



# Building Post

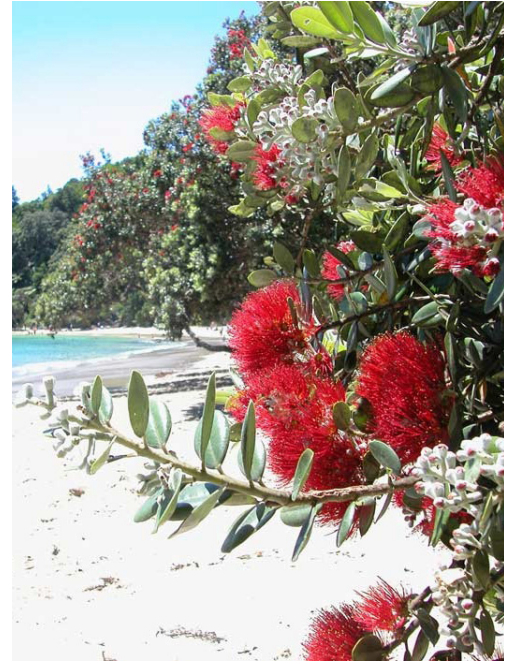
## Christmas Greetings

Welcome to the December 2020 edition of the Building Post. What a year it has been, what with Covid-19, the general elections and the demise of Donald Trump. It's hard to imagine what the media will find to write about now Donald's gone - well, is he?

This is also my last Building Post, not only for 2020 but also for me as the Building Control Group Manager. I am stepping down as from 19 March 2021. It's time for me to take a lesser role and let some younger person take the reins. I have to say that I believe we have a very good building industry in Marlborough, we have a great Building Control Team and we work together to ensure structures are code compliant, and most importantly, safe and fit for purpose.

It's also time to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. I do hope you all get a chance to take a decent break and spend time with your family and friends. I'm only having a short break and will be back on 5 January 2021.

It's been a privilege working with you all in my position as Manager, thank you.



## Drainage Plans

We have a favour to ask. Please include the position of the water connection feed on the drainage plan. The short time it will take will make a huge difference in time to come for owners and other tradies over the lifetime of the dwelling. With all Council's property files online, drainage plans are easily searched.

## Harping On

Since the introduction of the altered Schedule 1 (work that doesn't need a building consent) in August 2020 we have already come up against situations where people are simply not reading the conditions of each individual exemption. The work carried out must meet all of the conditions to be exempt. If it doesn't, then a building consent was required. Don't get caught out.

## Building Survey

As I mentioned in the last Building Post, we are now sending out our survey link with the issued building consent. We are either doing a fantastic job or people don't like doing surveys. Please take the time to complete the survey as we want our services to provide what our customers want. Some things are restricted by the Building Act but we will try to react appropriately to feedback.



## Sanitary Facilities

# Composting Toilets

There has always been some confusion around composting toilets. Do they need a building consent or not? And, does a building that would normally be exempt remain exempt if a composting toilet is installed?

These questions prompted a team review. Their conclusion is that a composting toilet and the building that contains it is not exempt because the building then has a sanitary facility.

**Considerations:** Here is the thought process behind the decision made by the team:

1. Schedule 1 of the Building Act says that for the various small buildings to be exempt they must not contain “sanitary facilities”.

Example - taken from Schedule 1:

### 3 Single-storey detached buildings not exceeding 10 square metres in floor area

- (1) Building work in connection with any detached building that—
    - (a) is not more than 1 storey (being a floor level of up to 1 metre above the supporting ground and a height of up to 3.5 metres above the floor level); and
    - (b) does not exceed 10 square metres in floor area; and
    - (c) does not contain sanitary facilities or facilities for the storage of potable water; and
    - (d) does not include sleeping accommodation, unless the building is used in connection with a dwelling and does not contain any cooking facilities.
  - (2) However, subclause (1) does not include building work in connection with a building that is closer than the measure of its own height to any residential building or to any legal boundary.
2. The main thing to note in the wording (and elsewhere in the Act) is that it is dealing with the use of the building/areas of the building rather than the actual fixture (toilet) itself. So we therefore have to look at what is classed as sanitary facilities.
  3. In the Building Act, the word “facilities” comes up in all sorts of places and is normally about a specific action (example: “access and facilities” where the facilities are for the accessibility of the building for a person with disabilities, but the individual “item/unit” is not specified).
  4. In the exemptions “sanitary facilities” are facilities for sanitation and can be singular or plural (the wording in the snip above also cites cooking facilities; e.g. a facility used for cooking but does not specifically cite if it is an oven, hob, etc.)
  5. Exemption 1 provides a link to the Plumbers, Gasfitters, and Drainlayers Act 2006 in regards to sanitary plumbing.
  6. Section 6 of the Plumbers, Gasfitters, and Drainlayers Act 2006 (means of sanitary plumbing) cites that sanitary plumbing includes the installing (fixing) of the sanitary fixture (toilet) and does not cite anything in that about if the waste is composted or not, and it is still covered even if there is no drain.

### 6 Meaning of sanitary plumbing

- (1) In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires, **sanitary plumbing** means—
  - (a) the work of fixing or unfixing any sanitary fixture or sanitary appliance, or any associated fittings or accessories;
  - (b) the work of fixing or unfixing any trap, waste or soil pipe, ventilation pipe, or overflow pipe connected with or intended to be connected with or accessory to any sanitary fixture or sanitary appliance or any drain (whether or not the sanitary fixture, sanitary appliance, or drain is there when the work is done);
  - (c) the work of fixing or unfixing any pipe that—
    - (i) supplies or is intended to be a means of supplying water to any sanitary fixture or sanitary appliance (whether or not that sanitary fixture or sanitary appliance is there when the work is done); and
    - (ii) is within the legal boundary of the premises on which that sanitary fixture or sanitary appliance is or will be installed (whether or not that sanitary fixture or sanitary appliance is there when the work is done);
  - (d) generally all plumbing work associated with any sanitary fixture or sanitary appliance.
- (2) Despite subsection (1), **sanitary plumbing** does not include—
  - (a) the work of fixing or unfixing any sanitary fixture or sanitary appliance that is installed in any ship, boat, aircraft, or vehicle, or any plumbing work associated with any of those sanitary fixtures or sanitary appliances; or
  - (b) the work of fixing or unfixing a bedpan washer, a bedpan steriliser, a dishwasher, or a washing machine in any case where the fixing or unfixing of waste pipes or of pipes supplying or intended to supply water is not involved; or
  - (c) the work of fixing or unfixing a pipe for reticulating water in any central heating or cooling system downstream of a testable backflow prevention device that is used exclusively for that central heating or cooling system; or
  - (d) the work of repairing or replacing taps, ball valves, tap washers, or plugs; or
  - (e) the work of fixing or unfixing any shower that is installed over a bath and that is supplied with water through the bath taps.
- (3) Despite subsection (1), **sanitary plumbing** does not include the work of fixing or unfixing any pipe in any premises (other than a building) if—
  - (a) the premises was taken or otherwise acquired and is still held under the [Public Works Act 1981](#) or any corresponding former Act; or
  - (b) [section 167\(4\)](#) of the [Land Act 1948](#) applies to the premises; or
  - (c) the premises is a public reserve within the meaning of the [Reserves Act 1977](#).

Compare: 1976 No 69 s 3

## Fixture and Appliance

### Composting Toilets *continued ...*

7. The interpretation (section 4) clearly cites what a sanitary fixture and appliance is, and that it is a fixture or appliance used for, or intended to be used for sanitation:

**sanitary appliance—**

- (a) means an appliance that is used, or intended to be used, for sanitation and that is not a sanitary fixture; and
- (b) includes a washing machine and a dishwasher

**sanitary fixture—**

- (a) means a fixture that is used, or intended to be used, for sanitation; and
- (b) includes a bath, a shower, a sink, a basin, a toilet pan, a bidet, a urinal, and a laundry tub

**sanitary plumbing** has the meaning set out in [section 6](#)

**serious harm** means—

- (a) death; or

8. There are also standards that specifically deal with the compliance of composting toilets; NZS1546.2, NZS1547 and TP58.

**A question:** So what does this mean for a building that contains a composting toilet?

**Decision:** A building is not exempt due to the intended use of the building or area contained within that building containing a sanitary facility. This is because a composting toilet is still a toilet (use) and the toilet is used for sanitation as a sanitary fixture.

### Backflow

With summer coming up, well hopefully, late spring was pretty unsettled, I thought it a good time to remind everyone of the importance of backflow requirements.

For this piece I'm talking about simple vacuum break backflow systems that are used for general residential situations. During the building consent process we address whether a backflow device is required. This would occur generally when installing a swimming pool or installing a new effluent system. But everyday activities that don't require a building consent can trigger the need for a simple, cheap, readily available vacuum break device. These devices are generally easily fitted to your outside tap in a few seconds.

Why would you want to do this? You do it to protect your household potable water supply.

**A simple example of when backflow is essential:**

If you leave a garden hose in a fish pond/water feature to top it up from time to time and for some reason the water supply pressure is lost, the hose could backflow the contents of the fish pond/water feature straight back into your household water system. Very tasty and possibly the effects of the backflow will have very nasty effect on the health of you and your family.

**Rule of thumb:** If there is a possibility that, as a result of loss of water pressure, backflow can occur, then you need to ensure a backflow device is fitted. As already stated, these devices are cheap, easily fitted and readily available at quite a number of hardware and plumbing outlets in Marlborough. Why wouldn't you fit one?

Another example: Topping up swimming pools. We check these at our pool inspections but over summer portable pools always make an appearance. Apart from the fact that under the Building Act you still need to fence these pools to meet the Building Code F9 (water depth greater than 400mm)\* you also must fit a backflow to the tap that you use to fill the pool. Water goes off pretty quickly if untreated, and not to mention the little accidents your children/grandchildren may have whilst in the pool. You won't want that water back siphoning into your potable water supply for your house, will you? A small amount of E.coli can do wonders for your digestive system and really spoil your day.

\*If a pool is **capable** of being filled over 400mm it must have a compliant pool barrier that complies with F9 of the Building Code.



## E.coli and Summer

## Installation Details

# Technical Bits

## Aqualine Substitution

**Aqualine substitution of BL1 braceline elements** - The following requirements are often missed on site:

- The bracing element must be 900mm or greater in length.
- Fasteners are to be at 100mm centres to the perimeter of the bracing element.
- Corner bracing fastener pattern applies.
- Hold downs required - see Note 1 on page 14 in the current Gib site guide.

## Intersecting Walls

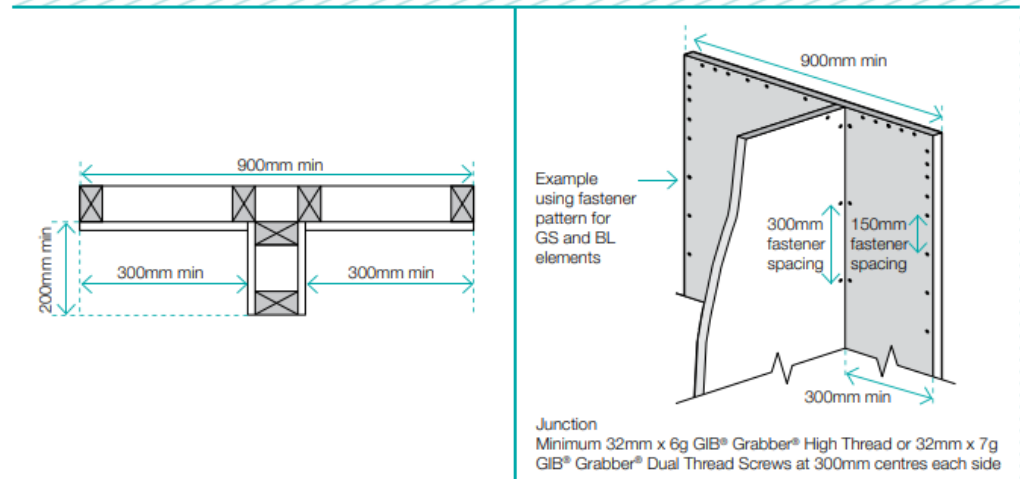
### Requirements:

Intersecting Walls GIB® Bracing Elements may have intersecting walls with a minimum length of 200mm. Fasteners are required around the perimeter of the bracing element. Vertical joints at T-junctions shall be fixed and jointed as specified for intermediate sheet joints. The bracing element length must be no less than 900mm. Where a wall bracing element is interrupted by a T-junction the element is deemed to be continuous for the whole length (900mm minimum in the example).

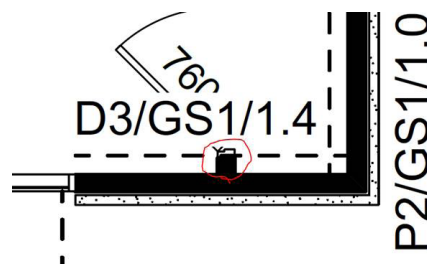
- When fixing part sheets of GIB® plasterboard to the side of a T-junction, a minimum width of 300mm applies for bracing elements. See figures on page 67 in the current Gib site guide.

### 5.1.7 General Installation Details

#### Intersecting Walls



- What not to do: Inserting, say a wardrobe wall or hall wall into bracing element. See example below:



Other examples of bracing that get designed wrong are:

- Bulk heads and recesses in ceiling, change in ceiling level bracing line requirements.
- Blocking under bracing walls in timber sub floors.
- Calculation over the soffit if the roof pitch is more than 25 degrees.
- Top plate connections of bracing lines in covered ceilings
- And finally, the Section 5.1.5 of NZS3604

Covid-19  
—  
We're so  
Lucky

## State of the Industry

Recently I have become very aware of the issues that some of you are having in obtaining all sorts of building materials, right down to the supply of electrical fixings. I am also very aware of the importance placed on the issuing of the Code Compliance Certificate (CCC) for your contractual arrangements. Without all work complying with the Building Code and consented documents Council cannot issue the CCC, so if there are fixtures missing the building won't fully comply.

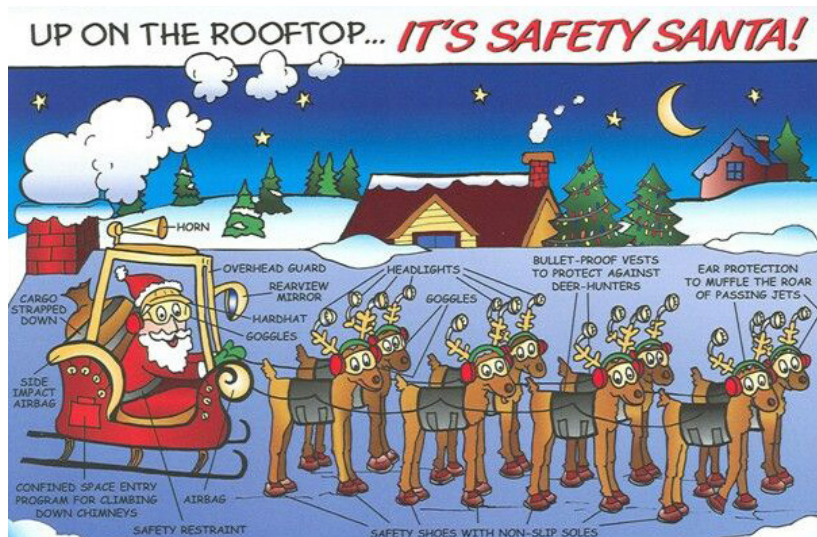
However, what we can do is make it very clear on the final inspection record that the building has passed the inspection but there are a number of items (listed in the record) needing to be completed prior to Council issuing the CCC. You should make contact with the organisations that depend on the CCC being issued before they carry out their processes to ensure that our final inspection notes will be sufficient for their needs.

I note that there are also warnings from the industry to consider your work programs well in advance to ensure you get the products and services you require on time to have a consistent work flow. Good luck with this issue. Covid-19 has a lot to answer for, but New Zealand is so very lucky to be living the dream whilst most of the world suffers badly.



## Certificate of Acceptance (COA)

These applications are now online for your use and are yet another step to make all our applications easier to access via the Marlborough District Council website.



## Compliance Schedules and Certificates for Public Use

Buildings containing specified systems (SSs) must have those systems listed on a Compliance Schedule (CS).

Legislation deems that the CS must be issued with the issue of a Code Compliance Certificate (CCC). However MBIE has advised councils that a CS may be issued with the Certificate for Public Use (CPU).

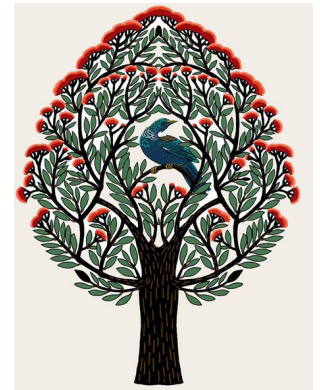
For Council to create a CS it must have sufficient information about each of the SSs installed in the building to be able to describe the systems. Such information may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- the Standard, or document, the system was designed and installed to;
- the make, model, serial/catalogue number, sizing and useful manufacturer's data of the system, including elements of the system where appropriate;
- the location of the system and elements of the system - 'As Built' plan(s); and
- the maintenance, inspection and reporting procedures for each of the SSs.

For Council to issue the CPU it must be satisfied the area of the building covered by the CPU has its life safety systems established. It will need evidence the systems are installed in accordance with the referenced Performance Standard/document and that they are performing the functions they were intended to perform. Such evidence may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- suitable certification by installers and/or independent inspection bodies, i.e. producer statements;
- test certificates and/or certificate of completion;
- file notes; and
- photographs, etc.

It needs to be appreciated by the applicant for the CPU, and those people involved in the document supply chain, that Council has 20 days in which to issue the CPU. If earlier issue of the CPU is required, it is necessary for suitable documentation to be supplied as early as possible to avoid a delay in issue of the CPU.



CPU

CS

CCC

