ISSUE 104

UNDER CONSTRUCTION

GET YOUR JUNE/JULY 2024 SKILLS MAINTENANCE POINT!

JULY 26TH

THE COUNTDOWN IS ON!

PARIS 2024 OLYMPIC GAMES

PlaceMakers®

Official Partner

NZ TEAM

Proud to be part of the NZ Team

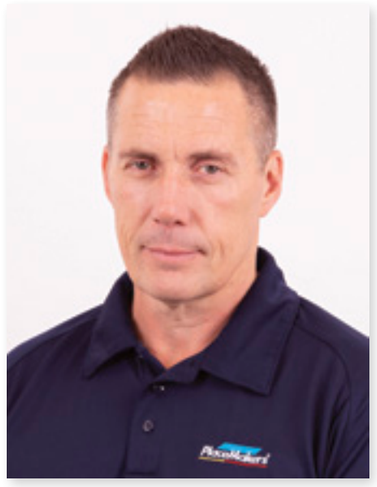
PlaceMakers is excited to get behind the New Zealand Team and their campaign at the Paris 2024 Olympic Games. We're also adding a little something to the mix with PlaceMakers Podium Picks. Find out more on page 14.

PlaceMakers®

Together we're building New Zealand

FOREWORD VIEW FROM THE GM OPERATIONS

SUSTAINABLE INNOVATION



Sustainability continues to be a watchword for those involved in the construction industry, from builders to suppliers to trade merchants like us. In this issue, H1 Energy Efficiency regulations are back in focus, as we review new product solutions, hear from builders about how they're coping with compliance and cover a range of related topics

PlaceMakers continues to lead the building supplies industry in supporting construction companies through regulatory changes such as H1. Our 'All Over H1' online guide is one of the most comprehensive resources for product solutions available and is currently being updated to reflect the latest developments being introduced to market. This includes two concrete slab edge insulation products, both of which are also profiled on page 4.

One innovative H1 development comes from very close to home. A team from the PlaceMakers Frame and Truss division – working under the name of Framology – has developed a 90mm framing solution that helps meets the required R2.0 construction R-value for walls. Read more about this on page 8!

> **We are thrilled to be supporting the NZ Team as they head overseas to the Paris 2024 Olympics Games! Find out how you can be part of the Games through our new Podium Picks App and other exciting initiatives on page 14**

While new options and construction methods continue to (hopefully) make compliance easier to achieve, we hear from three builders on whether H1 has been causing them a headache or not. Read their responses on page 3.

Meanwhile, on page 30, BRANZ answers a common question regarding ventilation in skillion roofs within the context of H1 requirements.

As builders' outputs are increasingly focused on delivering more sustainable results for customers, many are turning their attention to how their internal business practices can be improved. PlaceMakers has been doing the same – including the reduction of plastic packaging in our stores with help from key suppliers. Read more on page 6.

Sustainability extends to ensuring our local communities are well-supported and given the right opportunities to thrive. That's what drives our involvement in initiatives such as the Ara Education Charitable Trust, which gives students a leg-up into the construction industry – and we're proud of how, again, our suppliers have stood alongside us. Turn to page 10 for more information.

Last but not least, we are thrilled to be supporting the NZ Team as they head overseas to the Paris 2024 Olympics Games! Find out how you can be part of the Games through our new Podium Picks App and other exciting initiatives on page 14. Go NZ Team!

Shane Cornelius

General Manager Operations

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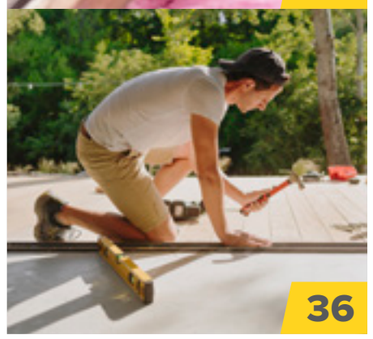

NEWS

FEATURES

OTHER STUFF

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BUILDERS BUSINESS

IS H1 CAUSING A HEADACHE?

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 have been the implications of the new H1 insulation requirements?*

Firm: Quality Construction
Interviewee: Dan Albert
Role: Director
Location: Wellington
Staff: 5

We were applying the insulation systems prescribed by the latest H1 regulation update long before they came into force. Even when H1 updates weren't required by law, when we explained the benefits to clients, they never objected.

We were a bit concerned about the availability of insulation materials once the regulation came into effect but found our suppliers had it all sorted.

Materials have driven overall costs up slightly but, on the labour side, we haven't had to charge any more for installation. The biggest cost increase has actually been accommodating the increased bulk, both in deliveries and on-site storage, for insulation.

Another unforeseen consequence is the increase in packaging waste. We don't have ways to recycle the soft plastic packaging.

While the H1 regulations help the environment by reducing the cost and power requirements for heating and cooling homes, it has increased non-recyclable construction waste. That's something we need to look at because it somewhat diminishes the overall environmental goals that the new regulation is designed to achieve.

Firm: Versatile
Interviewee: Brad South
Role: Director/Franchisee
Location: Invercargill
Staff: 8

Since the new insulation requirements came into force, we've experienced an increase in build cost. However, I find putting an exact figure on it difficult because different insulation products have increased by different amounts.

For example, using thermally broken windows adds about 10% and, if you need to use a product such as Hot Edge on your slab, that can add 10% as well. Other increases may not be as much.

On the labour and build-time front, I haven't seen much of an increase. However, if we need to increase the thickness of the wall insulation because we can't meet the required R-value from floor, window and ceiling insulation, we might increase the framing from 90/45 to 140/45, and that comes with additional labour costs.

Before the change, I was concerned that supply may not cope with demand, but I haven't experienced any shortages. It's also been a smooth process for us to go from the old regulations to the new ones, as it was well communicated, especially through PlaceMakers, and we've known about them for some time.

Firm: Gray Brothers
Interviewee: Mark Ward
Role: Co-owner/Director
Location: Dunedin
Staff: 13

I've found the transition to the new H1 insulation standards to be fairly easy. I haven't experienced any supply concerns and, in terms of it adding additional cost to a job, it hasn't done so at a level that's especially noticeable.

One thing that has helped keep build costs at around the same level is the reduction in price for some materials, as more supply has hit the market.

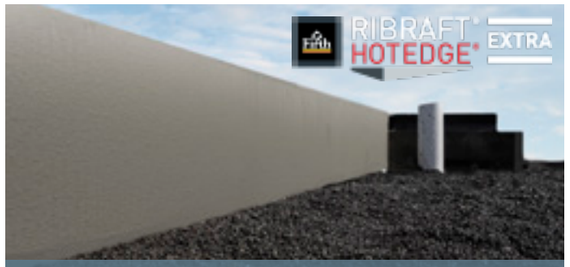
For example, 4x2 timber has come down by about $1 per metre, so it's swings and roundabouts. I think the easing of Covid supply shortages has helped the industry a lot and we've seen prices go down as a result.

While the new R-values haven't had a big impact on the business, I'd say the trend to place more of an administrative burden on builders has had a big impact.

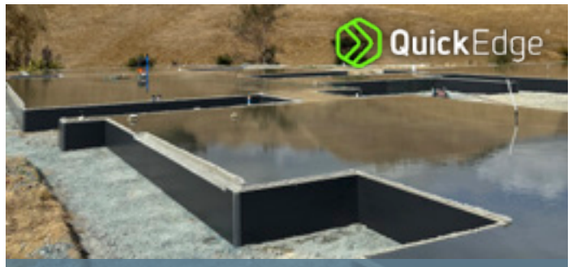
For example, five years ago I had 18 staff and employed one office worker to manage it all, but now we have three in the office and less on the tools. Getting work over the line seems to be a more painful process than ever!

PLACEMAKERS NEWS

ALL OVER H1 EDGING



A finished install using Firth's HotEdge Extra concrete slab edge insulation



A finished install using QuickSet's QuickEdge concrete slab edge insulation

To ensure our builders remain 'All Over H1', PlaceMakers is committed to reporting on the latest product solutions designed to meet the requirements of Clause H1 of the New Zealand Building Code – including these concrete slab edge insulation options from Firth and QuickSet

While many builders are now familiar with H1 requirements – most of which came into force last year – others are encountering the changes for the first time. This is largely due to the lag time between consents and builds, with any consents issued before 1 May 2023 still able to use previous requirements. With this in mind, we've included below a reminder on the current construction R-values for floors.

H1 CHANGES FOR FLOORS

Increases to floor insulation are two-fold, differing over climate zone – as with all building elements – but also depending on whether you have a concrete slab-on-ground floor or another type (most commonly suspended floors).

The new minimum construction R-values are lower – R1.5 to R1.7 – for concrete slab-on-ground floors than for other floor types – R2.5 to R3.0. According to MBIE, this is because it's much more challenging for slab-on-ground floors to achieve significantly higher R-values than with other types, such as suspended timber floors.

However, even the small increase required for unheated slab-on-ground floors in the warmest four climate zones – a move from R1.3 to R1.5 – is greater than it appears.

That's because the background calculation method used for the 5th edition has changed. According to BRANZ, the increase is the equivalent of going to R2.0 under the previous approach. R1.5 means most slabs in buildings under 300m^2 will be specified with some combination of perimeter and under-slab insulation.

In the future, MBIE expects that this differentiation between the floor types to be removed and slab-on-ground floors will need to achieve even higher levels of insulation.

It's unlikely that there will be a big shift in the types of products that can be used, but a change in the installation methods will be needed. For example, insulation added to non-slab-on-ground floors will no longer be able to be held in place with staples due to its increased thickness.

The new R-value requirements are also different for heated slab-on-ground floors. See the table below.

More than 80% of heat loss from a concrete slab foundation is lost through the edges, which is why insulating these surfaces is important for creating an effective thermal envelope to reduce energy demands for both heating and cooling. Firth and QuickSet have developed products to help resolve this issue.

Schedule method minimum construction R-value requirements (m^{2}K/W) for concrete slab-on-ground floors.

	CLIMATE ZONE					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
PREVIOUS MINIMUM REQUIRMENTS						
Unheated slab floors	R1.3					
Heated slab floors	R1.9					
MINIMUM FROM 1 MAY 2023 (FOR HOUSING)						
Unheated slab floors	R1.5 ▲				R1.6 ▲	R1.7 ▲
Heated slab floors	R2.5 ▲			R2.8 ▲	R3.0 ▲	

NEW SUPPLIER SOLUTIONS

FIRTH'S PROVEN RIBRAFT HOTEDGE®

Firth's proven RibRaft HotEdge® slab insulation solutions have options for all cladding types:

- **HotEdge** (BV) for brick veneer cladding.
- **HotEdge Extra** for non-brick veneer cladding.
- **HotEdge Base** for under slab perimeter insulation.

With Firth HotEdge® or HotEdge Extra®, you are not only helping to create warmer, drier, healthier homes, you're also allowing for design freedom elsewhere in the build with HotEdge helping to meet (or exceeding) H1 requirements.

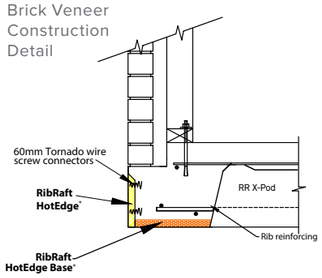
HotEdge Extra provides peace-of-mind with a BRANZ-tested installation solution (ST18050) for anchoring 90mm timber framing base plates to the slab.

The HotEdge systems help close a building's thermal envelope to create a healthier home by removing thermal bridging cold spots where the slab and timber framing meet.

The HotEdge system is quick and easy to use, with a pre-plastered finish on the XPS boards, easy-to-fit Tornado screws and powder-coated aluminium corners, all designed to reduce installation time and costs. Each board has two standard heights with custom board heights available up to 1000mm.

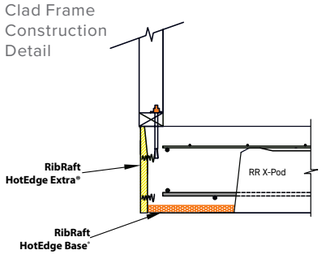
HotEdge is a fully integrated thermal solutions that has been tested with all Firth RibRaft foundation systems and RaftMix concrete to ensure your slab meets or exceeds H1 compliance.

Brick Veneer Construction Detail



FIRTH RIBRAFT X-POD®
BRICK VENEER HOTEDGE® & HOTEDGE BASE®
FIRTH CONCRETE (MIX CODE IP2019X OR IP2519X)

Clad Frame Construction Detail



FIRTH RIBRAFT X-POD®
90-140mm WALL FRAME HOTEDGE EXTRA® & HOTEDGE BASE®
FIRTH CONCRETE (MIX CODE IP2019X OR IP2519X)

Construction detail for RibRaft HotEdge and HotEdge Extra

QUICKSET CONCRETE SLAB-EDGE INSULATION

QuickSet is excited to announce the launch of QuickEdge edge insulation for concrete foundations, tailored for those who prefer tried-and-tested traditional boxing methods but seek the advancements of modern solutions.

While the concrete slab edge insulation was already available as part of its patented QuickSet system, the company is thrilled to bring the benefits of edge insulation to those using traditional concrete slab methods.

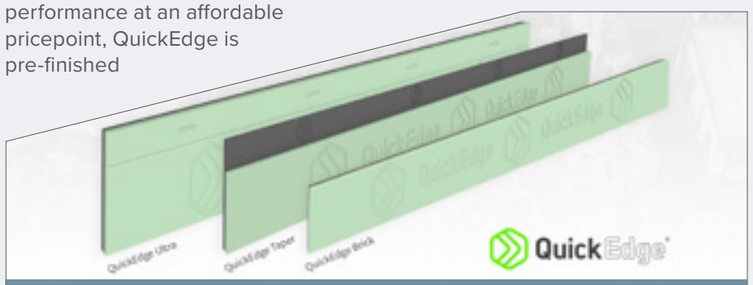
QuickEdge is proudly CodeMark-certified and BRANZ-appraised in conjunction with Allied Superslab+.

There are three options to suit varying traditional slab methods, and all deliver superior thermal performance:

- **QuickEdge Taper**, designed for 90mm framing, has an R-value close to R1.0.
- **QuickEdge Ultra**, designed for 140mm and above framing, has an R-value that exceeds R1.0.
- **QuickEdge Brick**, designed for brick homes, has an R-value close to R1.0.

Designed to deliver exceptional performance at an affordable pricepoint, QuickEdge is pre-finished with UV stabilisers built into it and does not requiring plastering, priming or painting – saving time and labour costs.

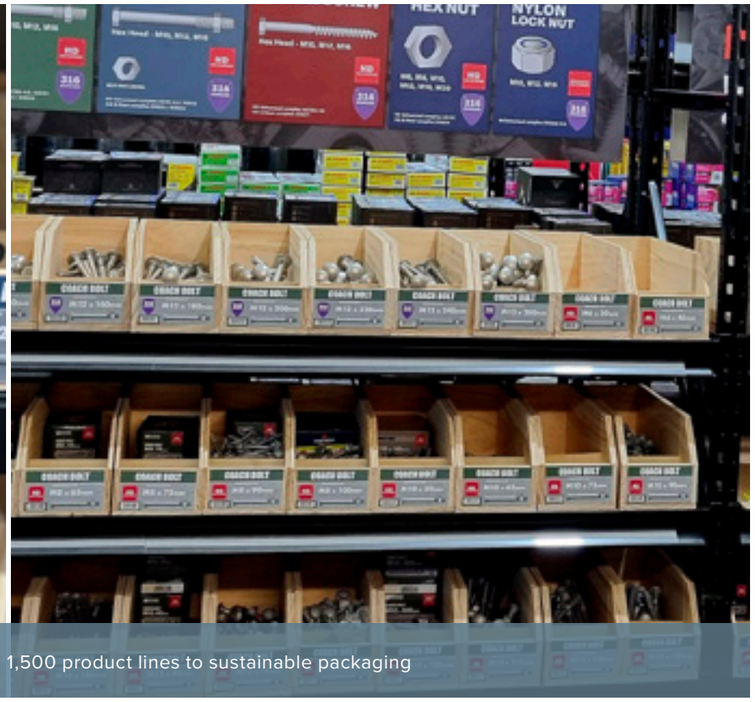
With durability in mind, QuickEdge is built to survive the rigours of construction and the bustling activity of home life. Thanks to a dense outer layer, protecting the softer insulation material on the inside, it's protected from weed eaters, lawn mowers or crickets balls! ■



The three QuickSet QuickEdge profile options (l-r): QuickEdge Ultra, QuickEge Taper and QuickEdge Brick

PLACEMAKERS NEWS

MORE SUSTAINABLE FASTENINGS



ECKO Fastening Systems has transitioned 1,500 product lines to sustainable packaging

Bremick Fasteners' transition from plastic to cardboard

> **Our goal to promote packaging that is both environmentally and customer friendly has been well-supported by our major New Zealand suppliers ECKO Fastening Systems Ltd and Bremick Fasteners**
>
> *– PlaceMakers Fastening Category Manager Dean McGowan*

PlaceMakers is saving more plastic packaging from going to landfill with the help of ECKO Fastening Systems and Bremick Fasteners

Following its industry-first move in switching loose nail packaging from plastic to cardboard, PlaceMakers has eliminated 55,000 poly bags and 60,000 plastic boxes from its shelves – and, ultimately, from landfill.

When the move was announced in February 2022, PlaceMakers Fastening Category Manager Dean McGowan said it was "the biggest change to loose nails in over 20 years".

"The move was a first from a New Zealand building supplies merchant. Our goal to promote packaging that is both environmentally and customer friendly has been well-supported by our major New Zealand suppliers ECKO Fastening Systems Ltd and Bremick Fasteners, delivering a ground-breaking in-store customer experience that's exclusive to PlaceMakers."

SUPPLIERS JUMPING ON BOARD

The first to jump on board two years ago, supplier ECKO Fastening Systems has now converted 90% of its range to cardboard packaging, with ECKO National Sales Manager Shaun Matheson calling it a success for everyone involved.

Shaun says that when a PlaceMakers store initially switches from plastic packaging to cardboard boxes, there may be a few questions from customers but it's very quickly "business as usual".

"We've had no pushback from customers; most of the feedback is that the packaging is great, with builders saying they are choosing our products because the cardboard packaging makes it easier to identify them on the shelves, which makes their store visits more efficient.

"They are also finding the cardboard packs easy to read and handle on site."

ECKO has taken care to ensure the packaging is well-suited to the environments they are used in.

"We have designed our screw packaging to be easily stackable in the back of a van and robust enough to handle the load of other boxes being stacked on top of them. That robust design also minimises any damage from shipping and handling prior to arriving in store."

MORE SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS

With 1,500 unique lines now available in sustainable packaging, Shaun says ECKO is continuing work on transitioning its whole range away from plastic.

"At this stage, our heavier products, such as 15kg tubs of loose nails and some of our masonry lines, are still packaged in plastic – but we're working on transitioning those.

"Products sold individually, such as nuts and bolts, were previously displayed in plastic containers. We found that a lot of merchants would throw the containers away when they got damaged or refreshed by suppliers. So, we've changed them to wooden display boxes manufactured in New Zealand from NZ pine, which is another point of difference for us that contributes to our sustainability efforts."

ECKO isn't the only PlaceMakers supplier reducing its plastic packaging. Dean Cannon, National Retail Sales Manager for Bremick Fasteners, says the company has transitioned nearly 800 lines of fasteners packaged in plastic snap and clam packs to cardboard packaging.

"Historically, we've used plastic containers and most of it ended up in landfill, so we decided to move to 100% recyclable, biodegradable and combustile cardboard packaging. We have been working on an even more sustainable version, using water-based ink and a plant-based window secured with sugar cane glue. We carried out extensive testing to ensure it meets our durability requirements, and we're happy to report it does.

"99% of our line – everything other than bulk products – will use this new packaging and will begin to be seen in stores from August."

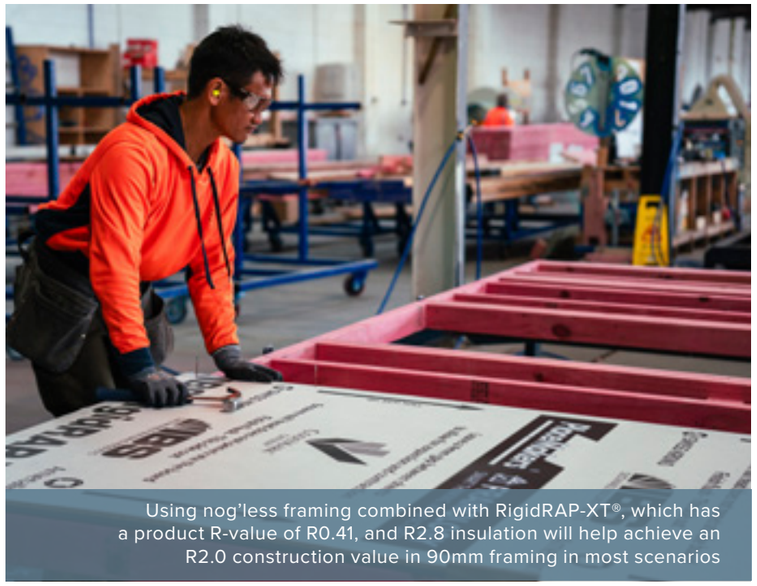
Dean adds that their manufacturing plants have been upgraded to meet the highest sustainability benchmarks to also ensure an environmentally friendly supply chain. ■

PLACEMAKERS NEWS

FRAMOLOGY – A NEW WAY OF FRAMING

With wall framing now requiring a construction R-value of 2.0, PlaceMakers Frame and Truss is committed to helping builders achieve – and exceed – the new regulation in the best way possible. Under the banner of Framology, it has developed two innovative solutions

Timber is an excellent and easy-to-use sustainable building material that PlaceMakers Frame and Truss plants around New Zealand have been supplying to builders for decades. Due to thermal bridging, there is a direct correlation between the actual construction R-value and how much timber is within the wall framing. Thermal bridges are materials or elements that are better at conducting heat.



Using nog'less framing combined with RigidRAP-XT®, which has a product R-value of R0.41, and R2.8 insulation will help achieve an R2.0 construction value in 90mm framing in most scenarios

BETTER THAN BASELINE

When MBIE introduced the requirement that all walls in New Zealand, regardless of zone, achieve R2.0 as part of its updates to Building Code Clause H1 Energy Efficiency, it carried over the definition of construction R-value for a typical area of wall from the previous Standard to H1/AS1 2.1.4.3. This means that thermal bridging due to studs, nogs/dwangs, top plates and bottom plates is taken into account, but thermal bridging due to lintels, sills, the additional studs that support them, and studs at corners and junctions, is not.

In a bid to better understand the actual timber to exterior wall framing ratio – including all timber – BRANZ and Beacon Pathways conducted a study. Released in 2020, it found the actual percentage was between 24% and 57%, with an average of 34%, when accounting for all timber within the wall frame.

To showcase the difference it makes when all timber is taken into account, BRANZ highlighted the following examples.

With a framing ratio of 43% (taking all timber into account), using R2.0 insulation in 90mm framing will only achieve an actual R-value of R1.44, and using R2.8 insulation will only achieve an actual R-value of R1.57.

With a framing ratio of 23% (taking all timber into account), using R2.0 insulation in 90mm framing will only achieve an actual R-value of R1.79, and using R2.8 insulation will only just achieve an actual R-value of R2.0.

As a result, many in the industry are suggesting using 140mm framing, which is deeper and can therefore accommodate thicker insulation with a higher product R-value – a solution the Framology team doesn't believe is necessary.

TEAM FRAMOLOGY STEPS IN

As National Technical Resource Manager Pete Hammond succinctly put it: "While using 140mm framing in external walls allows space for a higher performing insulation, it increases the cost and complexity. We wanted to find a solution for those who would still prefer to use 90mm framing, but also want to work toward achieving an actual R-value of R2.0 when taking all timber into account – not just the timber specified to be included in the construction R-value required in H1.

"I strongly believe this is possible in most instances."

To help designers, builders and homeowners achieve this, the Framology team developed a two-step solution. Firstly, the amount of timber stipulated in a build is reported through the Timber Percentage Report, and secondly Framology has developed a building method that will reduce that amount. That method is nog'less sheathed framing.

The first of its kind in the market, PlaceMakers Framology Timber Percentage Report is used to determine the timber to wall area percentage. Based on the design that would normally be provided to PlaceMakers Frame and Truss for a quote, the report includes:

- Average timber percentage ALL – includes all timber in a build.
- Average timber percentage ALL w/o NOGS – includes all timber in a build without nogs (also known as dwangs in parts of New Zealand).
- Average timber percentage SELECT – includes only wall timber that H1 Acceptable Solution counts such as studs, nogs and plates, but not lintels and corner studs, etc.

Released in September 2023, more than 1,000 reports have already been provided to designers and builders.

While the concept of reducing or removing nogs isn't new, PlaceMakers Frame and Truss is the first large-scale operation to execute the concept

NOG'LESS IS MORE

The second step in the process – nog'less sheathed framing – was released to market in February. Several builds are already under way and one has been completed (see image). While the concept of reducing or removing nogs – the horizontal blocking pieces used between the wall studs – isn't new, PlaceMakers Frame and Truss is the first large-scale operation to execute the concept.

"Removing nogging that's not needed reduces the overall timber percentage by about 4%, which can make quite a difference to thermal bridging," says Pete.

"Then we sheath it with RigidRAP-XT®, an insulated rigid air barrier with a product R-value of R0.41. Combined with an R2.8 insulation product, this approach will achieve a true R2.0 construction value in 90mm framing in most scenarios."

While PlaceMakers promotes using RigidRAP-XT®, the nog'less framing can be sheathed with other rigid air barriers, such as EcoPly, upon request, or can even be provided to site as standalone framing – it just requires careful handling.

A LONG TIME COMING

People have been questioning the purpose of nogs/dwangs for decades. The first study suggesting that the practice of nogging was unnecessary was published by MJ Collins in 1974, followed by several BRANZ studies (1991, 1998 and 2011) and BRANZ guidance (2020).

Most other countries eliminated the practice decades years ago, when kiln-dried timber became commonplace, but Kiwis have held onto the traditional building method. In its BRANZ Beacon Pathways study, BRANZ suggested the additional framing could have a number of origins including:

- Design requirements added to one area of regulations without consideration of other areas.
- Building in higher wind zones and how wind zone requirements are calculated and applied by local authorities and design and building professionals.
- Cladding trends, such as increasing popularity of vertical profiles, which require 400mm or 480mm nog/dwang spacing depending on wind zone.
- Changing styles and preferences.
- More multi-storey dwellings.
- Less than optimal placement of windows, doors and openings at the design stage. (In some instances, shifting a window anywhere from a few millimetres to 300 mm to one side could negate the need for additional framing.)

"People have been questioning the purpose of nogging for more than 40 years, so it's about time we applied that tried and tested logic," says Pete. "We look forward to helping our customers build houses without unnecessary thermal bridges that compromise energy efficiency."

Talk to your account manager to see if Framology's Nog'less Sheathed Framing is right for your client's project. ■

PLACEMAKERS NEWS

PLACEMAKERS SUPPLIERS GIVE GENEROUSLY

AECT students in some of their new PPE with Alannah Bell from PlaceMakers and North Island rep Darren van Biljon

PlaceMakers suppliers Denstock, Lynn River and Makita have donated essential equipment to Ara Education Charitable Trust, which gives students a leg-up into the construction industry

Ara Education Charitable Trust (AECT) is a collaboration between industry, government agencies and schools to create work and training opportunities for school leavers from several South Auckland schools, including Aorere College, Manurewa High, Onehunga High and Southern Cross Campus.

Denstock donated 225 pairs of Magnum boots worth $27,000, Lynn River donated 40 pairs of safety glasses and 40 pairs of gloves worth $1,680 and Makita donated drill bits and knives worth $950 – all of which is vital in helping Ara Education Charitable Trust carry out their work in the community, says Communications and Marketing Officer Mariska Steyn.

“These donations will be used in our Schools Programme, where Year 13 students from various South Auckland high schools spend their final year of school in a practical, hands-on environment on-site, where they get to renovate old, relocated houses.

“These students learn valuable trades skills throughout this year and many of them go on to get apprenticeships or employment once they finish.”

KIWIS COMING TOGETHER

Denstock General Manager Matt Parrett says the opportunity to help kids interested in making a career in the construction industry was too good to miss.

“We’re a Kiwi company that places importance in traditional values, such as helping others where we can. So, when PlaceMakers reached out to us, we couldn’t say no. We had a range of footwear in stock that we thought would make a perfect giveaway, and, hopefully, some budding tradies will make good use of it!

“While safety boots are a compliance product, they aren’t affordable for everybody. If we’ve been able to remove any of the anxiety for anyone, around being able to afford the necessary gear, we’ll be really happy with that.”

Lynn River Marketing Manager Jamie Gallagher says that AECT was a charity close to his heart and was delighted when the opportunity came up to donate.

“I’ve seen the difference it can make for people getting their start in the trades, through feeling supported and being provided with the tools and knowledge they need to jumpstart their careers,” says Jamie.

“We have been supplying PlaceMakers with safety gloves and PPE for several years now. When they asked if we could possibly donate some gear, we jumped at the chance.”

Jamie says that Lynn River’s charitable approach to business was the product of a day’s worth of soul-searching by employees – and one that he’s immensely proud of!

“We recently underwent a rebrand, where we closed the business for a day and got the whole team together to discuss what matters most to Lynn River. A main takeaway and key focus moving forward was caring for our customers and the wider community. For us, it’s crucial to support great initiatives like this. It comes with satisfaction to know we are assisting those in need by taking a bit of the financial burden away from starting out and the massive costs involved with buying tools required for their trade.”

AECT students checking out their new gear from Makita, Denstock and Lynn River

Makita was also approached by PlaceMakers to contribute to the charity and, like Lynn River and Denstock, was only too happy to contribute, donating around $1,000 worth of stock.

“By actively engaging with local communities and industry partners, like the Ara Trust and other training institutes around the country, we foster a culture of collaboration, innovation and mutual support,” says Jennifer Chatfield, Makita NZ Key Account Manager. “For Makita New Zealand, giving back isn't just a choice; it's an integral part of who we are and what we stand for.”

WORKING TOWARDS A BRIGHT FUTURE

The donated gear will also be used for other programmes, such as the AECT Maori & Pasifika Women in Construction Programme, which empowers young wahine (women) to enter the construction industry.

“After completing the programme with us, these young women are placed into apprenticeships, work experience or jobs, while they receive ongoing mentorship to help them navigate any difficult or challenging situations that might arise on their career journey," says Mariska. "PlaceMakers also supports us with their strong focus on 'Women in Construction', and our young wahine have had the opportunity to rub shoulders with the inspiring women who are working on the BUILDhers construction project.”

BUILDhers is a New Zealand-first project involving a team of more than 40 women leading every stage of home construction, from architectural design to final sale.

As a charity that relies solely on funding via grants, as well as donations from businesses, any help AECT can get from suppliers within the construction industry lets it continue its important work with some of New Zealand’s most disadvantaged young people.

“Anything we receive is welcomed with open arms, as this enables us to keep our programmes alive, and change lives,” says Mariska.

“There are various ways to help us, beyond financial support. This includes people offering up their time to help out on site, apprenticeships, employment opportunities, surplus materials from other sites, any working tools and machinery that are no longer required, as well as professional services, such as architects or lawyers, who can help with documentation for the houses we work on.”

DONATION FACILITATORS

PlaceMakers, which has been a strong supporter of AECT for some time, was instrumental in facilitating the donation.

“It is all thanks to PlaceMakers that we have received these generous donations,” says Mariska. “We have been talking with PlaceMakers about putting together ‘starter packs’ for our students. They asked us to send through our ‘wish list’ for items to be included in these packs, which included gloves, glasses, boots and drill bits.

“Once PlaceMakers received our list, their team reached out to their suppliers to make it happen!

“They also donated branded hi-vis hoodies and wide-rimmed sun hats. Their support has been amazing. Their hearts and hands are always open to help in any way.”

In 2023, PlaceMakers donated a complete kitchen and electrical appliances for AECT’s Forever House project, which featured in a previous issue of *Under Construction*.

PlaceMakers GM Marketing Sharon Lydon says PlaceMakers is proud to partner with grassroots charities like AECT, which make a real difference in the community.

“We’re incredibly proud to support the valuable work that AECT undertakes. PlaceMakers is dedicated to helping introduce as many people as possible to our industry from all backgrounds, ethnicities and genders and to helping provide a wider talent pool for future builders.” ■

PLACEMAKERS NEWS

PREVENTING PUMP POLLUTION

Pump-out bags are effective in reducing environmental risks and waste, says Mark Roberts (inset)

Pumping concrete takes a versatile material to new places and has changed the way we undertake construction. However, this method of laying concrete carries additional environmental risk, as concrete that escapes from pumping activity can be very destructive. Auckland Council Senior Waste Planning Specialist, Mark Roberts, provides some common sense solutions for ensuring concrete is managed correctly

Councils across the country are placing more emphasis on the effects of concrete use on water quality. It is important that you consider the effects your concrete pumping activities may have on the environment before you begin.

Contractors can face abatement notices or fines from councils if wet concrete or slurry is found outside of construction sites. Your clients, as the property owners, can also be fined for failing to control any sediment or concrete that escapes into gutters, rain gardens or storm water drains.

Some common-sense actions will reduce the risk of releasing concrete into waterways.

Before starting a pumping job, identify where any run-off will flow, such as kerb channels, stormwater drains and natural water bodies.

Ensure there are adequate facilities onsite for washing out and that wash-out will not run off the site.

Check for any specific environmental or waste management plans with the site or project manager.

It is the responsibility of the pumping contractor to ensure residue or clearing of pipes does not escape from the site.

Pumping into gutters, berms or neighbouring properties is unacceptable and can result in fines.

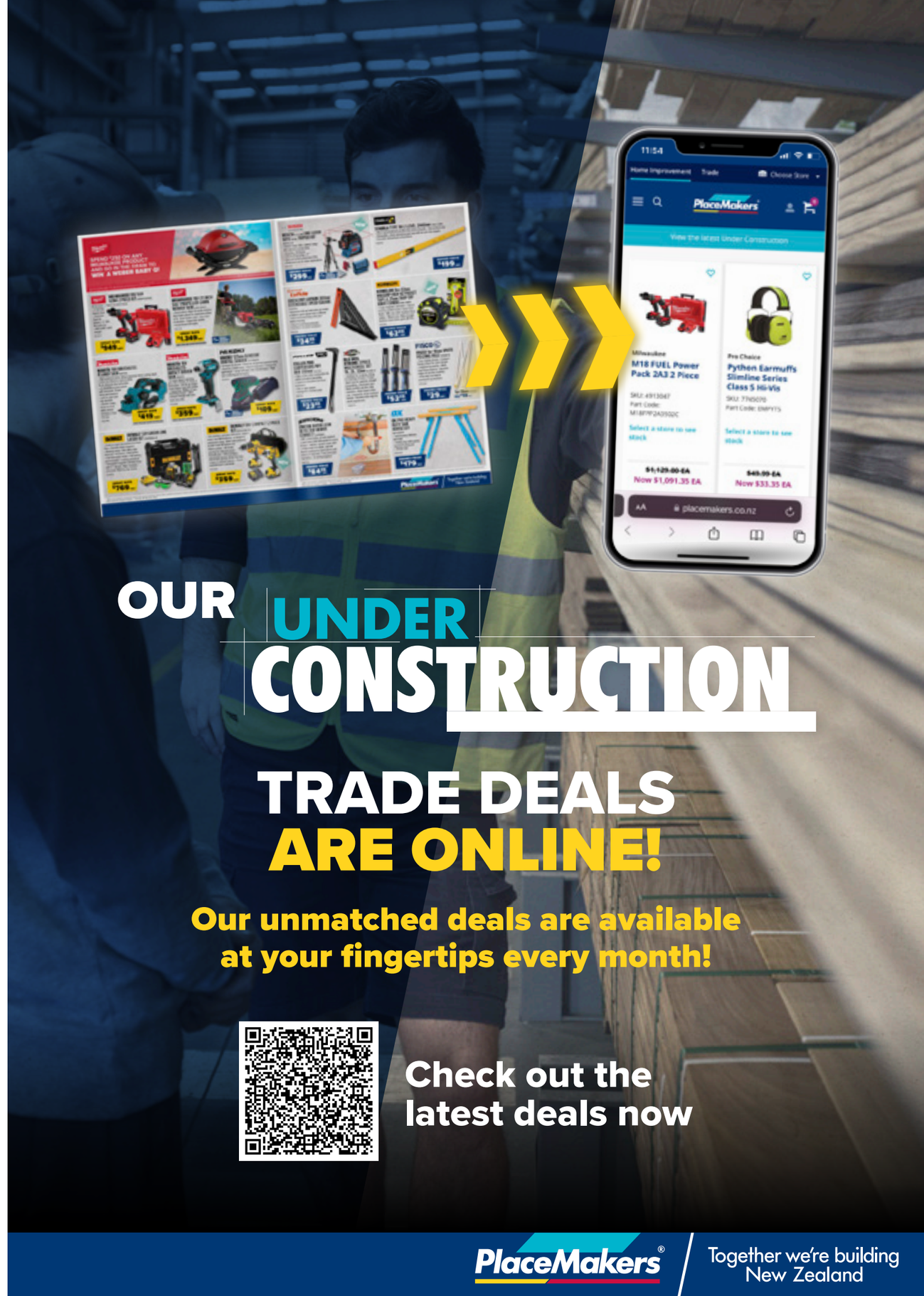
Ensure that all staff have appropriate training that addresses all aspects of environmental responsibility required of a professional concrete pumping contractor, including spill response procedures, pollution controls and proper clean-up procedures.

Pump-out bags, like the one pictured, are effective in reducing environmental risks and waste from concrete pumping.

Simple planning before a project begins can reduce the risk that concrete pumping presents to the environment and prevent fines and abatement notices.

Excess concrete should be disposed of into a site receptacle designated for concrete, such as a pump out bag, and allowed to set before being sent to a concrete recycler. Dumping of pump out waste onto neighbouring sections, berms, reserves, rain gardens or gutters (yes, this does happen) is strictly forbidden.

Concrete wash or slurry that finds its way into drains will eventually make its way into streams and creeks. The high alkalinity is extremely damaging to fish and other freshwater life. No amount of water can ever be poured into a drain or waterway to sufficiently dilute even a small amount of concrete. ■



PLACEMAKERS NEWS

BACKING THE NEW ZEALAND TEAM

Tour de Fern events will be held nationwide, including PlaceMakers Mt Wellington on 7 June and PlaceMakers Kaiwharawhara on 17 June

With the Paris 2024 Olympic Games just around the corner, PlaceMakers is excited to share the various ways in which we will be whipping up support for our awesome athletes!

Planning for co-branded merchandise, special events and clean-ups of local sports clubs is well under way as part of PlaceMakers partnership with the New Zealand Team – all of which is designed to get Kiwis amped for the main event and behind our representatives in the NZ Team!

To kick things off, we will be launching our exclusive Podium Picks game two weeks before the start of the Games. This will be the perfect way to get psyched, stay up to speed and start predicting how the NZ Team will perform each day – all while earning points that could lead to massive prizes for you (and hopefully some medals in France)!

With more than 2,500 spot prizes up for grabs, it's well worth doing your research – and/or teaming up with your mates – to take part in the best game going, outside the actual Olympics of course!

Prizes include a $10,000 travel voucher for first overall, a $5,000 PlaceMakers voucher for second, and a Panasonic OLED TV for third. Why not get involved and see how you stack up?

Playing is easy. All you need to do is predict how many medals – and what type – the NZ Team will win each day. Our App will give you the best chance to be in winning contention by providing an up-to-date schedule and the maximum number of medals that can be won as the event progresses.

To emulate the real Games, 4th to 8th place runners-up will receive a Diploma (yes, Olympic athletes receive these too!) and an NZ Team prize pack.

Can't wait to play? No problem. You will be able to start earning points before the Games begin by answering a warm up multi-choice question – how many athletes will make up the NZ Team at Paris 2024 Games?

Search and download the official NZ Team app in Playstore or the App store to get involved!

TOUR DE FERN

Want to feel like you're part of the action, racing a state-of-the-art Technogym Ride smart bike 300m along the Champs-Élysées?

The New Zealand Team is challenging Kiwis to get in the winning spirit with a dynamic nationwide event series 'Tour de Fern – Sprint for the Fern', which launched in Auckland on 10 May.

The public cycling simulation visits Auckland, Tauranga, Wellington, Hamilton (Fieldays), Christchurch and Invercargill from mid-May to late June. Tour stops include PlaceMakers Mt Wellington on 7 June, PlaceMakers Kaiwharawhara on 17 June and PlaceMakers Riccarton on 26 June. Get yourself along and embrace some friendly competition with your peers and our Olympians.

NZ TEAM

TOUR de FERN

SPRINT FOR THE FERN

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH CYCLING NEW ZEALAND

To provide riders the simulation of racing along the Champs-Élysées, the famous Parisian avenue will be projected onto screens in front of riders, and onto a big screen for those cheering them on from behind.

All participants will be entered into a nationwide leaderboard to see who can sprint the course the fastest, being ranked against our Olympic cyclists' times. Some of our past Olympians will be in attendance to meet and greet and even race against those who show up.

A PLACEMAKERS-APPROPRIATE PARTNERSHIP

PlaceMakers has a proud history of supporting the communities within which it operates and is delighted to support the New Zealand Team.

"It's a worthy cause that aligns with our values and resonates with our people and customers alike, no matter what age, gender or sporting preference, and make us feel proud to be Kiwis," says Sharon Lyndon, General Manager – Marketing.

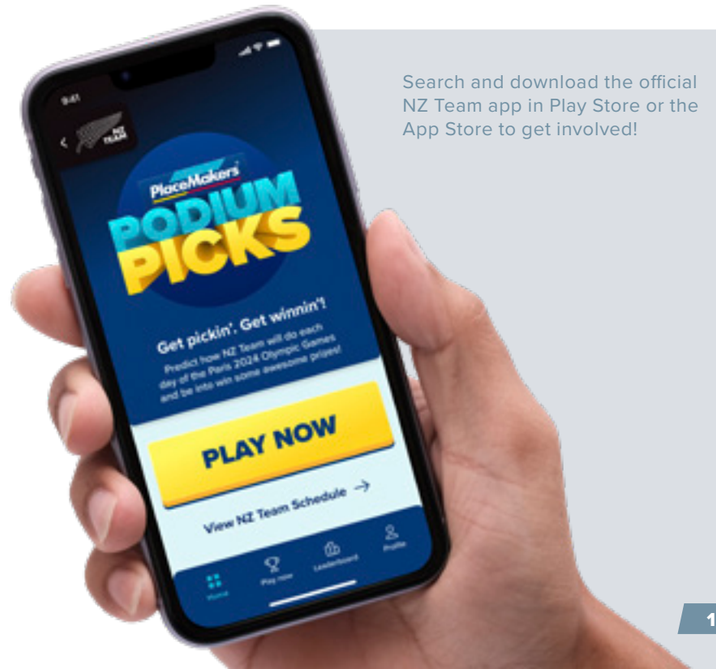
With values and culture that includes whakakoha (respect), ngākau pono (integrity), kairangatira (excellence), hautūtanga (leadership) and pohonui (pride), the New Zealand Team is committed to athlete engagement and representation.

Those are values that resonate with PlaceMakers, says Sharon.

"We believe this sponsorship epitomises these desires and we look forward to PlaceMakers playing an important role in empowering Kiwi athletes to represent our country and compete on the world stage, including the upcoming Paris 2024 Olympic Games."

IN-STORE SUPPORT

Make sure to get in touch with your local branch to find out about exciting local initiatives and possible FanZones for watching the event!



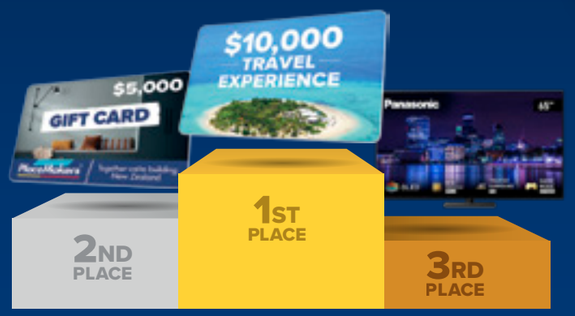
Search and download the official NZ Team app in Play Store or the App Store to get involved!

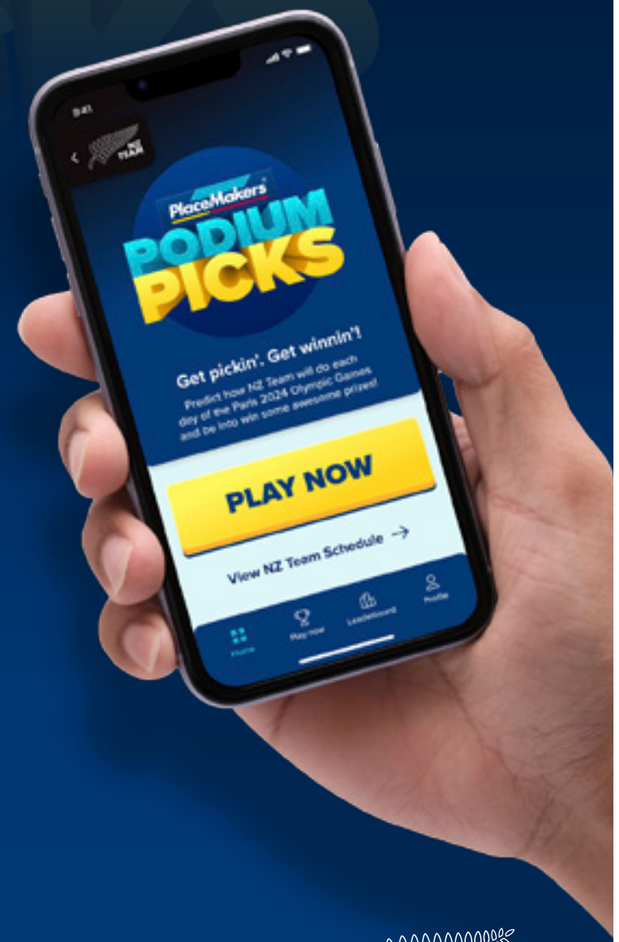
PlaceMakers®

PODIUM PICKS

GET PICKIN'.
GET WINNIN'!*

Predict how the NZ Team will do each day of the Paris 2024 Olympic Games and be into win some awesome prizes!*





PLAY NOW

placemakers.co.nz/podiumpicks

Download the NZ Team app to play and support our Olympians

PlaceMakers®
Official Partner

NZ TEAM

Proud to be part of the New Zealand Team

*Terms and conditions apply. Visit placemakers.co.nz/podiumpicks for more.

PRODUCT NEWS

FIRTH PRESENTS PERMEABLE PAVING

EcoPave® systems provide multiple benefits, including flood mitigation and effective, durable land usage

Introducing the Firth EcoPave® permeable paving range

Firth's EcoPave® range provides attractive, permeable hardscape paving solutions to assist with stormwater management – reducing run-off and filtering pollutants.

Why choose permeable paving? The top benefits are listed below:

MANAGE STORMWATER PEAK FLOWS

EcoPave® does this by holding and releasing rainwater in a controlled manner. Firth EcoPave® systems effectively manage stormwater on your client's property to help avoid overwhelming local infrastructure during heavy rainfall.

IDEAL FOR RESIDENTIAL TRAFFIC

Whether it's a driveway or carpark, the FlowPave® system is perfect for light-to-medium residential traffic applications, providing a durable and puddle-free solution that enhances the environment.

IMPROVE WATER QUALITY

Permeable paving systems actively contribute to better water quality. Through effective filtration and sedimentation, they help filter out pollutants that contribute to water pollution, ensuring a cleaner and healthier environment. Engineered permeable systems also help recharge local aquifers to keep your client's gardens and lawn looking green all year round!

ENHANCE AESTHETICS AND FUNCTIONALITY

With a variety of colours, textures and compatible commercial pavers, Firth EcoPave® range offers endless design possibilities to elevate outdoor spaces. It's not just about functionality; it's about creating visually appealing hardscapes that make a statement.

MAXIMISE LAND USE

EcoPave® systems maximise land usage by reducing the need for additional retention structures, such as ground sumps, ponds or dams. By retaining water within the system, they help make the most out of your client's land, optimising its potential.

KEEPING THINGS GREEN

Firth's Pixel Paver®, Grass Paver and Gobi® Blocks are perfect for creating hardstand parking, without sacrificing the front lawn. These open pavers allow grass to grow through, forming all-weather lawns with a hard, durable sub-surface that can be driven over no matter how wet 'n' wild the weather gets.

MADE BY FIRTH IN NEW ZEALAND

Firth prides itself on a uniquely local style of architecture. Its hallmark is a strong connection with the outdoors and, for nearly 100 years, Firth masonry bricks and pavers have been helping make those spaces welcoming and beautiful.

Made from locally and ethically sourced natural aggregates, Firth hardscaping products elevate the aesthetics and functionality of our homes, commercial properties and civic spaces. Always engineered and manufactured using the best available technologies, they're synonymous with good looks, quality, strength and durability.

Learn more at: **firth.co.nz/paving-and-retaining/permeable-pavers** .

WHAT'S ON

PLACEMAKERS PRODUCT PICKS

HERMPAC KANDA DECKING

With origins in Africa, Kanda is a versatile timber with an attractive fawn-brown colour that designers and homeowners are drawn to. Resembling a warm shade between vitex and kwila, it also gives it a sense of familiarity to the New Zealand market.

Kanda decking ticks all the boxes when it comes to residential decking:

- Stable.
- Naturally durable.
- Minimal tannin bleed.
- Easy to install.
- Available in both watershed and flat profiles.
- Favourable length spread.
- FSC-certified.

QUICKSET CONCRETE SLAB-EDGE INSULATION

QuickSet is excited to announce the launch of QuickEdge slab edge insulation for concrete foundations, tailored for those who prefer tried-and-tested traditional boxing methods, but seek the advancements of modern solutions.

QuickEdge is proudly CodeMark-certified and BRANZ appraised in conjunction with Allied Superslab+. Key features and benefits below:

- Exceptional thermal insulation.
- Traditional boxing compatibility.
- Cost-effectiveness.
- Finish with ease.
- Robust durability.

JAMES HARDIE STRIA CLADDING

Introducing the new 3m length Stria™ Cladding by James Hardie.

In response to customer demand, Stria™ Cladding is now available in 3m lengths. This will provide greater design flexibility for architects and designers, while also supporting less wastage and a reduction in labour required on site. In turn, this may enable greater cost and time efficiencies on projects when using the product.

For more information visit **jameshardie.co.nz** .

SCAN TO LEARN MORE

PROLAM GLULAM EXPOSED TRUSSES

Prolam's new range of Glulam Exposed Trusses is a stand-out solution inside and out.

On-trend and in-demand, Prolam Exposed Trusses are a high-impact solution for interiors or alfresco areas, offering designer looks with the proven structural integrity and support of glulam timber.

Designed to be seen, Prolam Exposed Trusses combine the beauty and strength of timber with the structural integrity and dimensional stability of Prolam's industry-leading engineered glulam solutions.

Our visual grade timber trusses can be machine finished or band sawn for a more rustic effect – ready to be oiled, stained, or painted to achieve the desired look and feel.

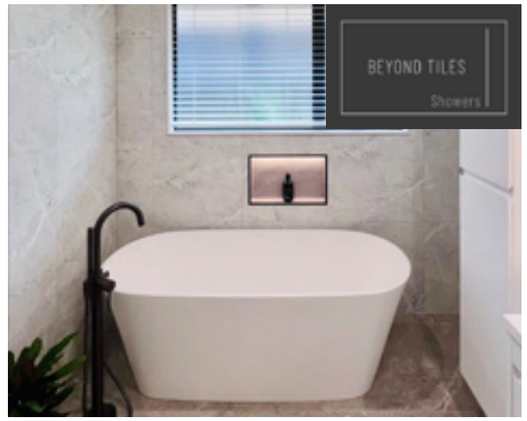
MAKITA PORTABLE POWER STATION

Introducing the ConnectX™ Portable Power Inverter, your ultimate power solution on the go. With a continuous output of 1.4KW and a maximum output of 2.8KW with pure sine wave, this compact powerhouse is designed to meet all your energy needs.

Equipped with two 230V AC outlets, two USB Type-A output ports, two USB-C output ports, and a DC12V cigarette socket, it offers versatile connectivity options for your devices, whether you're charging your power tools or smartphones.

Experience the convenience and reliability of the Makita ConnectX™ Portable Power Inverter – your trusted companion for portable power solutions.

BEYOND TILES WET WALL LININGS



Introducing Beyond Tiles wall panels – the ultimate game changer in home decor, seamlessly blending style with practicality. Crafted with premium materials, these panels are the homeowner's first line of defence against water mishaps, perfect for elevating bathrooms and kitchens with ease.

Say goodbye to traditional tile and grout headaches; Beyond Tiles panels are hassle-free to set up, CodeMark approved, and require no waterproofing. With a variety of sleek designs available, from modern aesthetics to timeless classics, they instantly rejuvenate any space. Direct-to-stud installation ensures durability, backed by a 25-year warranty. Upgrade your client's space with Beyond Tiles for unmatched style and quality.

FENTEC VISTAWALL GATES

Fentec VistaWall is for designers and discerning homeowners, who want to make their boundary a feature and a statement. Complete the look with a Fentec VistaWall Pedestrian Gate.

VistaWall Gates feature strong aluminium construction with no twisting or warping and are low maintenance. Gates come pre-made and can be adjusted on site, making it the perfect blend of form and function to elevate your client's property and enhance their landscape.

The Fentec VistaWall range has been designed to be quick and simple to install and, with modular components and fixings hidden within channel covers, achieve a clean minimalist look. VistaWall provides you with solid or slat options.

MBIE

THE BUSINESS SIDE OF BEING A TRADIE

As an LBP, it's your responsibility to talk to your clients about a payment plan before the job starts, not during!

Starting your own business can be a daunting task and often we learn on the job. You're confident on the tools and know you can do a great job on-site, but ensuring your business practices are up to scratch is just as important for building a successful business

To help you on your journey, business.govt.nz has a series of 'Tips for Tradies' videos and resource templates, so you can save time and money and run the admin side of your business as accurately as your tools.

SCAN FOR 'TIPS FOR TRADIES' CONTENT

HOW TO PRICE A JOB

Getting your pricing right is key for your business to be successful. Too high and you can scare clients away. Too low and you could be losing money on every job.

It's important to make sure you're quoting accurate prices to potential clients as best as you can.

There are different ways to set your prices, but the three most popular strategies are:

Cost-based pricing
This is where you work out all the costs involved in providing a service and add a bit extra to make a profit. It works best if your costs are low and your clients are focused on keeping the price low.

Competitor-based pricing
This is when you look at what other businesses are charging for similar work and set your price around that. You may charge less to beat their price, match them, or charge more and use a different benefit like better customer service, or getting the work done quickest to win the job.

Customer-based pricing
This is where you work within the budget your clients have available. Usually, this works best if your clients have bigger budgets and value quality over a lower price.

It's also important you have a markup, because it helps you meet your profit goals. To learn how to set your markup, watch the 'How to price a job' video in the series. There's also a handy pricing workbook you can use to help calculate your markup.

SCAN AND LEARN HOW TO PRICE A JOB

HOW TO PREPARE A QUOTE

Once you know what you're charging, prepare a quote that gives you the best chance of landing the job, is realistically priced, and covers your costs. One of the key principles of the Licensed Building Practitioner (LBP) code of ethics is to behave professionally – and that means pricing work fairly and reasonably.

Quotes are a great opportunity to build trust, put your best foot forward, and show your client you understand their needs and will do the job well.

Business.govt.nz shows you how to create a strong construction proposal for your potential clients in the 'How to prepare a quote' video. They also give you a free template to use that covers your legal requirements and contract must-haves.

Remember – it's a legal requirement to have a contract for all building work valued over $30,000, and best practice to have one even when it's less than that. As an LBP, you're also bound by our code of ethics.

SCAN AND LEARN HOW TO PREPARE A QUOTE

VARIATIONS TO CONTRACTS

Sometimes when working on a job, the scope can change unexpectedly. You find yourself with more work than you initially planned for, which is taking more time and effort on the job. This is where variations to contracts can help.

Variations can be any proposed change to the original job, but common variations include:

- Changes to the terms agreed, such as timeframes and when payments are due.
- Changes to the level of quality and finish for the agreed project price.
- Changes to the size or complexity of the job, or the products to be used.
- Unforeseen circumstances that lead to additional work or delays.

Another key part of the LBP code of ethics applies here – take responsibility for your actions. This means informing and educating your client, advising them of delays as they become apparent and always acting in their best interest.

Variations in contracts must:

- Clearly state the specific terms of the contract that are being changed and what the new terms will be.
- Consider any changes required to other parts of the contract as a result. This may include changing the amount charged if more work is required.
- Be specific on when the variation will come into effect.

For bigger jobs, you may wish a phased approach where invoices are split across the work. Don't be afraid to talk to your customer about a payment plan that works for you both – before the job starts

- Confirm that nothing else in the contract is being amended, other than your proposed changes.

SCAN TO LEARN ABOUT VARIATIONS TO CONTRACTS

UNDERSTAND YOUR CASHFLOW

Good cashflow management helps you to stay on top of your business finances and handle unexpected situations like natural disasters or a sudden change in the market. Managing your cashflow means setting time aside to record all your income and expenses on a regular basis, and comparing months, quarters, or years to see how much money came in, when it came in and what it was spent on.

You can also create a cash flow forecast. This will give you a future view of your business's earnings and expenses, to help you budget.

A good cash flow forecast should show you:

- Your current cash in the bank.
- Expected cash income from sales or loans and assets.

Story continues overleaf

MBIE

THE BUSINESS SIDE OF BEING A TRADIE CONT.

- Expected cash flow - which is a fancy way of showing the highs and dips of your cash reserves over time.
- Your closing balance.

SCAN FOR HELP WITH BUDGETING

Business.govt.nz has a cashflow forecaster tool, which can help visualise all your incomings and outgoings.

HOW TO PREPARE AN INVOICE – AND WHAT TO DO IF YOU DON'T GET PAID ON TIME

Invoicing can be a struggle for many small businesses. This can lead to not being paid on time, and not having enough cash for really important things – like paying yourself and your employees. Be up front from the beginning, so there are no surprises when it comes to invoice time. For bigger jobs, you may wish a phased approach where invoices are split across the work. Don't be afraid to talk to your customer about a payment plan that works for you both – before the job starts.

Use the free business.govt.nz invoice template to make sure all the details you need to provide are given to the client in a way that makes it easy to follow, understand and most importantly – action.

If you've done everything right and your customer still hasn't paid, you might need to make a valid payment claim. These have to be in writing and include details about the work you've done, how much is owed and a due date. ■

SCAN FOR INVOICE PREPARATION TIPS

If you've done everything right and your customer still hasn't paid, you might need to make a valid payment claim. These have to be in writing and include details about the work you've done, how much is owed and a due date

This article is an excerpt from Codewords Issue 118. 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 on the Under Construction website or recorded on the magazine, then provided at the time of renewal.

CODEWORDS QUIZ ISSUE 118

1. When using competitor-based pricing, what strategies could improve your chances of getting the job?
   a) *Charge less than your competitor.*
   b) *Charge the same as your competitor.*
   c) *Charge more, but add benefits such as better customer service, or an earlier completion date than your competitors.*
   d) *All the above.*
2. When is the right time to talk to your clients about a payment plan?
   a) *When you give them your first invoice.*
   b) *After you have made a valid payment claim.*
   c) *Before the job starts.*
   d) *After the project is finished.*
3. What would be a reason to make a variation to a contract?
   a) *Changes to the terms agreed, such as timeframes and when payments are due.*
   b) *Changes to the level of quality and finish for the agreed project price.*
   c) *Changes to the size or complexity of the job or the products to be used.*
   d) *Unforeseen circumstances that lead to additional work or delays.*
   e) *All the above.*

The Codewords article above is republished verbatim. As such, neither PlaceMakers or Under Construction magazine's publishers take responsibility for the accuracy of the article or its corresponding questions. Reading this article and answering the questions meets Skills Maintenance requirements.

TRADE PLY EXPERTS

WE HAVE THE QUALITY, RANGE & VALUE

SCAN TO LEARN MORE

PlaceMakers® Together we're building New Zealand

MBIE

REPAIRING FLOOD DAMAGED BUILDINGS

What you need to know when repairing flood damaged buildings and carrying out work under the schedule 1 exemptions of the Building Act

The severe weather events that hit many regions across Aotearoa New Zealand in 2023 resulted in damage to thousands of buildings. Remediation and recovery work continues.

BEFORE YOU START

Before you start repair or remediation work on buildings affected by flooding, you should:

- Ensure the building is safe to enter.
- Take photos before and during the work.
- Take appropriate health and safety precautions, including wearing safety gear and ensuring power and gas are turned off.
- Ensure that the sewerage system has been checked and presents no risk to health. Floodwater may be contaminated by silt and sewerage that is deposited as water recedes.
- Check your local council's website for current guidance for repair work, if any.

MBIE has produced some guidance that may help, such as:

THE REMOVAL OF SILT DEPOSITED DURING FLOODING - QUICK GUIDE

SLOPE STABILITY - QUICK GUIDE

STARTING THE WORK

Once you know what work is needed, you should check if it needs a building consent.

VISIT 'CAN I BUILD IT' FOR MORE DETAILS

If a building consent is required, your client must obtain this before you start the work. If the work needs to be done urgently to save or protect people's lives or health, or to remove a risk of serious damage to property, you should contact your local council. They will be able to advise you if you can proceed with the work and apply for a certificate of acceptance after the immediate danger has been removed or reduced.

All work must comply with the Building Code to the extent required by the Building Act, even if a building consent is not required.

SCHEDULE 1 EXEMPTIONS OF THE BUILDING ACT

The list of building work that does not require a building consent is provided under Schedule 1 of the Building Act and includes specific conditions to manage risk.

SEE SCHEDULE 1, BUILDING WORK FOR WHICH BUILDING CONSENT IS NOT REQUIRED

When you start repair work, you may find that the extent of the damage is larger than you originally thought. In that situation a building consent may be required, so you should contact the property owner and local council to discuss.

Some of the exemptions that may apply to remediating flood damaged buildings are:

1. Territorial and regional authority discretionary exemptions

This exemption allows local councils to use their discretion to exempt any proposed building work if it complies with the Building Code and is unlikely to endanger people or buildings. This discretion can be used to exempt proposed building work from the requirement to obtain a building consent if:

- The completed building work is likely to comply with the Building Code, or
- If the completed building work does not comply with the Building Code, it is unlikely to endanger people or any building, whether on the same land or another property.

2. General repair, maintenance and replacement

This exemption allows building owners to maintain their buildings (including carrying out any repairs or replacement) without having to get a building consent.

The following can be repaired, maintained and replaced if comparable building products or assembly is used, and, in the case of a replacement, it is in the same position:

- Building products.
- Assemblies incorporated in or associated with a building.

This clause cannot be used if a complete or substantial replacement of a specified system is required, or the product contributes to the building's structural behaviour or fire safety properties.

3. Internal walls and doorways in an existing building

Building work in connection with an internal wall (including an internal doorway) in any existing building doesn't usually need a building consent unless the wall is any of the following:

- Load bearing.
- A bracing element.
- A fire separation wall (also known as a firewall).
- Part of a specified system.
- Made of brick, stone, concrete (or similar) joined with mortar.

4. Repair and replacement of plasterboard due to flooding

When a flooding emergency happens and walls have been damaged, it is likely that the plasterboard will need to be partially or completely replaced.

It can be difficult to identify the type or purpose of plasterboard without expert knowledge or information. The building consent plans will usually show where the different types of plasterboard are located, and these plans, if available, can be obtained from your local council.

To help identify the type of plasterboard, you can take photos of the fixings and any information on the back of the plasterboard if you remove it, or you may be able to find out the use and purpose based on its location.

If you are unsure, it is safer to treat all plasterboard as if it is a bracing element and take appropriate measures to repair it.

Before starting repairs, it is important that any cavity spaces, such as between cladding and building wrap where silt and other contaminants may have collected, have been cleared out, and that all timber framing is dry and in good condition.

Consider the safety risks to yourself and others. Make sure you and anyone working on your behalf have the correct equipment and resources.

REPAIR AND REPLACEMENT OF PLASTERBOARD DUE TO FLOODING

WHAT INFORMATION DO YOU NEED TO PROVIDE?

You may need to provide a record confirming what work has been completed. The information could consist of a written or drawn record of the repair, a producer statement for construction work (PS3), certificates from any specialist trades such as electrical certificates of compliance, or a Record of Work for any Restricted Building Work completed.

This information should be provided to the property owner, and if the work is done under a building consent, the record of work must also be provided to the local council. ■

YOU CAN FIND FURTHER GUIDANCE HERE

This article is an excerpt from Codewords Issue 118. 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 on the Under Construction website or recorded on the magazine, then provided at the time of renewal.

CODEWORDS QUIZ ISSUE 118

4 What must you do before beginning any repairs or remediation to a flood damaged house?

a) *Ensure the building is safe to enter.*
b) *Take photos before and during the work.*
c) *Take appropriate H&S precautions, including wearing safety gear, and ensuring power and gas are turned off.*
d) *Check your local council's website for information about the current and any guidance for repair work.*
e) *All the above.*

5 If you can't identify which walls require bracing when you're replacing the plasterboard:

a) *It's safer to treat all plasterboard as if it is a bracing element.*
b) *Just brace some of the walls.*
c) *Don't worry about bracing, the house is still standing.*
d) *Wait for the building inspector to tell you.*

6 How can silt damage buildings?

a) *Silt can block subfloor vents that help to keep the subfloor dry.*
b) *Silt can trap moisture in framing such as piles, bearers or joists. This can lead to rot or damage.*
c) *Silt and water loading can dislodge walls and floors.*
d) *Silt build-up can prevent water draining away from the building leading to ponding against building elements which in turn can cause damage.*
e) *All the above.*

The Codewords article above is republished verbatim. As such, neither PlaceMakers or Under Construction magazine's publishers take responsibility for the accuracy of the article or its corresponding questions. Reading this article and answering the questions meets Skills Maintenance requirements.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR SUSTAINABILITY

Failure to follow specifications accurately could result in builders facing liability for any inadvertent breach of contract

Incorporating features and materials to improve a building's green credentials is becoming increasingly common. But who's responsible if the finished structure doesn't meet the original targets for sustainability? Builtin Construction Risk Expert Ben Rickard investigates

Responsibility can vary based on several factors, including contractual obligations, the roles and actions of the parties involved, and regulatory requirements. Some examples of where responsibility may fall are outlined below.

ARCHITECTS AND DESIGNERS

These are responsible for the design of the building, including specifying sustainable materials and systems. If the design is inherently flawed, or does not adequately account for sustainability requirements, the designers could be held liable.

ENGINEERING CONSULTANTS

Engineers could be liable if their structural, mechanical, or electrical systems designs do not perform to sustainability standards, or if their systems integration recommendations are flawed.

MATERIAL SUPPLIERS

Suppliers might be responsible if they provide materials that are substandard, or do not meet the sustainability claims specified. This could be seen as a breach of warranty or misrepresentation.

BUILDERS AND CONTRACTORS

If builders or contractors deviate from the specified materials or methods without approval, or if poor workmanship leads to sustainability targets not being met, they could be held responsible. This could be through direct legal action for breach of contract or negligence.

THIRD-PARTY CERTIFIERS

In some cases, third-party certifiers, who assess and certify the sustainability of a building, could also be held accountable, particularly if there is an error or negligence in their evaluation processes.

BUILDING OWNERS OR DEVELOPERS

In reality, the responsibility could fall on the owners or developers if they change specifications, cut costs, or make other decisions that impact the building's sustainability outcomes.

> **Building contracts should include detailed specifications and require rigorous compliance checks, including third-party inspections and testing**

To address these complexities, contracts often include specific clauses defining responsibilities and remedies related to sustainability targets. These contracts can also require performance bonds or other guarantees to ensure compliance with sustainability goals.

TELL ME MORE ABOUT WHERE THE BUILDER MIGHT GET IT WRONG

Builders play a critical role in ensuring that a building meets its sustainability targets. There are several areas where builders might inadvertently or deliberately fail to meet these standards, leading to significant discrepancies between the design intentions and the final outcome. Here are some common areas where builders might get it wrong:

1. Substitution of materials

As touched on earlier, one of the most common issues is the use of materials that are cheaper and of lower quality than those specified in the design. These substitutions can significantly impact the building's energy efficiency, durability, and overall environmental footprint.

2. Improper installation

Even if the correct materials are used, poor installation can compromise the building's performance. For example, inadequate insulation installation can lead to gaps and significant heat losses, undermining energy efficiency goals.

3. Lack of understanding or training

Sustainability features often require specific knowledge or skills for proper installation. Builders lacking expertise in green building techniques may inadvertently compromise the sustainability features, such as installing energy-efficient systems incorrectly, or failing to properly seal the building envelope.

4. Non-compliance with sustainable building practices

This can include failing to implement water-saving measures, improper waste management during construction, or not following sustainable site management practices. These practices are essential to reduce the environmental impact during the construction phase.

5. Cost cutting

To stay within budget or increase profitability, builders might be tempted to make changes in ways that compromise the building's sustainability. This could involve reducing the quality or quantity of materials and resources used in construction.

6. Communication failures

Miscommunication between architects, engineers, contractors, and subcontractors can lead to mistakes in the construction process. This includes misunderstanding specifications or the improper execution of detailed designs.

To mitigate these risks, building contracts should include detailed specifications and require rigorous compliance checks, including third-party inspections and testing. Additionally, promoting better education and training for builders on sustainable practices, along with a strong emphasis on quality assurance and control, can help ensure that the sustainability goals of a building are met effectively.

IF THE BUILDER DOES GET IT WRONG, WHERE COULD THEY BE LIABLE?

Using the example of substituting materials, several liability issues could potentially arise:

1. Breach of contract

If the contract explicitly specifies the use of certain sustainable materials, the builder's substitution without approval can constitute a breach of contract. The building owner could potentially sue for damages resulting from non-compliance with the contractual specifications.

2. Warranty issues

Buildings often come with warranties that cover defects in materials and workmanship. Use of inferior materials can lead to early failures or defects, possibly voiding warranties and exposing the builder to claims for repair or replacement.

3. Misrepresentation and fraud

If the builder claims to have used specified sustainable materials but has actually used inferior substitutes, this could be considered fraudulent misrepresentation. The builder could face legal action for fraud and prosecution under the Fair Trading Act.

Story continues overleaf

BUILTIN

SUSTAINABILITY CAN GO WRONG CONT.

4. Regulatory and compliance violations

Legislation and regulation increasingly mandate the use of sustainable materials, particularly in government-funded or green-certified projects. Using non-compliant materials could result in fines, penalties or forced project modifications.

5. Reputational damage

Both the designer and builder could suffer reputational damage. The designer's vision for a sustainable project is compromised and the builder could be seen as unreliable, potentially impacting future business opportunities.

6. Environmental impact

The substitution could have environmental consequences, defeating the purpose of the original sustainable design and potentially leading to liability issues if the building fails to meet certain environmental standards or certifications like Green Star.

Green Star is a tool that awards points across various key performance and environmental categories to assess a project's sustainability rating. If a build you're working on is designed to achieve a specific rating and you compromise that, you could be held liable

7. Financial impact on the building owner

The use of non-specified materials can affect the building's operational costs, sustainability performance and property value. The owner might incur higher costs over time due to increased energy consumption, reduced efficiency, or more frequent repairs. The builder could be held liable for these increased costs.

IN A NUTSHELL

In many ways, building to a more sustainable specification is no different than following any other design. However, the accumulation of energy efficiency and other sustainable outcomes for the completed structure does increase the potential for inadvertent breaches of contract (and other issues), opening up more areas of liability for those involved in the process. ■

Builtin are New Zealand's Construction Risk Management Experts. For more information visit ***builtininsurance.co.nz****, email Ben Rickard at* ***ben@builtin.co.nz*** *or call the team on 0****800 BUILTIN****.*

PROVE YOUR KNOWLEDGE

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

1) Which of these outcomes would NOT apply if a builder or contractor deviated from specified methods or materials without approval?

a) Direct legal action for breach of contract.

b) Direct legal action for negligence.

c) Nothing, as long as the builder or contractor can prove they did so unintentionally.

2) How can material substitution land a builder in legal trouble?

a) If the materials are of lower quality than specified.

b) There can be no legal repercussions for material substitutions.

3) How can a builder be held liable for costs after completing a job?

a) The owner may incur higher costs over time due to increased energy consumption and reduced efficiency. The builder could be held liable for these.

b) A builder could be fined, penalised, or forced to do modifications for using the wrong materials.

c) A builder could be exposed to claims for repair or replacement due to early failures or defects in building materials.

d) All of the above.

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.

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A SKILLION ROOF DESIGN

H1 requirements have led to an influx of questions related to skillion roofs

As the dust settles after the introduction of the revised H1 requirements last year, BRANZ has continued to receive a steady stream of related queries about the ventilation of residential dwellings – especially roof spaces

The new baseline construction R-value for roofs of R6.6 continues to cause consternation for designers and builders, so we'll look at some of the contributing factors and try to resolve some of the issues that have arisen.

BRANZ SKILLION ROOF DESIGN

The most common queries involve skillion roofs. Here, I consider a skillion roof detail we have been working on at BRANZ. Questions are usually concerned with how to design these roofs but, increasingly, they also ask how to keep the construction price reasonable.

Note that there are currently no Acceptable Solutions available such as *NZS 3604 Timber-framed buildings* or *E2/AS1 External moisture* with details, materials or dimensions for timber skillion roof construction, so any proposal submitted for building consent approval will be considered as an Alternative Solution. Designers should prepare supporting evidence that their skillion roof design proposal will meet all its performance and durability requirements to the satisfaction of the building control officer processing the application.

The first skillion roof design principle that BRANZ addressed was to ensure there are no gaps that allow warm or moist air to travel up from the habitable rooms below into the roof structure above. The biggest culprit here is usually recessed light fittings that penetrate the ceiling lining.

While there are airtight-rated recessed light fittings available, instead we incorporated a continuous taped and sealed airtight sheet lining with no penetrations fixed directly to the underside of the rafters.

To achieve airtightness, it could be a standard stopped plasterboard ceiling lining. But we used plywood sheet, which also provides additional bracing rigidity to the roof and ceiling plane. Note that this is a functional sealed surface that will not be seen, so airtightness performance will be more critical than the finished appearance.

STANDARD TIMBER CEILING BATTENS

We also retained the use of standard timber ceiling battens – 35mm thick at 600mm span – fitted to the plywood surface and then fixed a standard plasterboard sheet ceiling, providing an aesthetically pleasing visible ceiling surface to the room below. This surface can be penetrated, creating a void in the ceiling plane for recessed LED lamps and wiring.

For this skillion detail, we used 240 x 45mm rafters at 600mm centres – a relatively common size and spacing for timber skillion roofs in Aotearoa New Zealand – and utilised a generic glass wool insulation material fitted full depth to the 240mm high void between the rafters.

> **"The first skillion roof design principle that BRANZ addressed was to ensure there are no gaps that allow warm or moist air to travel up from habitable rooms into the roof structure**

VAPOUR OPEN MEMBRANE

We fixed a layer of vapour open roof underlay to the top edge of the timber rafters, snugly encapsulating all our insulation material between each pair of adjacent rafter.

The vapour open membrane is necessary to enable any moist air that makes its way into the insulation material to pass through and escape safely into the ventilated space above.

There is typically a small pressure differential (approximately 4Pa) between the interior space below and the ventilated plane within the skillion structure above. This will be enough to gradually drive the moist air up past the insulation material and through the vapour open membrane to the airflow paths, where it can be safely removed to the exterior of the building.

This membrane will primarily act as a wind barrier, preventing wind-wash occurring where the air moving through the roof cavity disturbs the insulation material and compromises the efficient optimum thermal insulation performance of the material.

It also provides additional protection should moisture or condensation occur in the roof void below the cold roofing material. If droplets do fall on the top of the vapour open membrane, they will run down the slope of the roof and exit to the exterior via the drained and vented cavity behind the eaves and fascia board (see Figure 1).

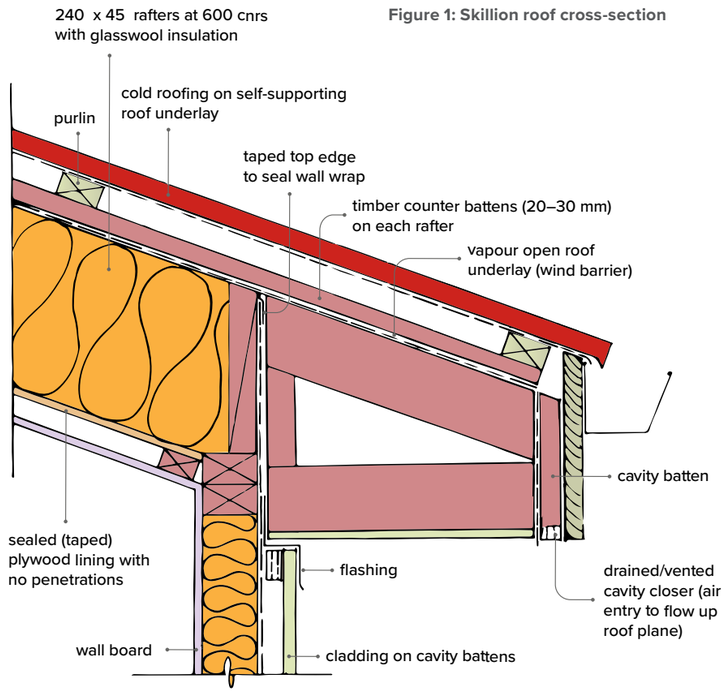


Figure 1: Skillion roof cross-section

AIRFLOW PATHWAYS

The next layer in the roof plane is the most important. This is where pathways are created for air to flow passively up through the roof plane from:

- The inlets at the eaves or fascia up through the airflow paths in the skillion rooftop outlets at the highest edge of the roof – a ridge with outlet vents.
- A monopitch roof upper eave.
- A junction where it forms a lean-to roof against an adjacent vertical wall or parapet.

Both the inlet and outlet vents must be carefully detailed to allow free flow of air, while remaining fully weathertight. We used the rule of thumb that the total cross-sectional area of inlet vents should be approximately twice the total area of the exit vents at the top, to maintain steady passive free airflow up the roof but avoid noisy rushing currents of air racing up through the confined spaces of the roof.

To maintain the airflow paths up the roof, we show a simple solution using a timber counter batten. On the top edge face of each rafter, we have fixed a continuous 45mm wide x 20mm deep timber batten to the full length of the rafter.

Story continues overleaf

A SKILLION ROOF DESIGN CONTINUED

This lifts all the horizontal purlins clear of the vapour open roof underlay and maintains clear unimpeded air channels between each pair of counter battens up the full height of the roof plane. Note that the purlins will now sit 20mm higher above the top face of the rafters so the purlin fixings will have to be increased in length accordingly.

There are other methods of creating the airflow through this plane of the roof, including proprietary kit such as castellated purlins and battens – timber or synthetic material. Search for what is available. Some options may be more suitable for the specific requirements of your skillion roof design.

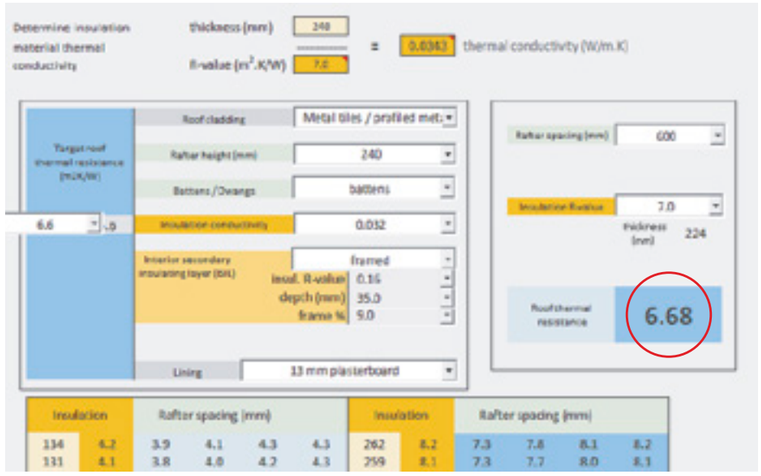
DETAILING AND FURTHER RESEARCH

Above the counter battens, we revert to standard traditional roof design – cold roofing, such as long-run profiled galvanised steel on self-supporting roof underlay with the underlay draped beyond the fascia into the spouting.

Another detail worth mentioning is sealing the ends of the spaces between rafter pairs. Our drawing shows continuous bevelled blocking between the rafters but with the additional protection of continuing the wall wrap up past the wall to the top of the blocking, where it is sealed with a continuous length of tape to keep it airtight.

A further point of interest is that we used the BRANZ House insulation guide to establish the construction R-value of this detail. The construction R-value is R6.68 (see Figure 2). ■

Figure 2: House insulation guide construction R-value calculation



Article by Bruce Sedcole, ANZIA, BRANZ technical writer. This article was first published in issue 201 of BRANZ Build Magazine. Images and figures supplied by BRANZ. www.buildmagazine.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!

4) Are proposals submitted for building consent approval for skillion roofs considered an Alternative Solution?

a) Yes as there is no Acceptable Solution with details, materials or dimensions for timber skillion roof construction.

b) No, as NZS 3604 Timber-framed buildings includes details, material and dimensions for timber skillion roof construction.

5) How could builders eliminate gaps which allow warm or moist air to travel into the roof structure?

a) Use a standard stopped plasterboard ceiling lining.

b) Use airtight-rated recessed light fittings.

c) Incorporate a continuous taped and sealed airtight sheet lining with no penetrations fixed directly to the underside of the rafters.

d) All of the above.

6) Why is it necessary to fix a vapour open roof underlay to the top edge of timber rafters?

a) To enable moist air that makes its way into insulation material to pass through.

b) To act as a wind barrier, preventing wind-wash occurring.

c) To provide additional protection should moisture or condensation occur in the roof void.

d) All of the above.

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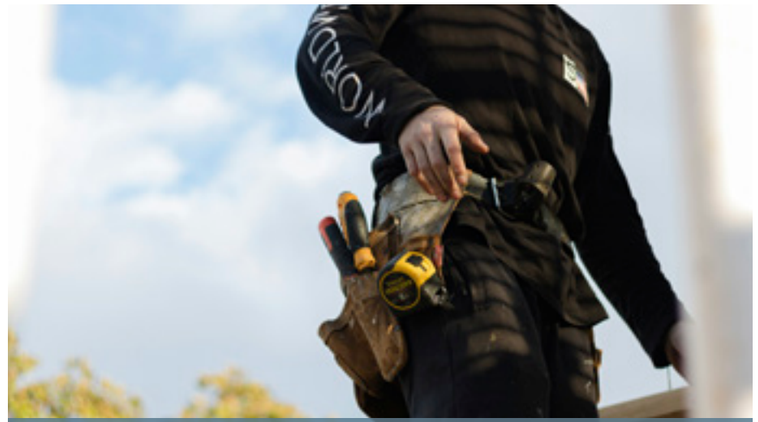
SHORTER STAY FOR LOW SKILLED WORKERS

The Accredited Employer Work Visa (AEWV) has been changed to prioritise higher skilled migrants and make sure there are no New Zealanders being overlooked in favour of workers from overseas



Tougher immigration laws will limit how long certain migrants can work in New Zealand. Photo by Callum Hill on Unsplash

One of the headline updates is the reduction in length of stay from five to two years (with the ability to apply for a third year with a Job Check) for workers in Australian New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO) level 4 and 5 occupations, which includes construction labourers.

"The total time you can stay in New Zealand (also called a maximum continuous stay) on one or more AEWVs is reduced to three years. When you get to the end of your maximum continuous stay you will need to leave New Zealand for a specified amount of time – normally 12 months – before you can apply for another AEWV," says Immigration New Zealand (INZ).

TOUGHER RULES

To be classified as an ANZSCO level 4, a labourer will require a NZQF Level 2 or 3 qualification, or at least one year of relevant experience. An ANZSCO level 5 labourer will require an NZQF Level 1 qualification, or compulsory secondary education.

"We [have been] flooded with a bunch of low-skilled migrants rather than people who will drive productivity," said Immigration Minister Erica Stanford. "I'm faced with [changing] our settings to have a stringent labour market test, so jobs are genuine and we're putting Kiwis first."

Employers must also lodge vacancies for ANZSCO level 4 and 5 occupations with Work and Income, plus advertise the job nationally for 21 days – an increase on the previous requirement of 14 days. Before employing a migrant, an employer must also provide reasons why a suitable Kiwi can't be found to do the job.

Additionally, employers must employ someone on an AEWV for at least 30 hours per week, and if this is not met, INZ can revoke employer accreditation.

There is now a minimum English requirement for the AEWV, which can be met through an applicant's citizenship, the location of their previous work and study or via an English test.

NEW RULES IMPACT CURRENT VISA HOLDERS

The changes to the visa also effect those currently holding an AEWV. Employees who applied for their first AEWV before 21 June 2023 and are in an ANZSCO level 4 or 5 job paying above the required AEWV rate of $29.66, and hold a three-year AEWV, will no longer be able to access the maximum visa length of five years.

However, there are some jobs on the ANZSCO level 4 and 5 list which aren't affected. They are:

- Green list jobs.
- Jobs earning 1.5 times the median wage.
- Jobs on a pathway to residence.

The Construction and Infrastructure Sector Agreement, which allows employers to pay less than the $29.66 median wage rate for some roles for a limited time, was due to include seven additional roles. However, these will no longer progress. The roles were:

- Driller's assistant.
- Earthmoving labourer.
- Earthmoving plant operator (general).
- Linemarker.
- Machine operators (not elsewhere classified).
- Mechanic's assistant.
- Road traffic controller. ■

MIXED RESPONSE TO BCA CONSENT REPORTS

The Government says forcing BCAs to report consent and CCC timeframes will improve performance, but not all agree

Builders and Building Consent Authorities (BCAs) are split on their support for new building consent and code compliance certificate (CCC) reporting responsibilities

In March 2024, Building and Construction Minister Chris Penk announced that BCAs will be required to submit data every quarter on the length of time taken to respond to a consent or CCC applications to the Ministry of Building, Innovation and Employment (MBIE).

Applications for consents and CCCs must be completed by BCAs within 20 working days.

"Starting in April, BCAs will be required to submit timeframes for building consent and CCC applications, with this data being published on MBIE's website every quarter," said Penk.

A JOINED-UP APPROACH

The publication of data is designed to drive innovation and reduce the time it takes new buildings to reach the CCC stage – an approach that Malcolm Fleming, Chief Executive of the New Zealand Certified Builders, thinks may prevent BCAs from engaging in "cynical" behaviour.

"The NZCB supports this decision. It will create a picture of whether the historical complaint of BCAs being slow with building consent and CCC processing – and, in particular, engaging in the cynical behaviour of 'stopping the clock' on day 18 or 19 of the building consent application process – is still occurring.

"I sense that it is no longer the issue it was, in part due to larger councils such as Auckland providing applicants with online tracking of building consent applications, and those larger councils having the ability to push overflow consent applications to other BCAs, who do have the capacity and vice versa. BCAs have created collegial networks that operate in this manner.

"Regardless of whether building consent delays are a national problem, a regional problem, or no problem at all, capturing data to benchmark BCA performance on building consent and CCC is seen as a good initiative. It will provide good baseline data for when building activity recovers and the volume of building consent applications that BCAs need to deal with will increase markedly from current levels."

> **It is important to note that building consent statutory performance figures, as requested by MBIE, provide only a partial view**
>
> *– Ian McCormick, Auckland Council General Manager Building Consents*

PART OF A WIDER PROBLEM

Master Builders Chief Executive Ankit Sharma was similarly pleased with the new reporting requirements but added that challenges with consents won't be fixed with one change.

"Master Builders supports the Government's measured approach to streamlining the consenting process, including the requirement that BCAs report on processing times. There are a range of measures that must be implemented to address consenting delays.

"As of August last year, 66% of Master Builders members were experiencing consenting delays. Those who work in the sector are in agreement that the consenting system is not delivering what the country needs. Inconsistencies across BCAs are still a significant challenge.

"We believe key themes coming through the consenting review – which talk about more joined-up BCA service delivery, consolidation, and self-certification pathways for proven operators – will contribute to better uniformity across the country."

Master Builders is pleased that the Government is consulting with the sector to reduce costs, improve productivity and deliver more affordable housing and infrastructure, added Sharma.

BCA RESPONSES MIXED

While the new reporting requirements are popular with those working in the construction industry, it hasn't been met with universal support from BCAs.

"This new government requirement continues the historic focus on councils' statutory performance alone," said Ian McCormick, General Manager Building Consents at Auckland Council.

"It is important to note that building consent statutory performance figures, as requested by MBIE, provide only a partial view of consenting processing times. Statutory time is essentially an accurate count of the time an application is being worked on by council staff. The total processing time includes the time council staff spend waiting for information found to be missing from the application to be provided by the applicant or agent.

"If the time taken for applicants to respond to [requests for information (RFIs) from] councils was also reported, therefore bringing the wider industry into focus, it would have the potential to really make a difference and enable an improvement in the quality and completeness of building consent applications submissions."

Wellington City Council (WCC) Chief Planning Officer Liam Hodgetts added that a one-size-fits-all approach risks ignoring some of New Zealand's unique challenges.

"The supply of this data won't improve consenting timeframes on its own. It is one part of informing future decisions on the Government's plans to improve the building consent system.

"If this reporting can assist central government in highlighting the challenges BCAs face for approving more complex buildings, particularly in Wellington, due to its seismic risk and topographical challenges, then WCC welcomes that."

Christchurch Council was more enthusiastic about the new reporting responsibilities.

> **Capturing data to benchmark BCA performance on building consent and CCC is seen as a good initiative**
>
> *– Malcolm Fleming, NZCB Chief Executive*

"MBIE, as the central regulator, needs this type of information, so it can make more informed decisions on changes that may be needed, and/or guidance and assistance that would assist in the building consent process," said Steffan Thomas, Head of Building Consenting.

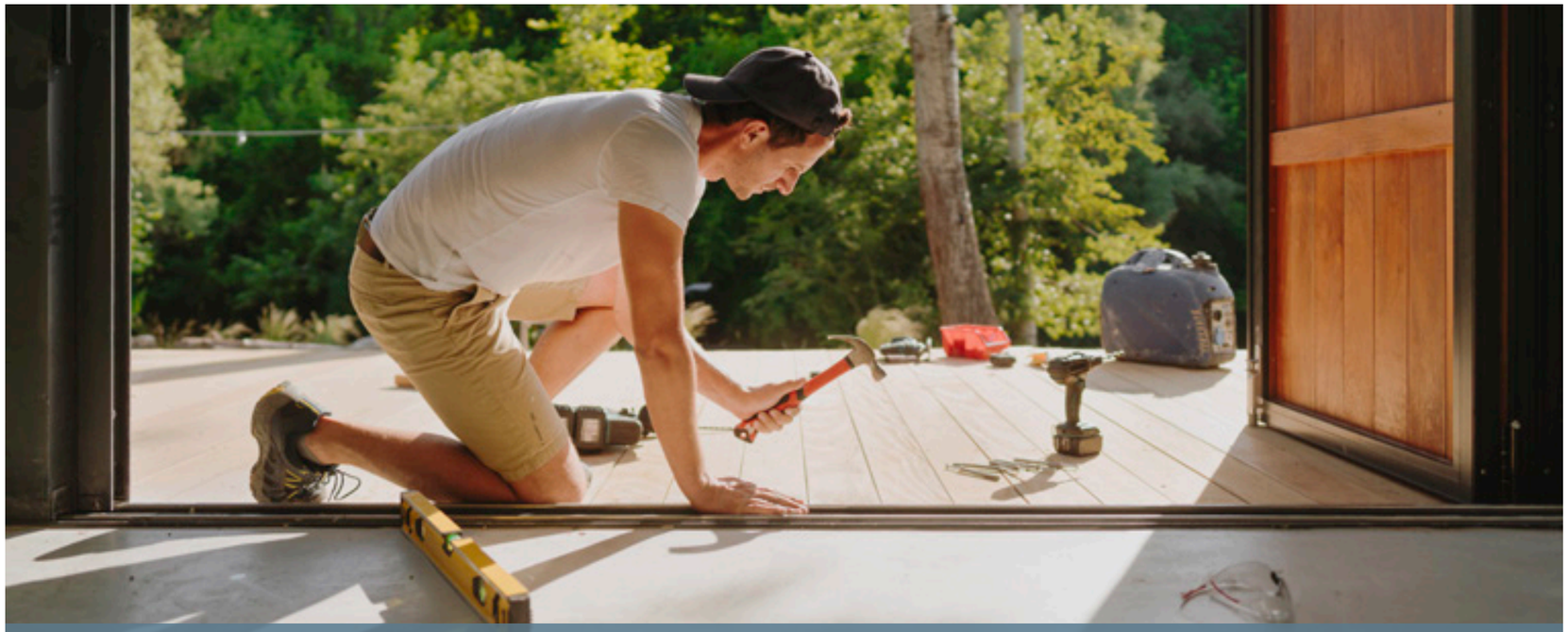
In response to Auckland Council's concerns, MBIE's Head of Building Systems Delivery and Assurance Simon Thomas told *Under Construction*: "Further data regarding RFIs and overall elapsed time is something that we are looking to collect and will be working with the BCAs and their software providers to enable this for future reports."

IMPACT ON WORKLOAD LIMITED

Asked whether a responsibility to gather and report consent processing data would place more pressure on BCAs, Ian McCormick, Auckland Council's General Manager Building Consents, told *Under Construction* that it would not, as that information was already gathered internally.

WCC's Hodgetts added: "The MBIE report includes new data sets that we have not previously reported on but is not overly onerous and we welcome government interest to better understand the BCA consenting environment." ■

BUILDING LEVY SURPLUS SPARKS CHANGES



The increase in the building levy threshold should reduce the cost for smaller building and construction projects

The Building Levy surplus will be used to increase investment in services and adjust the Building Levy threshold to be more in line with current construction costs

Following a review of a consultation that ran between April and May 2023, the Building Levy threshold is set to increase from $20,444 (including GST) to $65,000 (including GST) from 1 July 2024.

The consultation received 59 submissions from Building Consent Authorities (BCAs), industry bodies and various individuals. Of those, 68.5% of submitters agreed the threshold should be increased to $65,000, which was MBIE's preferred option.

Most submitters who said they supported increasing the Levy threshold to $65,000 thought it aligned with recent increases in the cost of building and construction, and better reflected the cost of small building projects these days, given it hadn't been updated in 30 years.

Another reason for their support was the expected reduction in cost for smaller building and construction projects. The Levy change is in response to its $71.6m account balance, which the Treasury and Office of the Auditor General say should trend to zero over time. To achieve this goal, MBIE has raised the threshold and will increase spending by $6.3m per annum in:

- Digital channels and engagement.
- Compliance pathways.
- Building for climate change.

SUBJECT TO CHANGE?

It is estimated that the raised threshold could lead to cost savings of up to $113 for projects under $65,000. However, MBIE told *Under Construction* that the threshold would be reviewed in three years and may change in 2027.

"The Building Consent Baseline Review provides us with an opportunity to assess the performance of MBIE's building system regulatory function and take stock of the current cost base of the system and likely future funding needs, to inform the next Building Levy review," said Antonia Reid, Policy Director at MBIE.

"With each Building Levy review and proposed rate change, the rates are set to fund the costs that MBIE forecasts it will face over the next three years. The rate also depends heavily on expectations of building consent volumes and values over that period.

"At the next review, MBIE will look at how much is needed to fund the services over the coming three years and forecast the required levy rate from there; this may result in a proposed increase or decrease."

INCREASING INVESTMENT IN SERVICES

MBIE says increasing investment by $6.3m per annum in services would improve:

- Quality and volume of the information, education and guidance delivered.
- Compliance pathways in areas such as the Building Code, Acceptable Solutions and Verification Methods.
- Regulation of the building industry around climate change.

The Building Levy amount is paid to MBIE by a building owner or developer when they submit their plans to a BCA for consent for a building project. The BCA that processes the consent receives 3% of the Levy paid as an administration fee.

"It funds a range of functions and activities under the Building Act 2004, including information and guidance, compliance, enforcement, monitoring and reporting," said Reid.

NO RATE INCREASE

The Building Levy consultation also asked for feedback on whether to decrease the Levy rate from $1.75 (including GST) per $1,000 of building work value.

"In the consultation on proposed changes to the Levy, we received mixed feedback on the proposal to change the Levy rate, with just under half in favour of a reduction and just over half in favour of maintaining the existing rate and improving the regulatory services the Levy funds," said Reid.

The group that opposed reducing the Levy rate included six BCAs and nine industry bodies. Reasons for disagreeing with the proposal to reduce the Levy rate to $1.48 included:

- The impact on the amount of cost recovery a council can collect from the 3% administration fee.
- The impact on MBIE's ability to strengthen the regulation of the building and construction industry in the longer term.
- The fact that there other areas that could use the additional investment if funds were available, such as training and resources.

As a result, the Levy rate will remain the same for now, said Reid.

A GOOD START

While the increase to the Levy threshold will save customers money, Registered Master Builders Chief Executive Ankit Sharma told *Under Construction* that wider industry considerations are still needed.

"We are supportive of all actions to reduce costs in the system. However, reducing the Levy in isolation will only make a small difference. It needs to be taken in conjunction with other, more significant changes.

"Some of these are already under way, such as the changes to the Resource Management Act and the detailed review of the building consent system. These will have a much greater impact on costs." ■

> **Reducing the levy in isolation will only make a small difference. It needs to be taken in conjunction with other, more significant changes**
>
> *– Ankit Sharma, Registered Master Builders Chief Executive*

INDUSTRY FEATURE

MARCH CONSENTS DROP BY 25%

The year ended March 2024 saw 11,689 fewer new homes consented than during the year ended March 2023

There were 35,236 new homes consented in the year ended March 2024, which represents a 24.9% reduction compared with the year ended March 2023, which had 46,925 new homes consented.

"The annual number of new homes consented has continued to decrease from its peak of 51,015 in the year ended May 2022," said Construction and Property Statistics Manager Michael Heslop.

In the year ended March 2024, there were 15,166 stand-alone homes consented, a drop of 23% when compared with the year ended March 2023. There were also 20,070 multi-unit homes consented in the year ended March 2024 – a 26.2% reduction compared with the same period. Of the multi-unit homes, 2,188 were apartments and 1,716 retirement village units.

In March 2024, 2,931 new homes were consented – 26% less than in the same period the previous year. Of the new homes consented, there were 1,680 multi-unit homes (-29.6%) and 1,251 stand-alone houses (-21.1%). Of the multi-unit homes, 1,297 were townhouses, flats and units (-28.8%), 224 apartments (-31.5%) and 159 retirement village units (-32.9%).

"The 2,188 apartments consented in the year ended March 2024 is the lowest in nearly eight years," added Heslop.

In seasonally adjusted terms, the number of new homes consented in March 2024 fell 0.2%, following a 16% seasonally adjusted rise in February 2024.

SIMILAR REGIONAL OUTLOOK

No regions consented more dwellings in the year ended March 2024 compared to the previous year.

The four regions with the most consents issued were Auckland (14,699; -28%), Canterbury (6,575; -20%) Waikato (3,228; -28%) and Wellington (2,358; -35%).

CONSENTS DOWN PER 1,000 RESIDENTS

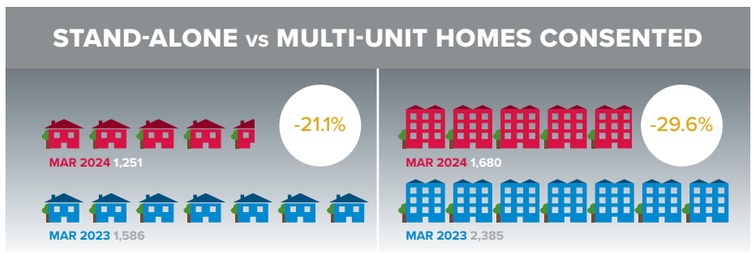
In terms of dwellings consented per 1,000 residents, the figures for the year ended March 2024 declined compared with the year ended March 2023 (6.7 vs 9.1).

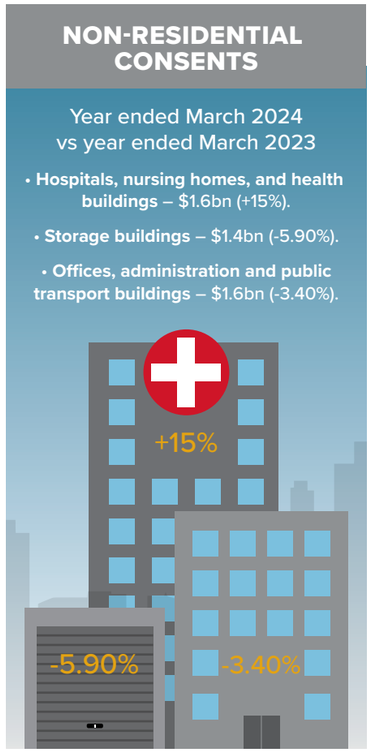
Three regions consented above national levels: Auckland (8.5), Otago (7.7) and Canterbury (9.9).

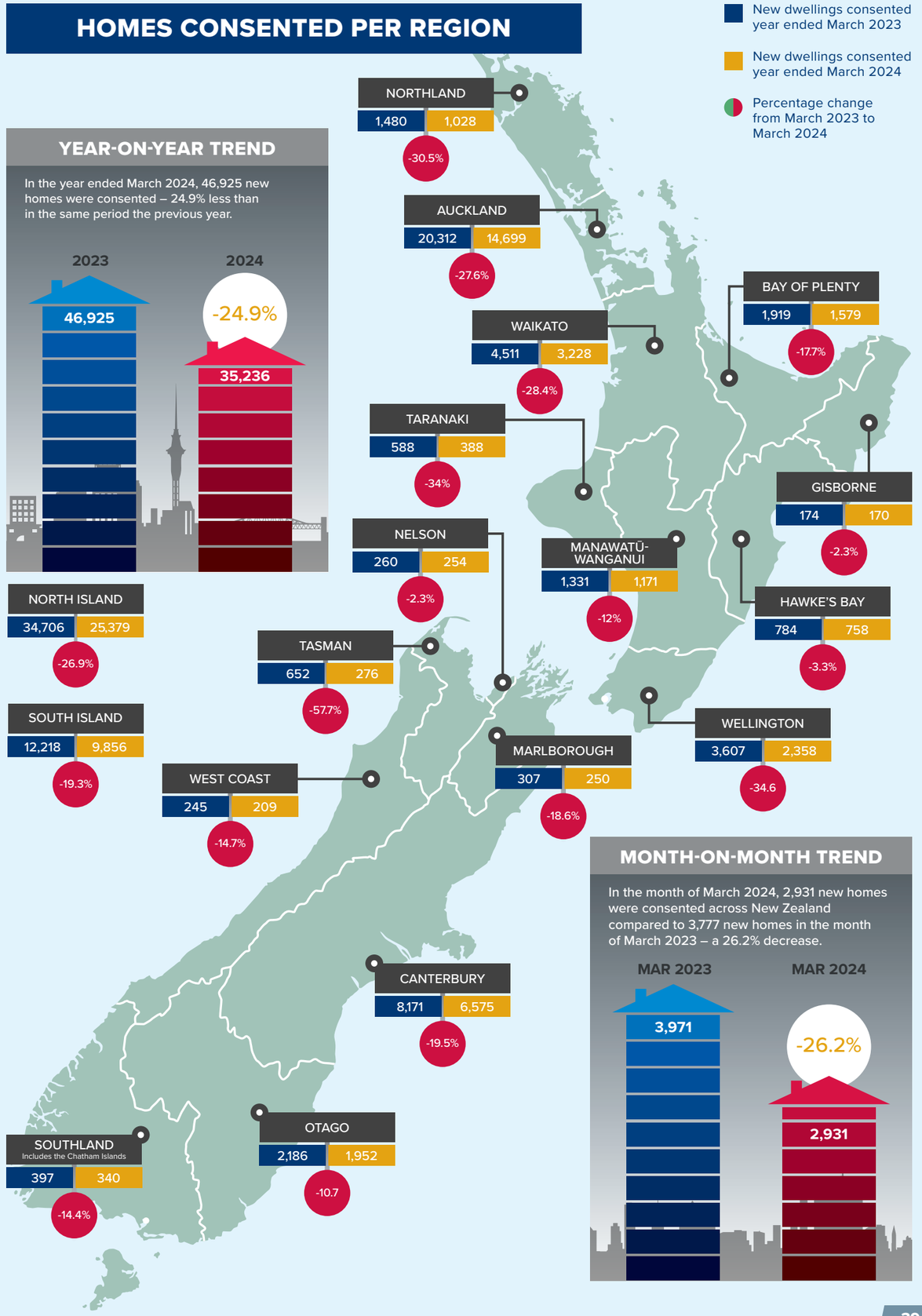
NON-RESIDENTIAL BUILDING CONSENTS UP

In the year ended March 2024, non-residential building consents totalled $9.5bn, down 1.1% from the year ended March 2023. The building types with the highest value were:

- Offices, administration and public transport buildings – $1.6bn (-3.4%).
- Hospitals, nursing homes, and health buildings – $1.6bn (+15%).
- Storage buildings – $1.4bn (-5.9%). ■







INDUSTRY FEATURE

LBP CAUTIONED BUT NOT SANCTIONED

A Licensed Building Practitioner (LBP) has been issued a warning after he used substituted building products without seeking design direction or authorisation for the changes

The LBP was engaged to build a new residential dwelling for the Complainants and a building consent was issued based on an independent designer's design. The consent included a Specification that stipulated which brand-named product should be used for the deck balustrade, and roof and wall claddings. Instead, the LBP supplied and installed substituted products. The LBP also completed work on the roof eave, garage door flashing and window jamb sealing, which differed from what was stipulated in the building consent.

"In general, the Respondent submitted that he installed the products that he had priced during the preliminary design phase, which were products supplied by his normal suppliers," said the report. "He did not reference the building consent Specification. He took the approach that the Specification did not have to be strictly complied with."

As a result, the Board investigated whether the LBP had carried out or supervised building work in a negligent or incompetent manner contrary to section 317 (1) (b) of the Act and carried out or supervised work that does not comply with a building consent. It also investigated whether:

- Correct building consent processes were used for changes to wall and roof cladding materials and the deck balustrade system.
- The quality and compliance of building work on the roofing eave flashing, garage door head flashes and sealing of window joinery and window installation methodology.

SUBSTITUTIONS COMPLIANT BUT NOT APPROVED

The Board viewed the product changes as product substitutions that required a minor variation under section 45A of the Act, as there were no issues regarding the compliance of the substituted products with the Building Code. However, substitutions still need to be approved by way of minor variation applications through the Building Consent Authority (BCA).

"The Respondent did not consult with the designer or engage with the BCA prior to the products being substituted. He did not seek any minor variations for the changes, which are still outstanding," said the Board.

COMPETENCE QUESTIONED

In reviewing the situation, several issues were made clear to the Board.

Firstly, the LBP was not even aware of the products that had been specified or that he had to follow a process if changes to specified products were made.

Secondly, he did not refer to the approved Specification at all when carrying out the build and instead worked off the design he originally priced, using his normal suppliers.

As a result, the Board commented that "a competent LBP should be aware of the process relating to product substitutions" and that he "departed from an accepted standard of conduct".

Regarding the LBP's building work, the most serious oversight was a failure to install a colour steel cladding flashing, with the Board hearing that the LBP wasn't sure if it was installed or not.

However, the Board's main concern was to determine whether the failure to obtain minor variations for the building work was serious enough to warrant disciplinary action. To do so, the board consulted two cases: Collie v Nursing Council of New Zealand and Pillai v Messiter (No 2). After reviewing them, the Board decided a disciplinary finding should not be made.

Despite not sanctioning the LBP, the Board still found that he had been negligent in his decision to not install specified products, notify his BCA of the product substitutions and not carry out the specified building work.

ESCAPED SANCTIONS BY A WHISKER

The Board also noted its concerns over his conduct and warned that it "was only by a small margin that the Board did not uphold the charge".

"The Respondent displayed a worrying disregard for the Specification that formed part of the building consent. A Specification is not a guidance document. It is a mandatory part of the building consent, and it must be adhered to. If changes are made, a process to ensure that change is approved and recorded by the BCA must be followed." ■

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LEGAL

THE RMA LIVES ON

The Government proposes to make Medium Density Residential Standards optional for councils

The formation of a new Government has shed light on the next steps for environmental laws and regulation within New Zealand. The Coalition Agreements (Agreements) contain notable commitments and confirm a mandate to repeal many of the environmental initiatives implemented under the previous Government. So what does that mean for builders?

To progress specific initiatives, the Government has already repealed existing legislation such as the Natural and Built Environment Act 2023 and Spatial Planning Act 2023. In the short term, reform will be achieved through amendments to the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA), with a view to replacing the RMA in the long term.

The following 'short-term' list captures commitments within a 100-Day Action Plan or intended to be completed 'as soon as practicable'. 'Mid-term' captures some further commitments to be progressed in the early years of coalition.

OVERARCHING OBJECTIVES

The Agreements contain several consistent themes that clarify the purpose of pending repeals and promulgation of new legislation:

- Prioritising regionally and nationally significant projects.
- Enabling new infrastructure and facilitation of primary activities.
- Promotion of a liberal democracy, with a focus on the enjoyment of property rights, especially with respect to interpreting the Treaty of Waitangi.
- Improving cost-efficiency and reducing red tape in relation to the creation and compliance with environmental regulation.

COMMITMENTS (SHORT TERM)

The short-term commitments are to be supported by the introduction of new legislation, such as the Regulatory Standards Act, ministerial portfolio for Regulation, and a National Infrastructure Agency. The purpose of these initiatives is to promote the principles of economic efficiency during the drafting of new legislation, and regulation as well as coordinating funding (including procurement from government agencies or private funding) for projects of regional and national significance.

The following changes to the RMA and secondary legislation processes that will impact those in the construction industry have either already been implemented or will be commenced in the short-term:

- Amend the RMA to establish a fast-track consenting and permitting process for regional and national projects of significance (the Bill for this has had its first reading and is currently being reviewed by select committee).
- Extension of time for councils to meet their obligations under the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management 2020 (NPS-FM) (pending work on a replacement).
- Cease implementation of new Significant Natural Areas (SNAs) and seek further advice on the operation of existing SNAs as part of the Government's programme to reform the RMA.
- Repealing the legislation supporting the Three Waters/ Affordable Water Reform, ensuring that ownership of assets to remain with councils, and beginning the implementation of a new plan for Local Water Done Well.
- Repeal the ban on offshore oil and gas exploration.
- Make any additional Orders in Council needed to remove red tape to speed up cyclone and flood recovery efforts.
- Stop the review of the Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS) system. The review was designed to assess if changes are needed to provide stronger incentives for businesses to transition away from fossil fuels. Ceasing the review is intended to instil confidence in the existing ETS regime and stabilise the value of New Zealand Units.

COMMITMENTS (MID TERM)

We can then expect to see further changes commenced in the mid-term, including:

- To make the Medium Density Residential Standards (MDRS) optional for councils, with the need for councils to ratify any use of MDRS, including existing zones.
- Amending the RMA to streamline the plan preparation process in Schedule 1.

National's Going for Housing Growth Policy proposes to remove LUC-3 land from the National Policy Statement – Highly Productive Land. We understand that this commitment has not been overridden by the Agreements.

We note that the commitments identified above are not intended to be an exhaustive list of all matters contained within the Agreements.

If you have any questions, please get in touch with our team at **duncancotterill.com/expertise/resource-management** .

This article is provided by Duncan Cotterill is a full-service law firm with offices in Auckland, Wellington, Nelson, Queenstown and Christchurch.

*if you have any questions about the RMA, please contact your local Duncan Cotterill advisor (**duncancotterill.com**).*

Disclaimer: the content of this article is general in nature and not intended as a substitute for specific professional advice on any matter and should not be relied upon for that purpose.

PROVE YOUR **KNOWLEDGE**

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

7) Which legislation has the Government repealed?

a) *Natural and Built Environment Act 2023.*
b) *Spatial Planning Act 2023.*
c) *Both.*

8) How will the RMA be amended?

a) *Establish a fast-track consenting and permitting process for regional and national projects of significance.*
b) *Continue the review of the Emissions Trading Scheme.*
c) *Expand implementation of new Significant Natural Areas*

9) What changes have been made to the Medium Density Residential Standards?

a) *None.*
b) *It is now optional for councils, with the need to ratify any use of MDRS, including existing zones.*
c) *It has been expanded to include land further afield.*

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.

THE SUCCESSFUL BUILDER

STAY COMPETITIVE IN A TIGHT MARKET

Diversifying what you offer, such as energy-efficient upgrades, can help mitigate the impact of market fluctuations

It can be difficult to stay competitive when the market tightens but, with some flexibility and creative thinking, it can be done! The Successful Builder Graeme Owen explains how

In the ever-changing landscape of the New Zealand new home building and renovation market, builders are facing a unique set of challenges. Many prospective new home buyers are growing increasingly hesitant to spend money on what they see as a high-risk venture and those undertaking renovation work are becoming much more price-conscious. So, you must be prepared to adapt your strategies to remain competitive and profitable.

In this article, I'll explore some effective strategies for navigating these challenges and even (hopefully) thriving in a difficult market environment.

1. UNDERSTANDING MARKET DYNAMICS

The first step in addressing these challenges is to understand market dynamics. In recent times, customers have become more cautious with their spending, particularly on large investments like home renovations. Economic uncertainty, coupled with rising living costs, has led to a greater emphasis on value for money and cost-conscious decision-making.

You have probably had to make some of these decisions yourself, so use your own experience to help you identify with your prospective clients' feelings.

2. TRANSPARENT COMMUNICATION

Being open and honest in your communication is key to building trust and managing your client's expectations in this environment. Don't be afraid to be honest with your customers about the uncertainties in material and subcontractor costs. Also, be upfront about pointing out any potential risks associated with the project.

When you foster open dialogue and provide clear explanations, you reduce the possibility of misunderstandings. Furthermore, you build a stronger relationship with your client. It will help if you expand your initial consultations and fully discuss project goals, budget constraints and potential challenges before expecting any contract to be signed.

3. FLEXIBLE PRICING MODELS

Traditional fixed-price quotes may no longer be feasible in a market where material and subcontractor costs are subject to fluctuations. Instead, you may need to offer a mix of fixed and cost-plus models.

With a cost-plus contract (where the client pays the actual cost of materials and labour, plus a margin) there is transparency about the actual costs involved in the project. While this does shift some of the risk onto the client, it also means they can stand to benefit should the project run well.

Similarly, a cost-plus contract allows for greater flexibility, as the client only pays for the actual time spent and materials used. This can be particularly beneficial for projects with uncertain timelines or scope changes.

However, where there are variations from the initial specifications, make sure you keep careful details of the spec changes and, if possible, the estimated costs associated with the variation. This will prevent misunderstanding should the project exceed the estimated cost.

4. DETAILED CONTRACTS

Detailed contracts are essential for protecting both parties' interests and minimising disputes. Whether fixed price or cost-plus, they should clearly outline the scope of work, pricing structure, payment terms, provisions for handling cost increases or changes in the project scope and how supply delays will be handled.

For example, contracts should include clauses that address how cost overruns will be handled, such as requiring client approval for any additional expenses beyond a certain threshold. By establishing clear expectations from the outset, you should avoid misunderstandings and conflicts – especially in the last stages of the project. It's also important to note that for any work above $30,000 (including GST), it is legally required to use a written contract.

5. VALUE-BASED SELLING

In a price-conscious market, builders must differentiate themselves based on the value they offer rather than simply competing on price alone. Emphasising the unique qualities and benefits of your services can help you justify your price – especially to customers who are looking for quality.

For instance, you might highlight your expertise and craftsmanship, your attention to detail, or your commitment to your customers' total satisfaction. Showcasing relevant past projects and providing client testimonials is a sure way to demonstrate your track record of delivering exceptional results.

6. EFFICIENCY & COST CONTROL

Efficiency and cost control are essential for maintaining profitability in a contracting market. You should continuously evaluate your processes and identify areas for improvement. Develop a team culture that is always looking for ways to streamline operations and reduce waste.

For example, you might negotiate better deals with suppliers, work carefully on scheduling to reduce downtime, or spend time training your team and researching technology that will improve productivity.

It's important to be proactive in managing costs and maximising efficiency, so you can maintain your competitiveness while delivering high-quality results.

7. DIVERSIFICATION

Diversifying what you offer can help mitigate the impact of market fluctuations. Also, it brings you into contact with a broader range of customers. Maybe you can expand into related services, such as small repairs and maintenance, landscaping, energy-efficient upgrades, or special projects. Offering energy-efficient upgrades may appeal to environmentally conscious customers seeking to reduce their carbon footprint and lower their utility bills. Growing your list of satisfied customers (from smaller jobs) can also grow your referral base!

8. CUSTOMER EDUCATION

Educating your customers about the long-term benefits of investing in quality renovations and home improvements can help overcome price objections. Emphasise the longer-term value that you can bring, such as increased resale value, improved comfort and livability, and energy savings. Post articles and guides on your website that explain the benefits of different renovation options and the return on investment they offer.

In conclusion, while a changing market does present its challenges, builders can overcome these by adopting a proactive and strategic approach. ■

*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) What is a cost-plus contract?

- a) *Where the client pays the actual cost of materials and labour, plus a margin.*
- b) *Where the builder offers work for a set price, plus a margin.*
- c) *Where the client purchases the materials directly from a supplier and only pays the builder for their labour.*

11) How can a builder diversify their offering?

- a) *Offer energy-efficient upgrades.*
- b) *Expand into related services.*
- c) *Take on smaller jobs to grow a referral base of customers.*

12) How can efficiency be improved?

- a) *By asking your staff to work longer hours.*
- b) *By researching productivity-improving technology.*
- c) *By hiring more staff.*

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SITE SAFE

ARE YOU ASBESTOS AWARE?

Asbestos removal has been in the headlines recently, with concerns that asbestos awareness in the construction industry is still not as high as it needs to be to prevent deaths. As New Zealand's leading killer in the workplace, Site Safe asks if you're sure you're prepared to address it safely?

If asbestos-containing materials (ACMs) are disturbed, tiny fibres are released. These fibres are hazardous if breathed in and could lodge in the lungs, with potential to cause diseases such as asbestosis, lung cancer, and mesothelioma.

If you don't take the right precautions to protect yourself, you could risk your life, livelihood and family.

Friable ACMs are especially dangerous, as the fibres are easily released into the air. Non-friable asbestos is also risky, as it can become friable if damaged or old.

HOW DO I KNOW WHERE ASBESTOS IS ONSITE?

Asbestos is encountered by many tradespeople but is especially dangerous in demolition environments. Sanding, drilling and cutting ACMs also release the fibres.

ACMs are commonly found in:

- Insulation.
- Soundproofing.
- Sprayed-on fireproofing.
- Decorative coatings.
- Floor coverings (eg; vinyl).
- Cladding.
- Roofing.

An asbestos management plan sets out where any identified asbestos or asbestos-containing material is present, and how it will be managed. A copy of the asbestos management plan should be readily accessible to workers and their representatives, as well as to other person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBUs).

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I SUSPECT ASBESTOS IS PRESENT?

If you have any suspicion that asbestos is present before you even start work, get an asbestos survey completed by an asbestos surveyor.

An asbestos surveyor should have:

- Sufficient training, qualifications, knowledge, experience.
- An ability to sample and identify asbestos through an IANZ-accredited laboratory.
- Sufficient knowledge of the tasks required and the risks the work will involve.
- Independence and use of a quality management system.

If you do uncover or damage materials that you think might contain asbestos:

- Stop work immediately.
- Keep people away.
- Minimise the spread of contamination to other areas.
- Get advice on what to do next from a licensed professional.

If you have identified asbestos and it needs to be removed because it's in poor condition, or as part of renovations, then it's time to call in a licensed asbestos remover.

MYTH BUSTING!

Myth: It's easy to spot asbestos.

Fact: Asbestos isn't always easy to identify. The only accurate way to confirm its presence is through asbestos testing conducted by an IANZ-accredited laboratory.

Myth: I can remove non-friable asbestos myself.

Fact: Non-friable asbestos is still risky as it can become friable if damaged or old.

Myth: This building was built after 1 January 2000, she'll be right.

Fact: It is still possible for buildings built after the year 2000 to contain asbestos. Products containing asbestos were able to be imported until October 2016. Asbestos can be in places that you might not expect, so you could encounter it without knowing.

Myth: Effects from asbestos exposure will be immediately felt.

Fact: Asbestos-related diseases take years to develop (and not all people exposed develop such diseases).

> **If you have any suspicion that asbestos is present before you start work, get a survey completed by an asbestos surveyor**

WorkSafe NZ is responsible for licensing asbestos removal professionals. The only exceptions are if the removal:

- Is 10m² or less of non-friable asbestos or asbestos-contaminated dust (ACD) associated with the removal of the non-friable asbestos over the whole course of the removal project, or
- ACD that is not associated with the removal of friable or non-friable asbestos and is only a minor contamination.

HOW CAN I PROTECT MYSELF?

Three simple steps will help keep you safe if you encounter materials you suspect might be ACMs:

- Keep dust down.
- Use the right PPE.
- Clean up properly.

Other risk controls include:

- Containing and isolating sites where ACMs are present.
- Ensuring that trained professionals carry out the removal of ACMs and ACDs.
- Using plastic drop sheets in ACM work areas.
- Using full and oversized disposable PPE and the minimum of a disposable P2 mask.
- Using only micro filter vacuums.
- Using low-pressure wet work methods (sprayers) and not pressured water hoses (including garden hoses).
- Training of all workers likely to encounter asbestos.
- Properly cleaning areas and wiping down surfaces.
- Disposing of ACMs as per guidance.
- Disposing of PPE in a double bag and clearly labelled as containing ACD.

HOW CAN I PROTECT OTHERS?

Communication with everybody who may be affected by the work is critical to keep everyone safe. This includes:

- Workers and any other people in the workplace.
- The person who commissioned the asbestos removal work.
- Any person at or near the workplace (eg, neighbours along boundary fences).
- Anyone occupying premises near the workplace.

Communications must clearly state:

- Why the work is being undertaken.
- What is involved with the work.
- When it will start and finish.
- The safeguards that will be in place during the works. ■

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!

13) If you uncover or damage materials that you think might contain asbestos, you should:

a) Rinse it with water before continuing.

b) Ask your workmates to help remove it.

c) Stop work immediately.

14) Buildings constructed after 2000 do not contain asbestos.

a) True.

b) False.

15) Communications around asbestos hazards need NOT include:

a) Why the work is being undertaken.

b) What the work involves.

c) The cost of the removal.

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INDUSTRY FEATURE

STAY ON TOP OF REGULATION CHANGES

With so many legislation changes in the building industry, it can be difficult to stay on top of what you need to know. That's why we've compiled this handy list of key updates! We hope you find it useful

FUTURE CHANGE

NZS 3604 UPDATE

An updated *NZS 3604 Timber-framed houses* remained a work in progress in 2023. It was hoped a revision would be published in 2023 - but that didn't happen. There is no word yet when builders can expect it to be published.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL INFORMATION AND MEETINGS ACT 1987 AMENDMENT

A change to this act requires that, from 2025, regional councils share with city and district councils information they have on natural hazards. Councils must add 'understandable information' on natural hazards to LIMs.

BUILDING WARRANT OF FITNESS

Following the tragic fire at Loafers Lodge in May 2023, Cabinet agreed to introduce and enhance offences and penalties for building owners and independent qualified persons to better comply with their statutory requirements under the building warrant of fitness regime.

COMING SOON

OVERSEAS BUILDING PRODUCTS

The Government is eliminating barriers to the use of overseas building products to make it easier and more affordable to build in New Zealand.

EARTHQUAKE-PRONE BUILDING REVIEW

The earthquake-prone building review has been brought forward from 2027 to 2024 and remediation deadlines have been extended by four years.

MDRS CHANGE

The Medium Density Residential Standards (MDRS) will become optional for councils. Under the MDRS up to three units and three storeys can be built on most Tier 1 council sites without the need for a land use resource consent.

COMMENCES **1 JULY 2024**

WASTE LEVY INCREASE

The rate for Class 1 landfills is increasing to $60 per tonne from 1 July 2024.
Class 2 construction and demolition fills are increasing to $30 per tonne from 1 July 2024.
Class 3/4 (managed and controlled fills) are subject to a levy of $10 per tonne from 1 July 2023.

COMMENCES **1 JULY 2024**

BUILDING LEVY THRESHOLD INCREASE

From 1 July, the Building Levy threshold will increase to $65,000 from it's current level of $20,444.

RMA REPEAL

The Resource Management (Natural and Built Environment and Spatial Planning Repeal and Interim Fast-track Consenting) Bill has been passed. Almost all resource management matters will continue to apply as set out in the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA).

NOW LAW

BUILDING CONSENT REPORTING

BCAs are now legally required to submit data for building consents and code compliance certificates every quarter.

BUILDING PRODUCT INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS

On 11 December 2023, new regulations for building product information requirements came into effect.

The new regulations provide building product users with information about how building products contribute to compliance with the Building Code. They place obligations on New Zealand-based manufacturers, importers, wholesalers, retailers, and distributors.

PROVE YOUR **KNOWLEDGE**

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

Codewords ISSUE 118

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Under Construction

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

JUNE / JULY 2024

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.

Signature

Date

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FIRTH'S RETAINING BLOCKS ARE LIKE LEGO FOR THE BACKYARD AND PERFECT FOR DIY. WITH OUR RANGE OF EASY TO ASSEMBLE OPTIONS YOU CAN CREATE A SIMPLE GARDEN BED OR RETAIN AND PROTECT A 1M BANK. SMALL, MEDIUM AND LARGE FIRTH RETAINING, IT JUST STACKS UP.

RETAINING WALLS

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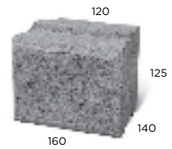
Perfect for DIY'ers, Firth's smallest and lightest segmental wall system. Minimal foundation preparation is required, so walls are easily constructed using the unique interlocking system.



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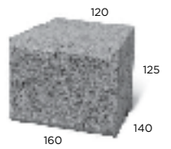
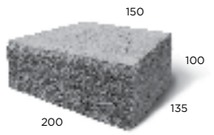


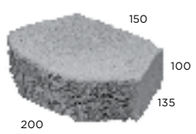
Cap

SEDONA STONE® (SMALL)

Firth Sedona Stone® Retaining Blocks, ideal for creating low DIY walls, planters, raised garden beds or finishing your lawn edging. Available in two finishes Straight Face and Tri-Face.



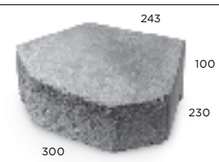
Straight face



Tri-face

GARDEN WALL® (MEDIUM)

Firth Garden Wall® Retaining Blocks, has the natural look of quarried stone allowing it to blend in with any landscape. Available in Tri-Face finish.

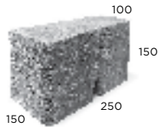


Tri-face

COUNTRY MANOR® (MEDIUM)

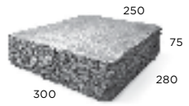
Keystone Country Manor® is random and rugged in appearance making these high strength concrete blocks conjure up images of old European estate walls adding character to any project.

Large Unit



Small Unit

Medium Unit

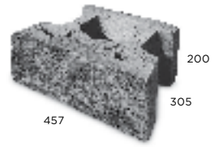


Capping Unit


Fibreglass Pin

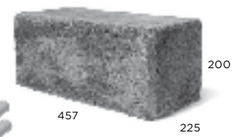
COMPAC® III (LARGE)

Keystone Compac® III features unrivaled aesthetic options and proven wall performance. Installers often prefer the Compac® III's lighter weight making it easy to handle.



Straight Face

Capping Unit



Corner


Fibreglass Pin

NOTE: All measurements are in millimetres. Range and colour may differ between North Island & South Island. Please check with your local branch for current availability.

TO VIEW MORE ON RETAINING DOWNLOAD OUR RETAINING BROCHURE ON **FIRTH.CO.NZ**

PlaceMakers®

TRADEMADE DEALS

Spend over $1000+GST at PlaceMakers during June and July 2024 on Firth Grey Masonry blocks and Dricon Trade Mortar in one purchase and go in the draw to

WIN* A 7 DAY CLUB MED HOLIDAY FOR 2 TO EITHER BALI, MALAYSIA OR PHUKET

VALUED UP TO $10,000 RRP

Firth

DRICON

*Promotion open to PlaceMakers and TUMU Trade Account customers only. To enter the draw, buy $1,000+GST of Firth Grey Masonry, in one transaction, between 1ST June and 31ST July 2024 (Qualifying Purchase). Each Qualifying Purchase automatically goes into the draw. The prize is a 7 day club med holiday for two to either Bali, Malaysia or Phuket valued up to $10,000. Available for any stay until end of 2024 subject to hotel and flight availability. The prize will only be awarded if the winner is within trading terms with trade account balances paid up to date. Terms and conditions apply, see https://www.placemakers.co.nz//online/firth-holiday or in-store for more details.

PlaceMakers®

Together we're building New Zealand