rd year apprentice from Akaroa who has consistently entered Apprentice of the Month and won twice this year, has won the grand prize of 'Novice who Nailed It' - taking away \$500 in travel vouchers. Though as Andrew sees it, entering is about more than just winning.

"Being an apprentice isn't always easy. Sometimes you can get a bit of a hard time. So, I think having something like Apprentice of the Month to focus the quality of your work on and look forward to is a great thing.

"The competition also provides a chance to see what others are doing and how high the standard of their work is. This makes you feel really good when you do win, because there's strong competition."

Andrew might be a relative novice at building, but aged 35 with two kids at home, the former tour boat skipper probably isn't what most outside of the building industry imagine when thinking of an apprentice builder.

When asked what advice he would give to other apprentices, Andrew says: "You just have to keep at it and take opportunities when they present themselves - don't shy away from something that will challenge you, and don't be afraid to ask for help."

For his own learning, Andrew has been focusing on becoming more familiar with NZS 3604.

"It's always with me – I mean, it's 40mm thick, so I don't have it on my tool belt!

start her work.

NOVEMBER APPRENTICE OF THE MONTH

Apprentice finds success avoiding rush hour

lisa Fisher, a first-year painting and decorating apprentice from Hamilton, had to think outside the box to tackle a big project, working after peak tradie times to get the job done.

"My project was to paint inside a huge apartment complex with over 300 workers, along with cranes, and big truck and tractor units moving in and out 24/7. It was almost impossible to move in there, so it would have been a pretty stressful way to work, and I didn't want my newly painted walls to get ruined!"



Don't forget that all current PAC members have access to cash trade discounts on safety gear and hand tools plus other product ranges (some exclusions apply) at all PlaceMakers branches. Visit the PAC hub for more details pac.placemakers.co.nz



of PlaceMakers Riccarton

PPRENTICI

But I do have it in the van, or on the workbench at home, and reference it as much as possible."

While it's not about the prize for Andrew, it won't go unappreciated: "My wife and I have a wedding to go to in Queenstown, and we might go down without the kids, which would be a nice reward for both of us for all the hard work last year." 🔳

Seeing as booting the other tradies out wasn't an option, Elisa waited until many of them had left before she'd

"Staying late turned out to be ideal. Fewer people and bits of machinery around created more clear space, so it was a lot more relaxed, with less things for me to bang into and fewer people to lean on my freshly painted walls!

"I learned that sometimes you just need to do what needs to be done -I enjoyed



receiving a Milwaukee radio and charger from Duncan Nicholls at PlaceMakers Te Rapa

1000

5

working with the clear space to do it well, and the finished work turned out great, so I call that a win-win!"

PLACEMAKERS APPRENTICE CREW

18 DAYS OF GIVEAWAYS

From 1 to 18 December, the PAC Facebook page was on fire with the '18 Days of Giveaways' promotion

D laceMakers Apprentice Crew continues to one-up its huge Christmas giveaway, adding another four days to the frenzy! With hundreds battling it out to take home the prizes, 18 PAC members walked away stoked, thanks to the support of participating PlaceMakers suppliers. In addition, Hev Scott-Smith spent hours deciphering the mystery puzzle. It paid off in the end, with her cracking the puzzle on Day 2, scoring herself a \$250 Red Balloon Voucher. 🔳





NEWS

PPRENTICE

COMMUNITY NEWS

HOUSE OF THE YEAR – NATIONAL WINNERS



SPICE BUILD

Wellington & Wairarapa

SUPREME AWARD REGISTERED MASTER BUILDERS RENOVATION OF THE YEAR

DIMENSION BUILDING

Mid & South Canterbury

PLACEMAKERS NEW HOME

\$450,000 - \$600,000

D&B BUILDERS Bay of Plenty & Central Plateau

RESENE NEW HOME OVER \$2 MILLION

HOUS

Congratulations to all of our PlaceMakers customers who have won House of the Year National Awards!



DUNLOP BUILDERS

NEW HOME \$1.5 MILLION - \$2 MILLION



Auckland

RENOVATION \$500,000 - \$1 MILLION



STONEWOOD HOMES EAST AUCKLAND Auckland

VOLUME/GROUP HOUSING NEW HOME \$450K - \$750K







NEW HOME UP TO \$450,000



TMT CONSTRUCTION

RENOVATION UP TO \$500K



OUTDOOR LIVING AWARD

NEWS

WHAT'S ON

PLACEMAKERS PRODUCT PICKS



Abodo's Vulcan Decking, available from PlaceMakers, is created from thermally modified New Zealand plantation timber and then treated with an organic preservative system that includes a water repellent for superior durability. The thermal modification process means Vulcan Decking has enhanced stability, reduced resin content and is a beautiful homogeneous brown colour.

IRASPIK

of the Titen Turbo lies in special thread design that lowers driving torque, while providing excellent holding power. The revolutionary Torque Reduction Channel between the threads gives drilling dust a place to go, virtually eliminating torque-related issues such as binding, stripping and snapping. Features and benefits include: Serrated cutting teeth reduce torque for easy

The secret behind the performance

- Installation without cleaning dust from predrilled holes.
- Availability with either a hex head or, for a smoother installed profile, a 6-lobe drive countersunk head (bit included).

SIMPSON Strong Tia





New and exclusive to PlaceMakers, the revolutionary NuraSpike is designed to be driven into the ground to support the adjustable decking pile, Nurajack. With Nuraspike and Nurajack, digging holes and concreting piles for low-profile decks can become a thing of the past.



Using Nuraspike is easy – simply place a Hitting Plate (sold separately) on top of the Nuraspike and hammer into any suitable ground. Then place the Nurapad or adjustable Nurajack (available in sizes from 12mm to 550mm) on top of the Nuraspike.

Nurajacks and Nuraspikes are available nationwide through PlaceMakers.

For more information go to www.nurajack.co.nz



If you're looking for a work shirt with an awesome fit and superior performance, check out the Argyle XT performance t-shirt. The anti-microbial finish allows sweat to wash out, extending the lifetime of your t-shirt.

The wicking fabric offers comfort, ventilation and about 20% better drying ability than other standard polos. The seamless shoulder provides improved comfort; the soft and light fabric minimises restriction on movement; and a slightly longer cut means your waist isn't exposed when raising your arms up. Available in sizes S - 8XL.

Standards compliance: Orange and yellow design complies with: AS/NZS4602.1:2011 + Amdt No.1: Nov 2016 Class Day Only use. Orange and yellow material complies with: AS/NZS 1906.4.2010. Suitable for Day Only time usage. All colours AS/NZS4399 UPF 50+ Excellent rating.

ANCE

PlaceMakers is excited to bring you Pinoli – a new range of interior plywood panels made in New Zealand from sustainably grown Radiata pine.

Pino

The Pinoli range has the authenticity inherent to genuine wood products and creates spaces characterised by warmth and feeling.

Available in a broad range of profiles, Pinoli is perfect for a variety of residential and commercial settings, styles and finishes. Pinoli panels are untreated and suitable for staining, painting or clear coating. The pre-primed range has a factory-applied powder coating, allowing a topcoat to be applied immediately.



Key Deck is a solid, natural timber decking product produced from sustainable New Zealand Radiata that is FSC Certified and available from PlaceMakers. The pre-finished timber is enhanced with quarter sawing for stability and performance, new generation wood protection for durability, and a patented oil and colour impregnation process. It has a 90mm clean-tread profile, is treated to H3.2 and is available in selected lengths up to 4.8m (subject to availability at time of order).

Key Deck can easily be attached directly to the substructure, using the Camo Edge Deck Fastening system to create a concealed fix solution. Alternatively, conventional top fixed screws can be used.



With contemporary colours and effortless style, the GB Masonry Breeze Block range has been designed to complement modern designs.

The Wedge & Diamond Breeze Block designs are available through PlaceMakers now and are already drawing an enthusiastic response from our customers looking for a distinctive walling option that offers a unique aesthetic and ventilation.

MBIE

2019 IN REVIEW – REGULATORY CHANGES

2019 was a year of changes for the building and construction sector, largely led by the Government. On the basis of new partnerships with industry, the Government has sought its views and instigated a number of new initiatives as a result. We take a bird's eye view of some of the changes over the year...

> APRIL – The Ministry of Business, Employment and Innovation (MBIE) releases the **Building System** Legislative Reform Programme, which proposes major changes to New Zealand's building laws, for public consultation. The proposed changes affect five areas: building products and methods, risk and liability, occupational regulation, the building levy, and offences, penalties and public notification.

JUNE - Regular six-monthly updates to the Building Code are introduced. These are to assist MBIE in being more responsive to industry and reduce the number and scale for any changes required. They also provide the flexibility to enable timely, incremental changes to be made, while also allowing more complex changes to be rolled over into the next update cycle if required.

OCTOBER – The first Building System Legislative Reform Programme decisions are announced: streamlining consents for prefabrication and off-site manufacturing, requiring better information and clear responsibilities for building product manufacturers and suppliers, strengthening the framework for product certification, reducing the building levy, and updating Building Act offences and penalties.

OCTOBER - Government procurement rules updated to replace focus on 'lowest price' to a 'broader outcome model' and require government departments to consider factors including: skills development and training undertaken by construction companies and their subcontractors, whether there is strong governance over the project, and sustainable building practices such as using sustainable materials and minimising waste.



DECEMBER – Building Amendment Act - a new system for managing buildings after an emergency is introduced, which gives clear legislative powers for investigating building failures.



DECEMBER - The Accord Transformation Plan, which builds on the momentum of the Construction Sector Accord, is launched. It will set out initiatives that will be implemented in the short, medium and longer term to drive the right behaviours and practices among all players in the sector. The Accord has generated strong interest, with nearly 500 people and businesses signing up on the Accord website to get involved in sector transformation.



JUNE – Consultation closes on MBIE's Building System Legislative Reform Programme. The resulting recommended

changes to the Building Act are intended to be presented to

come into effect shortly after, with other changes to follow

through 2020 and 2021.

Parliament mid-2020, with the aim of having the first changes

AUGUST - Vocational Education Reform Bill introduced to Parliament - includes re-design of how apprenticeships will work.



OTHER CHANGES UNDER WAY:

- done without a building consent.
- legislation is having on firms. The Minister for Building and Construction will be releasing the report publicly in the near future.
- A significant new piece of work is under way to consider how the built environment can contribute to Government's climate change goals.



JULY - Changes to the Building Act were announced, making it easier to undertake modest building work on earthquake-prone buildings, without needing to do seismic strengthening at the same time.

Progress on additional exemptions under Schedule 1 is under way, meaning that this year there will be even more work that can be

A review of the industry's response to the retention money provisions introduced in 2017 to protect sub-contractors was completed. The review looked at factors such as awareness of the regime, extent of compliance, signs of behaviour change in the sector, and the impact the

MBIE



A VIEW FROM THE BOARD



The LBP scheme was founded on having skilled people doing the job correctly the first time. If you do so, there will be very little chance you will come before the Board

The 2019 Annual Report of the Building Practitioners Board shows that the number of complaints against LBPs is low but there are trends we can learn from

he Licensed Building Practitioner (LBP) scheme is overseen by the Building Practitioners Board (the Board).

The Board's functions are to hear appeals against licensing decisions of the Registrar of LBPs, investigate and hear complaints about LBPs, and approve rules for LBPs. Every year we review our operations and report to the Minister for Building and Construction.

Our 2019 Annual Report is now available on the LBP website. The report highlights trends we are seeing within the LBP scheme, and the board

www.building.govt.nz

encourages you to have a read.

NINE OF 250 COMPLAINTS RESULT IN CANCELLED LICENCE

The commentary on complaints may seem a bit grim, but given that there are over 25,000 LBPs, the number of complaints is very low, with around 1% of LBPs coming to the attention of the Board. This suggests a lot of good work is being undertaken, and consumers rarely feel the need to report LBPs to the Board.

This year was a busy one, with the Board receiving over 250 complaints and holding 143 hearings. Many of the

complaints did not proceed to a hearing. This was often because the Board believed the threshold for discipline had not been met or there was not enough evidence.

As a result of the hearings, 119 complaints (84%) were upheld, which means the LBP was found to have committed an offence and held to account. Of those LBPs who were disciplined, nine had their licence cancelled, five were suspended, four were ordered to undertake training, and the majority were fined and required to pay costs. The fines ranged from approximately \$5,000 to \$7,000

at the higher end and \$500 to \$1,500 at the lower end.

Of the LBPs sanctioned, ten also had their name published in Codewords to alert the industry to the severity of their offending. This represents a minority of cases (8%), as the Board only orders publication (over and above the inclusion in the register and in the decision documentation) when there is a perceived need for the public and/or profession to know the findings of the hearing.

KEY THEMES

One of the key themes from the complaints was LBPs starting work before the building consent had been issued. The Board understands there is often pressure to get started, but the law is clear. As an LBP, you need to be strong and refuse to start work before you have sighted the stamped copy of the building consent and any amendments. Note that building work includes demolition and preliminary work on the foundations.

Many LBPs still think that if they ignore a notice of complaint issued by the Board, nothing will happen. In fact, the opposite is the case. No response from an LBP generally leaves the Board with

no option but to proceed.

process have a much better chance of providing credible evidence that may persuade the Board not to proceed to a hearing. If the complaint does proceed to a hearing, evidence provided much earlier in the process is seen as more genuine.

BOARD OF EXPERIENCE

Some LBPs come to a hearing and try to excuse poor work by saying they had been ordered from the site and that the errors would have been picked up at the end of the job. While in some cases this may be correct, the Board is made up of practitioners with many years of experience who understand the job. They can tell the difference between unfinished work and snag-list items, and cases where the LBP clearly did not do the job correctly in the first place, or in sequence, and the cost to remediate would have been high.

The LBP scheme was founded on having skilled people doing the job correctly the first time. LBPs, especially those supervising unlicensed workers, need to take responsibility for the quality control of their work. It is not acceptable to do poor building work and hope mistakes

This article is an excerpt from Codewords Issue 93. Reading Codewords articles that are relevant to your licence class is a mandatory requirement for Licensed Building Practitioners. These questions can be answered through the LBP portal, online at underconstruction.placemakers.co.nz or recorded on the magazine, then provided at the time of renewal.

CODEWORDS QUIZ ISSUE 93

- (1) If you are notified of a complaint against you, you should:
 - a) Ignore it, hopefully it will blow over.
 - b) Engage with the investigation, so you can provide evidence that may exonerate you.
 - c) Get legal advice, if you feel you need to.
- d) Both b. and c.

- (2) following:
- conduct b) Hearing appeals against licensing
- decisions made by the Registrar.

LBPs who engage early with the

As an LBP, you need to be strong and refuse to start work before you have sighted the stamped copy of the building consent and any amendments

will be picked up later, maybe by the council, or go undetected.

The complaints process is a valuable tool to ensure consumers have confidence in the system and LBPs are held to account in a fair and timely manner. If you do the job correctly the first time, fix issues, communicate well, and take pride in your LBP status, there will be very little chance you will come before the Board.





MBIE

KEEPING YOUR RECORDS STRAIGHT



Each LBP who does RBW must complete a ROW. Make sure you only sign off on work you've completed or supervised

It's important to provide a Record of Work upon completion of Restricted Building Work

R ecords of Work must be filled in on time, every time, to avoid complaints being made against you and potential disciplinary action. The Building Practitioners Board received a disappointingly high number of complaints this year about ROWs.

DON'T WITHHOLD RECORDS OF WORK

Some Licensed Building Practitioners (LBPs) hold back the ROW because they are in a dispute or because the client is behind in their payment. This is done under the belief that they can use the ROW as leverage. This is bad practice, as the disgruntled client can complain to the Board that the LBP did not complete the ROW. The Board will then have to discipline the LBP for failing to provide their ROW, regardless of any commercial dispute, as this is not a valid reason to withhold an ROW according to the Building Act. The Board has no jurisdiction over contractual disputes – it only addresses the conduct of LBPs. Therefore, the LBP can be fined, even if the client hasn't paid for the work.

KNOWING WHEN WORK IS OVER

Usually it is easy to know when to complete the ROW. The job is finished, so you complete the ROW before moving on. However, sometimes a job ends unexpectedly. Perhaps there is a dispute between contractors, or the client stops paying the bills. If the job isn't finished, but you won't be returning to finish it, you should submit an ROW. On it, you can detail what work you did complete, even though the overall job was unfinished.

> The Board has no jurisdiction over contractual disputes – it only addresses the conduct of LBPs. Therefore, the LBP can be fined, even if the client hasn't paid for the work

Sometimes it is uncertain if you will return or not. When in doubt, you can still submit an ROW on what you have done thus far. In the unlikely event you do return, you can add to your records.

SUBMIT YOUR OWN ROW, DON'T PASS TO OTHERS There is still the myth that if you're a labour-only contractor to another LBP, the head contractor will do the ROW. This is not the case. Each LBP who does RBW must complete an ROW.

Another mistake is to provide the ROW to the head contractor, who does not then pass it on to the homeowner or council. The Building Act puts the responsibility on the LBP to ensure the ROW is sent to the homeowner and council. You can still be disciplined even



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CODEWORDS QUIZ ISSUE 93

(5)

a)

ROWs to:

them

authority.

(4) When should you provide an ROW?

- a) When the client has paid for the work.
- b) When the job is complete.
- c) When your part of the job is complete, or you do not anticipate returning to do more work.
- c) The homeowner and/or the territorial authority, if they ask for one.

if you did provide the ROW to the head contractor.

TYPICAL PENALTIES

When a complaint against an LBP for failing to provide an ROW is upheld, the Board usually issues a fine and requires a payment towards the cost of the hearing. If this was the only offence committed by the LBP, the fine is typically \$1,000 to \$3,000 and costs are around \$500.



The Building Act requires LBPs to send

(6)

- The main contractor who engaged
- b) The homeowner and the territorial
- If the Board finds that you failed to provide a ROW, the likely disciplinary action will be:
- a) Cancelling your licence.
- b) A fine and payment of costs towards the enquiry.
- c) Nothing, as long as you agree to fill in the ROW.

HEALTH & SAFETY

SITE SAFE

DON'T HARDEN UP, COVER UP!



Cement may be as common as muck, but take it lightly and it can cause serious burns

resh concrete is highly alkaline, with a pH of about 12.5. As a comparison, household ammonia is 11.5 and caustic soda is 12.7. This is very bad for skin and often not enough thought is given to the potential harm to people laying it.

There are a number of potential risks:

1. CONCRETE BURNS

One of the most dangerous things about concrete, according to construction safety organisation Site Safe, is that people don't know they are being burned.

That's because alkaline chemicals damage the nerve endings first, so there can be little initial pain. However, once they do kick in, concrete burn injuries are extremely painful and can take months to heal – some treatments can even require surgical treatment in the

form of skin grafts. In extreme cases, the medical complications associated with the burn may lead to amputation or even death.

Dermatitis can occur without skin being in contact with concrete contamination, so it is vital workers wash their hands before visiting the toilet and eating

2. IRRITANT CONTACT DERMATITIS

Irritant contact dermatitis is a skin condition caused by the chemicals that make up concrete. Some particles that make up cement are abrasive and can injure the skin. If the skin is not given enough time to recover, irritant dermatitis can develop. This condition is found in many concrete workers.

Symptoms include: Stinging, itching, redness, swelling, cracking, blisters, scaling, fissures, bleeding.

Cuts or wounds heal very slowly and infections are likely.

3. ALLERGIC CONTACT DERMATITIS

Allergic contact dermatitis is a skin condition caused by an allergic reaction to concrete. Cement-based concrete contains hexavalent chromium, which causes allergies and, in some cases, cancer.

Daily exposure may take years to cause a reaction; but when it does, it is irreversible. Allergic contact dermatitis is a common reason for concrete workers to leave the industry.

Symptoms include: Swelling, redness, oozing, cracking, stinging, itching, blisters, scaling.

To control concrete risks, consider the following easy methods:

1. PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

Reduce the risk of skin contact by wearing:

- Full-length overalls with long sleeves and trouser legs that won't let dust or water in.
- Waterproof boots.
- Waterproof gloves.
- Eye protection.

Any clothing that has been contaminated by concrete should be washed and dried before it is used again. Do not allow contaminated clothing to touch skin directly.

2. HYGIENE

Dermatitis can occur without skin being in contact with concrete contamination, so it is vital workers wash their hands before visiting the toilet and eating.

The best solution is to provide a large sink – big enough for workers to submerge their forearms in - with warm water, soap and clean towels to get the concrete off. If running water is not an

option, the next best alternative is to store clean water in your work vehicle.

Don't use abrasive cleaning products or alcohol wet wipes as they can damage the skin and increase the risk of injury – a mild soap is best.

3. HEALTH MONITORING

Ensure all workers that may be exposed to concrete know what the risks are and what they must do to look after themselves.

It's recommended you get professionals to conduct regular skin exams and encourage workers to check themselves for signs and symptoms of concrete skin contact dermatitis.

4. WASTEWATER

Wastewater produced when working with concrete is toxic - it takes many thousands of litres of water to dilute one litre of alkaline back to a safe pH level (pH6-pH7).

Use these four steps to ensure runoff doesn't pollute waterways, potentially killing fish and plants:

- 1. Check the weather and pick a dry day.
- Contain the wastewater by making 2. a bunded area.

Site Safe is a not-for-profit, membership-based organisation that supports a culture of health and safety in New Zealand construction. For more information go to: www.sitesafe.org.nz

PROVE YOUR KNOWLEDGE Tick the correct answers below and record what you've learnt in the record of learning on the back page! 1) What concrete attribute makes it so 2) Why might a worker not immediately 3) Which of the following is not a recommended form of PPE to potentially dangerous to workers? realise they have been burned by control concrete risk? concrete? a) It's very sticky. Because alkaline chemicals damage the Waterproof boots. a) a) b) It's highly alkaline. nerve endings first, so there can be little b) Eye protection. c) It's highly flammable initial pain c) Ear muffs. Because it only hurts when you try to Ь)

- wash it off.
- Because it feels more like a tingling. c)

NB: The questions and answers in this section have been produced by the publisher and do not necessarily reflect views or opinions of the contributing organisation

- 3. Capture the wastewater in the bunded area.
- Clear the wastewater by 4 pumping it into a container such as a 1,000 litre cube.

5. EMERGENCY ACTION FOR CONCRETE BURNS

If there is any suspicion that a concrete burn has occurred, seek help from emergency services.

For more practical safety guides from Site Safe, visit **sitesafe.org.nz** and search 'practical safety advice'.







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NEWS

INDUSTRY FOCUS

SMALL HOMES, BIG CONFUSION

A new building trend is gaining traction, but those leading the charge in its early stages are coming up against legislation making it hard for wide adoption by the market

he tiny house movement continues to grow, offering an affordable option in the face of New Zealand's housing shortage. However, builders and homeowners are unsure what the rules are when it comes to these structures and are encountering many obstacles along the way.

The grey area in the tiny home industry has created ongoing disputes between builders, occupants and councils, as each party navigates rules that are unclear and can be interpreted differently.

WHAT IS A BUILDING?

Recent cases, such as that of Jono Voss in Lower Hutt, shine a light on the question 'what defines a building?'. Voss owns a tiny house on his friends' section in Taita and appealed to the Environment Court in October over his failure to comply with a council abatement notice. At the time of writing, both parties are awaiting the verdict.

Voss says his tiny house is registered as a trailer by the NZ Transport Agency, and therefore must be viewed as a vehicle. However, Hutt City Council disagrees. If the Council is right, it will mean Voss will have to apply for a certificate of acceptance for the work he has done without a consent, a building consent for the work he hasn't done yet as well as a resource consent.

MONSTER DEAL

VALID UNT

Together we're building

New Zealand

This case highlights the disagreement typically occurring between owners and councils across NZ.

Recent determinations by MBIE have found in favour of local building authorities issuing a notice to fix, with structures in question being classified as buildings under the Building Act.

Amberley resident Alan Dall made

an application for a Determination to MBIE, saying his unit was a vehicle, not a building, as stated by Hurunui District Council.

Dall had a trailer constructed offsite, which was registered and given a warrant of fitness before being moved to land where the unit was constructed on the trailer. The unit included a kitchen, bathroom, toilet, bedroom and living area.

The council said this was a building under the Building Act and required a building consent and that all work must comply with the building code. The notice to fix said Dall would have to remove, demolish, or apply for a certificate of acceptance.

A certificate of acceptance can be used in situations where work has been done without a building consent, or where a building consent authority cannot issue a code compliance certificate

In his application to MBIE, Dall noted that his unit was self-contained, off-grid occupied on a semi-permanent basis and could be easily moved.

The determination concluded that the unit, despite having some characteristics of a vehicle, was "more akin to a building" given that its superstructure was more comparable to a building and was not designed to move goods or people. The council's notice to fix was therefore upheld.

CHASING CLARITY

Eric Wood of Cosy homes in North Canterbury says the discussions that should be taking place aren't happening.

"There's been little to no consultation with people in the industry of building

tiny homes, and it has left those trying to build businesses and trying to get their foot on the property ladder having to navigate without an appropriate set of guidelines," said Wood.

"MBIE needs to step in and offer clarity where there's uncertainty and work with builders to come to an agreed set of rules that will facilitate the growing number of tiny homes."

INTERPRETING THE ACT

The Building Act defines a building as a "temporary or permanent movable or immovable structure". This definition includes a vehicle or motor vehicle that is immovable and is occupied by people on a permanent or long-term basis.

The plight of tiny homes have caught the support of Green Party building spokesman Gareth Hughes, who has said that tiny homes offer an innovative solution to the housing crisis.

In a parliament session earlier in the year, Hughes put forward questions to Building and Construction Minister Jenny Salesa, asking if local authorities should — given the housing crisis be supporting tiny houses instead of "punishing people who live in them, and threatening to demolish their homes".

Salesa responded, saying local authorities are responsible for interpreting the Building Act and acknowledged there may be some "differences in interpretation between local authorities" but said that is why the MBIE can settle disputes under the Building Act of 2004.

Under Construction will keep you informed as this issue develops and will report back when the verdict between Voss and the Hutt City Council is delivered.

INDUSTRY FOCUS

COMPULSORY INSURANCE ON HOLD



Amid concerns about providers' ability to meet demand, the Government has postponed ruling on the introduction of mandatory insurance cover for builders. As MBIE conducts further research into the subject, including non-regulatory options, we look at the possible effects mandatory insurance could have on the industry

urrent legislation requires builders to advise clients whether or not they can provide a builder's warranty insurance product, but evidence suggests this has not led to increased uptake.

Estimates put the current proportion of builds with insurance at 40-50%. As part of its proposed Building Law Reforms, the Government proposed making insurance mandatory for:

- Residential new builds
- Alterations over \$30k;
- Alterations over \$100k; or
- Alterations involving structural or weathertightness work.

Under Construction looks at what effects it could have on builders and

homeowners, should any of these compulsory options goes ahead.

SHORT-TERM PAIN, LONG-TERM GAIN?

From the homeowner's perspective, there would be an initial increased upfront cost – approximately \$2,000 for a \$500,000 build. On the flipside, the risk of homeowners being left out of pocket if a builder goes bust should be reduced. According to Ben Rickard from BuiltIn Insurance, the risk would be reduced because builders would need to satisfy an insurer's screening process, which usually includes proving that their business is financially stable.

"As a result, there would be an improved market of builders for homeowners to choose from, ideally containing fewer builders who are likely to go bust."

WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?

From a builder's perspective, mandatory insurance could have a significant impact.

It seems likely mandatory insurance would contribute to a move away from 'race to the bottom' pricing and assist in establishing sustainable margins in the industry

For those builders already offering insurance, it could 'even the pricing field' with those who do not currently offer insurance. It should also ensure more sustainable margins for the industry as a whole, because, in order to satisfy an insurer they won't go bust, a builder would need to demonstrate a commitment to or history of making sustainable margins.

Mandatory insurance would also relieve the builder of the unenviable task of selling the homeowner a product that can put them in questionable light. Instead, insurance would simply be a standard part of the package (though one that a homeowner could potentially actively opt out of, if any mandatory scheme included an opt-out clause).

Insurance companies vetting builders would also provide a kind of proxy minimum standard of financial stability and competency, though Ben says that doesn't necessarily mean that previously bankrupted builders wouldn't be able to get insurance.

"Each application for insurance would be assessed on its merits. Whether previous insolvency was the result of unavoidable market conditions, such as the GFC, or a result of the builder not paying their tax bill or under-pricing jobs, would need to be understood by the insurer before making their decision on whether to offer insurance."

GOOD FOR THE INDUSTRY?

Ben suggests the key benefit to the industry would be the likely removal of builders whose businesses aren't financially viable or whose building quality is poor from the market. Those builders who can't satisfy an insurer wouldn't be able to get insurance, therefore wouldn't be able to build – at least on projects above any financial level the Government determined.

"It seems likely this would contribute to a move away from 'race to the bottom' pricing and assist in establishing sustainable margins in the industry."

CAN THE INSURANCE MARKET HANDLE IT?

One of the key reasons MBIE has decided to defer its decision on mandatory insurance is the need to ensure the insurance market has the capacity to provide for it. One of the main players in the builder's warranty market, Stamford Insurance was supportive of the concept but hesitant about ability to deliver, saying:

"Stamford is very supportive of government intentions to improve consumer protection and believes every new home and significant building contract should come with an independent ten-year warranty. However, a compulsory scheme would be untenable in the present market with such a high demand for new homes against the background of a limited insurance market. Obviously, any proposals must not harm the supply side."

However, Ben has a different view of the market's capacity: "Builtin has the systems and experience to scale up both the assessment of builders wanting to offer warranty insurance and the processing of a large increase in warranty applications. While the appetite and experience of NZ-based insurers for this type of cover may be limited, there's always capacity in specialist markets overseas, as long as the numbers stack up, which a mandatory scheme would deliver."

WHAT NEXT?

When asked in January 2020 what happens next, MBIE commented: "Cabinet has deferred making decisions on whether to make guarantee and insurance products compulsory. Instead, Cabinet has directed MBIE to undertake further work, including on non-regulatory options that may support the growth of the market. MBIE is to report back to the Minister for Building and Construction later in 2020. This advice would inform any future Cabinet's decisions on whether to make guarantee and insurance products compulsory".

Until then, builders have four existing options for insurance:

- Join the Registered Master Builders Association to access member-only insurance.
- Join the New Zealand Certified Builders Association to access member-only insurance.
- Become accredited with Builtin Insurance.
- Register and be approved by Stamford Insurance.

Each option has its pros and cons, but all have membership or assessment criteria you must meet before accessing their guarantee or insurance.

INDUSTRY FOCUS

SHARING THE KNOWLEDGE



New Zealand Certified Builders (NZCB) has introduced a new membership category, 'Rusty Hammers', to encourage experienced older builders to mentor the younger generation

nspired by positive results seen in its current mentoring programme, Rusty Hammers is designed to encourage older builders, who are spending less time on the tools, to retain their trade association membership at reduced cost in exchange for providing mentoring to other builders in earlier stages of their careers.

NZCB Chief Executive Grant Florence says finding new ways to retain and continue supporting highly skilled older builders, while also harnessing their experience to nurture the next generation is important - especially given the ongoing high demand for builders and an increasingly complex regulatory and business landscape.

"Builders, who've been on the job for

decades, have built up a depth of practical experience that inherently extends well beyond what younger builders have had a chance to learn as part of their formal apprenticeship training, or in their first few years on the job. Having access to someone who's 'been there and done that' is incredibly valuable for our younger members who are being mentored," says Florence.

To be eligible for NZCB's Rusty Hammers membership category, builders need to be working for only around 20 hours per week and to have been a full NZCB member for over ten years. They must also commit to mentoring a younger builder they are matched with for 12 months, meeting at regular intervals as agreed between the mentor and mentee.

The mentoring focuses not only on technical trade skills but also on business skills, leveraging the mentors' decades of experience owning small-tomedium sized building businesses.

"Owning a small-to-medium sized business, as many of our members do, is challenging for anyone in any sector of the economy. In our sector, there is ongoing regulatory change to navigate and new demands and opportunities from developments in building materials and technologies.

"Enabling early-career builders to learn from those who've run successful building businesses for a long time, and enabling those older builders to retain their membership of NZCB, is a win-win for everyone, including consumers who ultimately benefit from this sharing of

best practice," says Florence.

Tauranga builder and NZCB member John Marsh, known as 'Swampy' by his colleagues, has been a mentor through the existing programme for three-plus years. As a veteran with more than 50 years' experience in the industry, Marsh says mentoring programmes such as Rusty Hammers are invaluable and facilitate more than just knowledge sharing.

"It does a lot for improving communication on site between the younger builders and the more experienced ones," said Marsh. "People don't talk to each other as much as they used to. They tend to spend time on their phones during breaks and don't tend to ask questions of the older people on the team.

"The mentoring programmes encourage productive discussion, while establishing a culture of not being afraid to ask questions."

As part of NZCB's existing mentorship programme, John currently provides business advice for a self-employed builder in his early 30s, meeting once a month. However, he also finds the time to mentor six younger builders in their twenties at his place of work.

> The mentoring focuses not only on technical trade skills but also on business skills, leveraging the mentors' decades of experience owning small-to-medium sized **building businesses**

"Investing in the next generation of builders is very rewarding. Whether it's teaching them theory, the basics of good business practice, or being

NEW HOME CONSENTS REACH 45-YEAR HIGH

New homes consented continue setting multi-decade highs, with the November year being the highest since 1974

total of 37,010 new homes were consented in the year ended November 2019, the first time in 45 years that the annual number exceeded 37,000.

In November alone, 3,204 new dwellings were consented a seasonally adjusted 8.5% decrease, after falling 1.5% in October.

The November figure comprised of 1,980 stand-alone houses, 722 townhouses, flats and units, 291 apartments, and 211 retirement village units.

The 37,010 new dwellings consented in the year ended November 2019 is an 13% increase from the November 2018 year.

IN THE REGIONS

Eight of the 16 regions consented more dwellings in November 2019 compared to November 2018, led by Canterbury (up 77 to 526; +17%), Wellington (up 45 to 337; +15%), Manawatu-Whanganui (up 30 to 141; +27%), and Hawke's Bay (up 30 to 91; +49%). Taranaki, Tasman, Marlborough and West Coast were other regions to consent more dwellings month-on-month.

The remaining eight regions saw a decrease in consented dwellings in November 2019 compared to November 2018, led by Auckland (down 52 to 1,120; -4%), Northland (down 33 to 96; - 25%), and Nelson (down 20 to 9; - 69%). Waikato, Bay of Plenty, Gisborne, Otago

a respectful worker, it's essential they can learn from those who have experienced success. This should help give them the skills to carve out their own career," said Marsh.

He also believes the benefits are mutual, as the younger generation is always teaching him new things.

"I'm always learning from the younger workers. They've helped me a lot with technology; they have plenty of innovative ideas and provide a different perspective.

"It's important to ensure that we teach them the essentials, but also allow them to do things their own way."

and Southland also saw decreases.

A SELLER'S MARKET

In December, Realestate.co.nz reported a record national average asking price of \$703,780 as well as a record low in new listings and total homes available for sale. It is the first time the site had recorded all three milestones in one month.

There were 24.5% fewer homes on the market than in December 2018 sitting at 18,230, a stark contrast to the high of nearly 60,000 in April 2008. Regional New Zealand was the main driver of the trends, especially regarding prices. Record asking prices were set in Bay of Plenty, Nelson, Southland, Marlborough, and Manawatu/Wanganui.

BRANZ

FUNCTIONAL FENCES





Builders are often asked to advise homeowners on fencing – this article may provide a useful starting point

f a fence is to be built on a common boundary, both neighbours are obliged to each contribute an amount equivalent to at least half the cost of a standard 'reasonably satisfactory' fence. The proportion of the costs can only be claimed from a neighbor if prior written notice is given that a fence is going to be built and the neighbor is advised of the cost of the proposed fence.

Neighbours should be consulted in the first instance, but if an agreement can't be reached over dividing the costs (or what constitutes a 'reasonable standard' of fence), there is a formal process that can be followed in which a non-cooperative neighbor is served with a Fencing Notice.

The notice must state that it is served under the Fencing Act 1978, must include the names and addresses of both parties involved and must be signed and dated. A template for such a notice is provided in the Fencing Act, which is located at **legislation.govt.nz**

under Fencing Act > schedule 1 > forms.

The notice must also describe:

- The boundary to be fenced.
- The type of fence.
- Who will build the fence.
- The estimated cost.
- How materials are to be purchased.
- The start date for the work.

If a boundary fence issue can't be resolved with tact and compromise, there are provisions in law involving notices and cross-objections that must be carried out in time frames as specified in the Fencing Act.

If there is no agreement at the end of the processes described, options such as mediation, arbitration, the Disputes Tribunal or court proceedings will need to be further investigated.

DOWN THE MIDDLE

The fence should be built with the posts centred on the boundary line or as near to it as practical. Usually, a fence of up to 2m high can be built without the need of a resource or building consent, but the relevant territorial authority should be consulted for the rules specific to the locality.

A myriad of fencing options are available, from simple post and wire fences, to prefabricated metal or timber palings or lattice work, to walls of stone, brick or concrete block.

The requirements are that they remain durable, are aesthetically pleasing, resist or deflect wind loads and comply with Resource Management Act requirements for the site in terms of heights.

For privacy, solid fences provide the greatest benefit, but for protection from the wind, the requirements are different.

SHELTER FROM THE STORM

Fences that completely block the

wind provide localised protection immediately adjacent to the fence, but create downwind turbulence (see figure 1). Angling the top or installing a strip of lattice across the top of the fence can reduce the turbulence (see figure 2).

For maximum shelter from wind, a fence should have about 40-50% of its face area open and be constructed with gaps – fewer at the base and increasing with height. Such a fence should provide a sheltered lee area with width of four to five times the height of the fence.

A fence constructed of offset horizontal planking or palings diffuses the wind as it passes through the fence. Even if the fence has more than 50% permeability, the effect of draughts are minimised because the wind cannot directly flow through the gaps.

Lattice fences have an even distribution of solid material and gaps to moderate the airflow, although they do not have the progressive increasing of open area recommended above. The approximate permeability of lattice fences is:

- 20mm lattice with 20mm apertures = 23% permeability.
- 50mm lattice with 50mm apertures = 25% permeability.
- 25mm lattice with 50mm apertures = 42% permeability.

Vertical paling or board fences provide greater protection from the wind when the gaps and palings are narrower and of similar sizes. Where wide palings are used, the wind that passes through the gaps will be more noticeable.

Windbreak fabrics can be fixed over wire or timber fences to provide additional wind protection. Such protection may be useful on a temporary basis until wind-tolerant planting is established.

In areas subject to frost, leave a small



gap at the bottom of a fence or planting (particularly if there is a vegetable garden behind the fence) to avoid trapping cold air and to reduce the risk or severity of the frost.

TIMBER POST AND RAIL FENCES

- Use H4-treated or naturally durable timber for all in-ground material. Using H4 treated timber (or equivalently durable timber) for the bottom rail of a fence is desirable where it is likely that the rail will be covered by or in contact with mulch.
- Posts should be placed 100mm into the ground for every 300mm above ground.
- Ensure the excavation is filled with rodded concrete (preferably) or thoroughly rammed earth – limiting fence height to 1m is recommended when rammed earth is used to fill post holes.
- Keep timber rail spans smaller rather than larger. The longer the span, the greater the potential for sag in the completed fence – for example, limit the span of a 100x50mm rail on edge to less than 2.4m.

Other factors to consider for timberframed fences are:

Ensure fixings holding trellis panels together will be durable - staples use.

- should be stainless steel for external



- Keep fibre-cement and profiled steel fence panels clear of the ground.
- Select fittings such as gate hinges and catches that are durable stainless steel fittings are preferable to zinc-plated fittings, which are not suitable for external use on treated timber.
- Ensure the spans of fencing panels are in the limits set by the manufacturer – typically 600mm maximum for fibre-cement.
- For profiled steel claddings:
- Don't use unfinished zinc/ aluminium alloy-coated steel in corrosion zones D or E.
- Ensure factory coatings are undamaged.
- Use colour-matched fixings suitable for the corrosion zone.
- Limit spans (supporting framing spacing) to 1200mm.
- Avoid use where the surface will not be regularly cleaned by rain.
- For fibre-cement:

•

- Use hot-dip galvanised fixings in corrosion zones B and C and stainless steel in zones D and E.
- Paint for durability.
- Limit spans (supporting framing spacing) to 600mm.

BRANZ

FUNCTIONAL FENCES CONTINUED



BRICK AND CONCRETE BLOCK FENCES OR WALLS

- Ensure there is a solid bearing.
- Provide a concrete foundation beam to lay the wall over.
- Ensure the base of the wall is sufficiently into the ground, anchored to a footing or has structural piers/columns or returns to prevent overturning. In some cases, concrete piles under each column may be required to extend deep into the ground to provide a firm footing. The advice of an engineer should be obtained.
- Reinforce as for a concrete block foundation wall.
- Keep trees a sufficient distance away from the fence or wall to prevent roots affecting it.
- Cap the wall to restrict water entry.

STEEL OR ALUMINIUM FENCING

- Embed posts into the ground as detailed for timber.
- Cap the tops of posts to prevent water entry and accumulation in the post (a known cause of accelerated deterioration).
- For steel, hot-dip galvanise, powder coat or protect with a specialised coating system.
- For aluminium, uncoated use is acceptable in most environments.
- Avoid coating damage during transport, handling and installation.
- Match fixings to the material.

If using a proprietary system, follow the manufacturer's installation instructions.

STONE WALLS

There are a number of design and construction options for stone walls. They can be:

- Free-standing.
- Used as a veneer or facing to a concrete or concrete masonry structural wall.
- Used as a veneer to the polystyrene formwork of a reinforced concrete retaining wall.
- Solid stone structural walls (usually limited to low height), laid with mortar or without (dry stone).
- Built with incorporated piers or columns, either structural or for decorative purposes.

1200 0001

AVI20

40%

are within a

Constructed from uncut stone, where • adjoining sides of the stone are not at right angles (such as river

boulders or quarry stone), or ashlar, where the adjoining sides have been cut or dressed so that they are at right angles to each other.

- Coursed, where some effort is made to align horizontal and/or vertical joints, or random, where a stone is either cut to fit or selected for the space available.
- For coursed work, there are a number of combinations:
- Random squared (or dressed) stone, • also called random coursed ashlar, to a general arrangement of courses.
- Broken ashlar, where no attempt • is made to course the work – each stone is cut for a specific location.
 - Ashlar, where cut stones are laid in continuous horizontal courses with plumb vertical joints.



Options include:

- Regular pattern using stones of a consistent size, laid stretcher bond (coursed ashlar)
- Variable course height (although stonework is of a consistent height and length in each course) with stretcher bond vertical joints
- Variable course height (although stonework is of a consistent height in each course) using stones of different lengths to give random vertical joints (blocked course ashlar).

- Coursed random uncut stone, where some effort is made to produce a coursed effect.
- Broken coursed (in quarried stone).
- Random uncut stone (in river stones and boulders).

Considerations include:

- The wall height and the width available to build the wall in.
 - The availability of suitable stone.
 - The time available for laying, for



This article was first published in BRANZ's Landscape Construction. www.branz.co.nz. Words and figures supplied by BRANZ.

PROVE YOUR KNOWLEDGE

Tick the correct answers below and record what you've learnt in the record of learning on the back page!

4) What does NOT need to be included on a Fencing Notice?a) The start date of construction	 5) What is the approxi of lattice fences with with 20mm aperture 	m n
	a) 23%.	
 c) Examples of previous fences you 	b) 25%.	
have built.	c) 43%.	

example, broken ashlar is a timeconsuming laying method.

- The construction method whether it is being constructed as a dry stone wall without mortar to bed the stones or mortared.
- The foundation detail
- What will prevent the wall from overturning.
- Whether the wall is retaining soil if so, it must be designed for the loads.

- ate permeability 20mm lattice
- 6) Why should you leave a gap at the bottom of a fence in areas to subject to frost?
- a) To avoid trapping cold air and to reduce the risk or severity of the frost.
- To allow room for frost-resistant b) plants
- c) To prevent blocks of ice building up and splitting the timber.

NB: The questions and answers in this section have been produced by the publisher and do not necessarily reflect views or opinions of the contributing organisatio

CONCRETE NZ

HOW TO AVOID CONCRETE CRACKS





Depending where you are in the country, spring and summer can be high-risk periods for early-age concrete cracking. Higher daytime temperatures and dry winds, along with low evening temperatures, are a perfect recipe for the creation of cracks

f you want to minimise the time spent investigating and rectifying unwanted cracks in concrete, now is the time to understand the issues and the action you can take to avoid problems. The following looks at cracks which form in concrete after it has been placed but before it has set — when the concrete is in its plastic state.

PLASTIC CRACKING

The formation of cracks in concrete is somewhat inevitable and can form prior to the concrete setting, or after it is in its hardened state. During the setting stage, the moisture content of the concrete changes and water is given off, and hence the concrete shrinks. This shrinkage leads to a volume change, and as concrete has a low tensile strength, if this volume change is restrained, cracks will form. However, appropriate measures can entirely eliminate, or at the very least minimise, the formation of these unwanted cracks.

Cracks which form before the concrete has fully hardened (usually not less than about eight hours) are known as plastic cracks. Plastic cracking occurs as either shrinkage cracks or settlement cracks.

PLASTIC SHRINKAGE CRACKS

Once concrete is in place, evaporation can only occur from the free surface. In the absence of appropriate precautions, and in unfavourable drying conditions, the rate of evaporation at the surface

can be greater than the rate with which water within the concrete can migrate to the surface to make good the loss. The highest risk weather for plastic shrinkage cracking is sunny and/or windy days with low humidity levels.

After concrete has been placed, vibrated, screeded and floated, it is left so the bleed water can rise to the surface. The slab cannot be finished until it is hard and the bleed water has evaporated. The bleed water will appear within about 15 minutes of placing and the slab is ready for finishing after several hours, depending on the concrete temperature. If the top surface is allowed to dry before final finishing,

then plastic shrinkage cracking may occur.

The risk of plastic shrinkage occurring is greatest when:

- The temperature difference between the concrete and air temperature is large. In spring, this type of cracking can occur in an area exposed to the sun, while shaded concrete remains uncracked. Concrete exposed to the sun can be significantly hotter than the air temperature.
- Low bleed concrete mixes (eg, superplasticised mixes and/ or mixes with high quantities of ultrafines) are used. The more concrete bleeds, the less likely it is that the surface will prematurely dry out. As such, greater precautions are required when using low bleed concrete mixes.
- There are low humidity days.
- There are high wind speeds.

WHAT DO PLASTIC SHRINKAGE **CRACKS LOOK LIKE?**

Usually, the cracks occur either while finishing or within 30 minutes to six hours of finishing, form without any regular pattern, and may range from 25mm to 2m in length. They may be straight or jagged and often intersect each other forming T junctions or acute angles. The cracks vary in width from a hairline to perhaps 3mm. Additionally, while they are surface-related, the cracks may extend deeper with subsequent drying of the slab.

HOW CAN PLASTIC SHRINKAGE **CRACKING BE AVOIDED?**

The most effective way to reduce the risk of plastic shrinkage cracking is to prevent rapid loss of moisture from the surface of the concrete.

Practices to achieve this are:

Dampen the subgrade and formwork, while also ensuring any excess water is removed prior to

placing concrete.

- In hot weather, lower the temperature of the fresh concrete by using cool aggregates if possible.
- Erect wind breaks to reduce wind velocity over the concrete surface.
- The use of polythene sheets on the top surface of the concrete will prevent both evaporation and air movement. These should be used with caution when trying to obtain a consistent colour to the slab.
- Use a proprietary evaporation retardant spray. These are inexpensive and provide a good degree of protection if used in instructions.
- Add polypropylene fibres to the concrete mix.

The use of polypropylene fibres works by evenly distributing many small reinforcement fibres throughout the mass of the concrete, in all directions, and intersecting any micro-cracking that occurs when the concrete shrinks.

Their physical properties are designed to match the properties (eq, the modulus of elasticity) of fresh concrete. Polypropylene fibres usually provide sufficient extra strength to prevent microcracks from widening and hence restrict the formation of plastic shrinkage cracking. Fibres are typically added at the batching plant and therefore their use requires planning. Your ready-mix concrete supplier will be able to advise on the appropriate dosage

Commence curing promptly after finishing is complete and ensure the surface is subject to continuous curing. Providing a fog mist spray to increase humidity above the concrete is a good means of

accordance with the manufacturer's

achieving this, although it may be difficult to get a uniform application during windy conditions. It is important excess water is not added to the surface.

PLASTIC SETTLEMENT CRACKS

Another form of cracking which occurs during the plastic stage of the concrete setting process is plastic settlement cracking.



Settlement cracks following straight rebar lines

Most concrete, after it is placed, bleeds. This means that water rises to the surface as the solid particles settle. The bleed water evaporates and there is a loss of total volume (ie, the concrete has 'settled'). If there is no restraint, the net result is simply a very slight lowering of the surface level. However, if there is something near the surface, such as a reinforcing bar, which restrains part of the concrete from settling while the concrete on either side continues to drop, there is potential for a crack to form over the restraining element.

Settlement cracks tend to follow a regular pattern, replicating the lines of restraint – usually the reinforcement or a change in section. Generally, the cracks are not deep, but, because they tend to follow and penetrate down to the reinforcement, they may reduce the durability of a structure.

TECHNICAL

CONCRETE NZ

HOW TO AVOID CONCRETE CRACKS

Plastic settlement is affected by the following factors:

- Rate of bleeding from the concrete.
- Time over which settlement can take place - ie, the time before it sets.
- Depth of reinforcement relative to total thickness of the section.
- Size of reinforcement
- Constituents of the mix.
- Slump

PREVENTION OF PLASTIC SETTLEMENT CRACKING

Plastic settlement cracks may be prevented, or rather closed, by revibrating the concrete after settlement is virtually complete and it has begun to set. However, the timing is critical and considerable experience is needed to know when that critical time is.

If revibration is done too early, more settlement could occur. If it is done too late, it could damage the bond between the concrete and reinforcement.



Other procedures which may help reduce plastic settlement cracking include using:

- Lower slump mixes.
- More cohesive mixes.
- An air entrainer to improve cohesiveness and reduce bleeding.
- Increasing cover to top bars.

With an understanding of the causes and precautions that can be taken to avoid plastic cracking, this common surface defect can be easily controlled.

concretenz

The Information Bulletin IB 73 Cracking contains more information about concrete cracking and is available for download from www.concretenz.org.nz.

CONCRETE

Concrete NZ is aligned with the New Zealand Concrete Contractors Association (NZCCA). To be a member of the NZCCA requires a high standard of knowledge and practical experience. To find out more visit www.nzconcretecontractors.org.nz

8)

PROVE YOUR KNOWLEDGE

Tick the correct answers below and record what you've learnt in the record of learning on the back page!

- 7) Why does the concrete shrink in the setting stage?
- The moisture content of the concrete a) changes and water is given off.
- b) Because warm air is being used to set it
- c) Because it was poured wrong.
- To avoid plastic shrinkage cracks, in general you should:
- a) Prevent rapid loss of moisture from the surface of the concrete.
- b) Keep concrete warm while it dries.
- c) Expose concrete to dry wind.
- 9) A feature of settlement cracks is:
- a) They tend to follow a regular pattern replicating the lines of the reinforcement.
- b) They may reduce the durability of a structure
- c) Both answers.

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TIPS

THE SUCCESSFUL BUILDER

GETTING THE LITTLE THINGS RIGHT



Take care of the little things, such as good communication, and you could turn clients into repeat customers and/or third-party endorsers

Having a happy client at the end of a job relies on getting the little things right every day, with your client and with your team

his scene might sound familiar: you have nearly finished a renovation; it's been a long job with some difficult patches and now the end is in sight. There have been a few challenges, and you have overcome these, yet the client is showing signs they are not totally happy. Maybe some necessary variations and tagged out areas cost more than initially thought, or the schedule has gone over, but what is worrying is that the client is questioning every dollar spent and talking about holding back payments. Why would they do that?

You have done your best – even more in some cases. But the relationship has soured. It's difficult and you wonder if you will even have the courage to ask for a testimonial. What will they say? It might not be flattering.

Wouldn't it be better if, in spite of the building challenges that all builders

experience, your client would rave about you and tell all their friends? Is that possible? Yes - when the client feels really good about the experiences they've had.

Here are some tips for making sure that your customers feel good about you and your company – right up to the end of the build.

1.LOVE YOUR TEAM

This might seem odd initially, but it has a huge impact on your client's wellbeing. It's where you start creating fans of your business.

When you set the example and love your team, when you focus on solving their problems, you are teaching them how to do the same with your clients. Your clients will love this! When you stand with your team and face a problem together and walk in their shoes, they know you care about them and they learn! You are creating a winning culture.

How often I hear of builders who 'blow up' at their team. Something's not quite right, or they get a little behind. So, they 'let them have it'. Sure, it might get them going for a time, but it builds up resentment, and it's probably the number one reason carpenters change employers (a popular employers' bestseller is titled Love 'Em or Lose 'Em.).

Creating clients who love your company starts with you creating a team who love working for you. So, practice building great rapport with your team. Show them you respect them and, when there is a problem, don't humiliate them. Deal with it in a way that leaves them feeling valued and respected.

2. MAJOR ON THE MINORS

A wise sage once said, "it's the little

foxes that spoil the vines". I think this is teaching that the repetition of lots of little annoying things causes much more frustration than a bigger one-off problem. So, teach and resource your team to be aware of the little things that annoy clients. Then teach them to do the little things that show your clients how you go about overcoming those things. Most importantly, teach them to do it regularly.

A great build experience is built on lots of little things done well repeatedly. For example, ensure that your team is practiced at turning up on time and always doing what they promise. Maybe you can help the foreman on a renovation job to plan well, so your team doesn't destroy the garden. Or, give your guys the tools, training and time to ensure that the job site is kept tidy.

But with all of these little things, do it more than once. Make them habitual - build them into your regular weekly reporting processes. The expenditure on these 'little things' – these caring routines - will pay off in the end.

3.COMMUNICATE CLEARLY

There is no question that when your client receives less than what they expected, they will be disappointed.

When you estimate a job at \$100,000 and it finishes up at \$115,000, they will not like paying the difference. Even though you said it was an estimate and the \$115,000 is justified, they will still be disappointed, because they heard \$100,000.

What you say and what your client hears can be two very different things. So, in order to communicate clearly, check what your client has heard you say.

For example, after presenting an estimate, you might want to ask: "Because most jobs end up costing x% (10% - 25%) above the estimated amount, do you still want to proceed knowing that it is possibly going to cost more than the quoted amount?"

Or: "The completed job is very likely to cost x-amount extra, because of all the things we haven't built into the estimate. Will this additional expenditure of x-amount be a problem for you?"

Or, when discussing a variation or change order, write it up and have your client read it carefully before signing, so they know precisely how much extra they will need to pay.

Having a good management system

Graeme Owen is a builders' business coach at thesuccessfulbuilder.com. Since 2006, he has helped builders throughout New Zealand get off the tools, make decent money, and get more time in their lives. Grab a copy of his free book: The 15 Minute Sales Call Guaranteed To Increase Your Conversion Rate: thesuccessfulbuilder.com/book-15-min-sales-call or join Trademates and connect with builders who are scaling too: www.facebook.com/groups/TradeMates

PROVE YOUR KNOWLEDGE Tick the correct answers below and record what you've learnt in the record of learning on the back page! 10) Treating your team with respect is 11) Communicating clearly is especially 12) When there is a disagreement between important because it: important when it relates to: you and the client, it is important to: Explaining quotes and the possibility of additional costs to the client. Go through the facts and establish who is right and who is wrong. a) Makes them feel valued and respected a) a) and therefore more likely to continue working for you. b) What type of tea the crew like. b) Defend your team. Teaches your team how to treat your b) c) All the details of how the job will be c) See the issue from the client's client perspective and even if you need to undertaken. c) Both of the other answers. respectfully explain how they are wrong, ensure they feel listened to.

NB: The questions and answers in this section have been produced by the publisher and do not necessarily reflect views or opinions of the contributing organisation

that updates expenditure and likely final cost can remove doubt and ensure clear financial communication.

4.RIGHT OR WRONG -SEE IT FROM YOUR **CLIENT'S PERSPECTIVE**

When a customer tells you or a team member that they are not happy about something, do you or your team member immediately spring to the defence?

It is much better to listen carefully and recognise that your client is telling you how they are feeling about the service they are experiencing. It's an opportunity for you to see things from their perspective. They may be right, or they may be wrong. Either way, being right or wrong is far less important than feeling valued.

If they are right and you agree to a change, or if they are wrong and you respectfully show them where, then you have won a friend. Clients who become friends become fans and make great referrers.

TAKEAWAY

Ask yourself - what one thing can you implement right now that would help your client feel better about your company?

BUILTIN

WHEN DID THE DAMAGE OCCUR?

BUILTIN



Damage might be discovered months or years after the build is complete, but it's when this damage occurred that matters for insurance

Builtin looks at what events can trigger a public liability insurance claim, how this is determined, and what this means when it comes to cancelling insurance

here are a few key triagers that must be met before your public liability insurance claim can even be considered. First, the event which triggers the claim must be within the policy period. This can be a source of misunderstanding, because there are often a few different events associated with a claim, so you need to understand which is the important one.

DIFFERENT EVENTS:



The only important event when it comes to a public liability claim is when the damage actually happened. It doesn't matter when you did the work, when the damage was discovered, or when you were told about it. The claim should still be made under the policy that was in place when the damage occurred, even if it was years earlier.

AN EXAMPLE

A renovation of a residential property was completed in January 2012. In 2018 a leak was discovered; it had taken time to penetrate internal linings and only came to light after discolouration started to appear. It was determined that the leak began sometime in 2014, with damage to the framing timber starting in 2015 after

months of being wet. The homeowner made a claim on their insurance, which was declined, so the homeowner notified the builder in January 2019 that they would be holding him liable for the repair costs.

In this case, the builder needs to claim on the policy he had in place in 2015. Even if he has changed insurers in that time, the insurer of the policy he had in 2015 should be the one to respond to claims for events during that policy period, even if the claim is made years later. If he had cancelled his policy in 2013 after the job was finished, but



before damage had occurred, he would have no cover as the event triggering the claim (ie, when the damage occurred) happened in 2015.

> It's a good idea to keep your cover in place for a while after you've finished the job, including after you retire

WHEN DOES WET TIMBER **BECOME DAMAGED?**

Most of the time, it's easy to identify when the damage occurred. It's when you dropped the rangehood onto the induction cooktop, or when the digger hit the underground pipe. In other situations, it can be very difficult - as with timber that gets wet and rots.

In a famous legal case between Arrow International and QBE, the judge decided that damage occurs when there has been "an alteration to the physical state of the timber which impairs its value or usefulness as a component in the building". This is not necessarily

when it first becomes wet or even when it is discovered. The judge said that damage had clearly been suffered when rotting of the timber had occurred. There is also a reference to "de minimis" which basically means the damage has to have reached a minimum threshold for it to be considered as such.

The judge indicated that, in the absence of any expert advice to the contrary, damage to timber is deemed to occur within 6-18 months of completion of the work. It was further agreed that once a building starts to leak, there will be enough moisture in the wood to promote fungal growth within three to six months. During the next six months, decay will advance so that it is well under way; such that the strength of the wood is compromised. Physical damage, in terms of the policy, has occurred by then, although "each case must be examined on its own facts".

GRADUAL DAMAGE/ **DETERIORATION EXCLUSION**

insurers have added an exclusion to public/general liability cover (and to domestic house policies) that excludes claims from gradual deterioration, such as rotting timber.

However, there is always the potential

Builtin are New Zealand's trade insurance experts. For more information visit www.builtin.co.nz, email Ben Rickard at ben@builtin.co.nz or call him on 0800 BUILTIN

PROVE YOUR KN Tick the correct answers below and rec	DWLEDGE ord what you've learnt in the record of lea	arning on the back page!
 13) Which of these is the most important event for liability insurance to kick in? a) When the damage is reported to you. b) When the damage occurred. c) When the damage is discovered. 	 14) According to a famous legal decision, unless expert evidence shows otherwise, water damage to timber is deemed to have occurred: a) 6-18 months after completion of the build. b) At completion of the build. c) 6-18 months before the damage is discovered. 	 15) Why should a builder continue to insure their work after they retire? a) In case the homeowner causes damage to the home. b) In case damage is found to have occurred (possibly months or years) after a build was completed. c) Because it's easier to not cancel the insurance.

Unfortunately, since this case most

for delayed damage claims from other events.

IN A NUTSHELL

One of the key triggers for a liability claim is that the damage must have occurred during the policy period. In some cases, this can happen months or years after the job was done. This is why it's a good idea to keep your cover in place for a while after you've finished the job, including after you retire.



SPONSORSHIP NEWS

A YEAR OF CHARITY

Communities around the country boosted by incredible local store fundraising

rom golf days to silent auctions, dozens of BBQs and even a long-distance scooter rally, a staggering \$211,514 was donated to community groups and individuals through the PlaceMakers Foundation in 2019.

The inaugural PlaceMakers Foundation Working Bee grant saw 3-year-old Harry Finch's family receive \$100,000 from the sale of two container houses built and sold to fund life-changing leg surgery and ongoing physio costs for the Otago youngster, who was born with Spastic Diplegia Cerebral Palsy. Thanks to the \$25,000 Working Bee grant, Cromwell builder Derek Craig was able to finish his ambitious project, with support from dozens of local tradies and PlaceMakers Cromwell, then donate the entire \$100,000 raised the Finch family.

An impressive range of activities were organised with a couple of stand-out commendations – the PlaceMakers Invercargill team brought in a whopping \$120,000 for the Prostate Cancer Foundation and Hospice Southland with its bi-annual Southern Scooter Challenge, PlaceMakers Albany raised \$15,000 for Cure Kids, and PlaceMakers Waiheke's golf day raised \$6,000 for the Auckland Rescue Helicopter Trust! PlaceMakers Evans Bay also raised \$6,000 to support vital initiatives for local mental health charities through a variety of events.

A particularly special recipient of store-raised funds was Ian 'Ollie' Olsen, a former long-standing staff member at PlaceMakers Whangarei who was severely injured due to a workplace accident. His team rallied together to arrange a trade BBQ breakfast and open auction to fund the creation of a home workshop where Ian can continue to use his hands and carpentry skills. Their goal of \$10,000 was far exceeded and \$15,000 was raised for Ian's workshop.

Bruce McEwen, NZ Distribution Chief Executive and PlaceMakers Foundation Chair, is thrilled with the number of events, funds raised and positive impact on community projects in 2019.

"I'm very proud and inspired by the way our stores have supported such a diverse range of people last year. It's a true reflection of the deep connection between stores, staff and communities nationwide."



More than 100 riders rode from Bluff to Queenstown for the bi-annual Southern Scooter Challenge

The PlaceMakers Foundation combines charitable giving, the skills of PlaceMakers' own staff and customers, and all available resources to help make a lasting difference in communities around the country. From a helping hand for local groups to bringing major projects to fruition through the Working Bee programme, the goal of the PlaceMakers Foundation is to make a change and together build a better New Zealand.

See more about the great initiatives here:

Date

foundation.placemakers.co.nz



Evidence of actual learning rather than just 'participation' is a key requirement of the LBP renewal process.

COD	EWORDS	UNDER CONSTRUCTION					
1	5	1)	6)	11)			
2	6	2)	7)	12)			
3		3)	8)	13)			
4		4)	9)	14)			
		5)	10)	15)			

PROVE YOUR KNOWLEDGE

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For ease of record keeping, use this coupon to collate your answers from within this issue of **Under Construction** and then sign and date it as proof of your own learning.

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