

# Plumbing newsflash number 375

## Amendments to plumbing and drainage legislation

### Purpose

To advise of miscellaneous amendments commencing 17 July 2009 to the *Standard Plumbing and Drainage Regulation 2003* (SPDR) and the *Plumbing and Drainage Regulation 2003* (PDR).

### Legislation

- *Plumbing and Drainage Act 2002*
- *Standard Plumbing and Drainage Regulation 2003*
- *Plumbing and Drainage Regulation 2003*

### Amendments to the Standard Plumbing and Drainage Regulation 2003 (SPDR)

#### Applied provisions

The Queensland Development Code (QDC) Mandatory Part 4.1—Sustainable buildings has been referenced in the applied provisions in Schedule 1 of the SPDR to ensure the water efficiency requirements of the QDC for shower roses, toilet cisterns and bowls and tapware are consistent with the QDC under the *Building Act 1975*.

#### Part B4 of the Plumbing Code of Australia (PCA)

The SPDR specifies that plumbing and drainage work must comply with certain sections of the PCA. However, Part B4 of the PCA relating to fire-fighting water services duplicates earlier building approval processes by building certifiers. The SPDR has been amended to remove this duplication of process.

### Amendments to the Plumbing and Drainage Regulation 2003 (PDR) for qualifications for a fire protection—commercial and industrial (C&I) endorsement on a plumber's licence

The Plumbers and Drainers Board (the Board) administers the licensing system for plumbers and drainers in Queensland including providing licences to appropriately qualified practitioners and investigating complaints regarding work for which a licence is required. The Board, when considered necessary, may recommend changes to the licensing system to ensure there are acceptable standards of competence for a particular scope of work.

Work typically undertaken by fire protection contractors requires technical skills from several occupations. Plumbers are not normally qualified to install complex sprinkler systems. Therefore, the Board endorses a plumber's licence where a licensee can demonstrate the appropriate competencies. An endorsement on a plumber's or drainer's licence entitles a licensee to perform specific aspects of work not covered under an existing plumbers and/or drainers licence and recognises any additional qualifications or skills of the licensee for which the endorsement is issued.



The plumbing and drainage apprenticeship training package available prior to July 1994 included competencies covering the installation of commercial and industrial sprinklers. From July 1994 the apprenticeship training package changed and it no longer contains training units in commercial and industrial sprinkler systems. As a result, applicants who have completed an apprenticeship after July 1994 and wish to seek a C&I endorsement on their licence are required to undertake further training in a course approved by the Board.

Recently, the Board considered the adequacy of qualifications of practitioners who completed their plumbing and draining apprenticeship before the end of 1994 for installing, maintaining and testing commercial and industrial fire sprinkler systems. Fire sprinkler standards and equipment in commercial and industrial settings have become increasingly technologically advanced over recent years. Licence endorsement requirements have not yet been adjusted in response to technological advances.

The Board recommended amending the PDR to update qualification requirements for the C&I endorsement to ensure the licensing regime adequately protects public health and safety and reflects contemporary fire protection standards. The amendments have removed the automatic right to a C&I endorsement for applicants who successfully completed a plumbing and drainage apprenticeship by the end of 1994. The Board now requires the completion of an approved course prior to granting an endorsement.

### **Amendments to the Plumbing and Drainage Regulation 2003 (PDR) for licence fee increases commencing 17 July 2009**

On 16 June 2009, the State Budget 2009-2010 included the introduction of a licence processing fee of \$50 per application and fee increases for a restricted licence (from \$48 to \$65), renewal of a licence and restoration of a licence (both from \$30 to \$55). The PDR has been amended to introduce these fee increases.

The introduction of an administrative processing fee will align some of the fee structures with those in other states and help offset the administrative costs of processing licences.

### **Contact for further information**

Department of Infrastructure and Planning  
Building Codes Queensland Division  
tel +61 7 3239 6369  
[buildingcodes@dip.qld.gov.au](mailto:buildingcodes@dip.qld.gov.au)

**DISCLAIMER:** The information contained in this Newsflash is provided by the State of Queensland in good faith. The material is general in nature and before relying on the material in any important matter, users should carefully evaluate its accuracy, currency, completeness and relevance for their purpose. It is not intended as a substitute for consulting the relevant legislation or for obtaining appropriate professional advice relevant to your particular circumstances. The State of Queensland cannot accept responsibility or liability for any loss, damage, cost or expense you might incur as a result of the use of or reliance on information contained in this Newsflash. It is not intended to be, and should not be relied upon as the ultimate and/or complete source of information.