



PLUMBERS



Issue 4 June 2002

Licensing Board News

A competent and professional plumbing industry in Western Australia

Industry Forums 2002

In June and July this year, the Plumbers Licensing Board will conduct eight industry forums to discuss the future regulatory direction of the plumbing industry.

One of the main issues for discussion is the board's proposed compliance and inspection regime. The establishment of a regime is an important regulatory issue that will affect every facet of the plumbing industry. While the proposal is yet to be endorsed by the Department of Consumer and Employment Protection, at the forums the Board will present an outline of the proposal.

Another issue listed for discussion is the establishment of restricted plumber's licences. The proposed licence will allow licensed electricians and gasfitters to perform the limited plumbing work associated with the servicing, repair and replacement of hot water units.

At the end of the session there will be an opportunity for attendees to ask questions and provide comment.

Industry forums will be conducted at the following locations:

- o Perth (x2) 12 June and 1 July 2002
- o Albany 18 June 2002
- o Bunbury 19 June 2002
- o Broome 25 June 2002
- o Geraldton 10 July 2002
- o Kalgoorlie 3 July 2002
- o Karratha 26 June 2002



Registration is essential. To register your interest or get more information, ring (08) 9282 0478. Venue details will be forwarded by mail when you register.

Plumber Licence Exams Under Review



The Plumbers Licensing Board is in the process of reviewing the existing plumber licence exam systems and processes.

Preliminary consultation with industry and the relevant training providers has indicated a preference for the removal of the practical components and the introduction of business management. It is thought that the introduction of business skills into the licence exams will better equip the next generation of licensed plumbers to operate in today's challenging business environment.

One of the major concerns of the Board in relation to the current system is inequity that people who have completed an apprenticeship after 1995 can obtain exemptions from completing the practical components of the exams.

Focus groups will be conducted with industry members who have recently completed all of the requirements to obtain Statements of Competency in water supply, sanitary and drainage plumbing.

Anyone who would like to be involved in a focus group or provide comment on the existing examination systems should contact Jean Villani on (08) 9282 0478.

Summary of Complaints Received

As at 17 May 2002

93 complaints relating to the plumbing industry have been received:

| Complaint | Total Received | Finalised | | Still Under Investigation |
|--|----------------|-----------|---------------|---------------------------|
| | | Justified | Not Justified | |
| Unsatisfactory Workmanship | 53 | 40 | 10 | 3 |
| Alleged Plumbing conducted by unlicensed persons | 28 | 7 | 12 | 9 |
| Advertising Plumbing work with no licence | 3 | 3 | - | - |
| Excessive Charges and Improper Behaviour | 9 | - | 4 | 5 |

Prosecutions for Breaches of the Water Services Coordination (Plumbers Licensing) Regulations 2000

As at 30 April 2002

| Breach | Name | Lic. No | Fine & Court Costs (\$) |
|--|-----------------|---------|-------------------------|
| Carried out plumbing work without an appropriate licence | Travis Finchett | N/A | \$857.70 |

Inquiries held by the Plumbers Licensing Board in accordance with the Water Services Coordination (Plumbers Licensing) Regulations 2000

1 January 2002 to 30 April 2002

The Board has conducted 5 disciplinary inquiries relating to breaches of the plumbing standards:

| Disciplinary Matter | Date | Name of Licensee | Outcome |
|-------------------------------------|---------|-----------------------|--|
| Failure to comply with By-law 16.1* | 25/2/02 | Ashley Dale Chugg | Reprimand |
| Failure to comply with By-law 16.1* | 25/2/02 | Richard Morhall | Reprimand |
| Failure to comply with By-law 16.1* | 25/3/02 | Dean Nelson Miller | Required to attend and complete training course within 6 months |
| Failure to comply with By-law 16.1* | 25/3/02 | Robert Thomas DeJoode | Required to monitor Mr Miller's work for 6 months and provide written report to the Board; and \$500 penalty |

• 3 disciplinary inquiries are currently the subject of appeal in the local court.

* of the Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage By-laws 1981

welcome

Plumbers Licensing Board News is a regular, biannual newsletter that is issued to all licensed plumbers, licensed tradespersons and key industry stakeholders to carry news of issues affecting the plumbing industry and provide awareness of the Board's activities.

Your input and feedback is important to the Board and may highlight matters that should be included in future editions of Plumbers Licensing Board News.

To provide feedback to the Plumbers Licensing Board about this newsletter please contact:

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Welcome to the fourth issue of *Plumbers Licensing Board News*. This newsletter has been produced and distributed by the Plumbers Licensing Board.

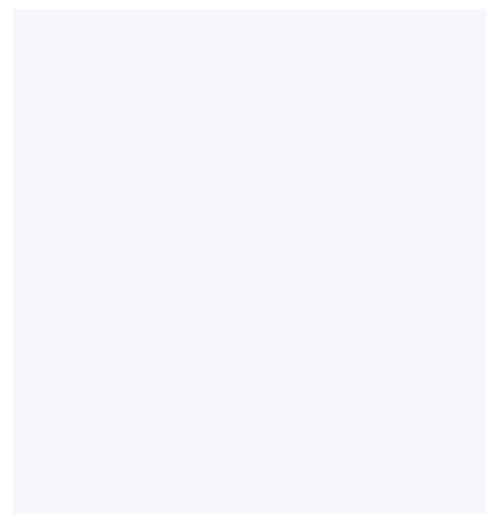
Plumbers Licensing Board Has Moved

On 16 April 2002, the administrative responsibility for the Plumbers Licensing Board transferred to the Department for Consumer and Employment Protection.

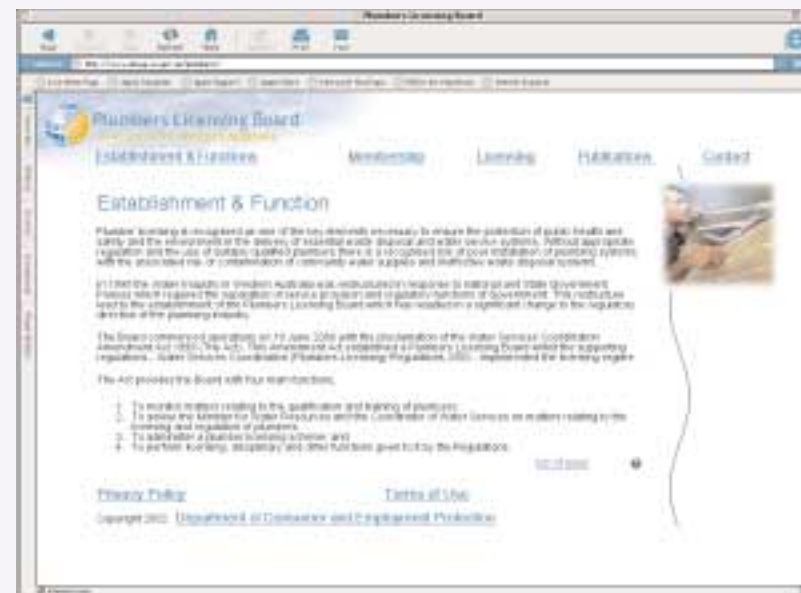
The Board is now based on the Ground Floor of the Forrest Centre, 219 St Georges Terrace. A spin off benefit for members is that this location also offers other licensing services including business name registrations.

A tailored customer service unit for all occupational licenses is provided at the new location. The counter is open between 8.30am and 5.00pm, Monday to Friday.

The New Licensing Inquiry Line number is 9282 0478. Voice mail is available and an officer will return your call when available.



Board Web Address Has Changed



The web address for the Plumbers Licensing Board has changed. The new address is: www.docep.wa.gov.au/plumbers.

The change has come about because the board is now part of the Department of Consumer and Employment Protection. This address is temporary and a dedicated web site will be established for the Board soon.

The web page provides general information about the Board and licence application forms can be downloaded directly from the site.

New Look Licences

For the 2002/2003 financial year, all licences issued by the Board will feature the new Government Logo.

All licensed tradespersons and plumbers will continue to be issued with wallet-sized identification cards which they are expected to produce when asked by plumbing inspectors and customers.

Licensed plumbers will also continue to receive an A4 size licence to display at their principal place of business. This is a requirement under Regulation 24.



Proposed Compliance and Inspection Regime

Now into its second year of operation, the Plumbers Licensing Board is proposing a compliance and inspection regime for the industry. Approval to implement the regime has not yet been given by the Department of Consumer and Employment Protection however, it is envisaged that the regime would involve audits of about 15% of all jobs by licensed plumbers each year.

Broad regulatory authority is given to the Board under the Water Services Coordination Act 1995, however these powers are limited to licensing plumbing industry members and taking disciplinary action.

The Board is now eager to oversee the regulation, control and performance of plumbing work and the standards to be observed in connection with the carrying out of plumbing work.

While the proposal is not yet endorsed by the Department, it is proposed to adopt a similar system to that currently operated by the Water Corporation that will:

- o Audit approximately 15% of the total plumbing work carried out by each licensed plumber over a financial year with an even cross section of water supply, sanitary and drainage plumbing.
- o Investigate plumbing complaints; and
- o Undertake compliance related activities for prosecutions and disciplinary inquiries.

It is proposed that under the regime, plumbing work would be categorised into one of two categories for the purposes of submitting Notices of Intention and Certificates of Completion.

The two planned categories are:

- o **Major plumbing work** – work involving the installation, alteration, extension, disconnection, ventilation, repair or maintenance of water supply, sanitary and/or drainage plumbing systems where the total value of the work is greater than \$750; or
- o **Minor plumbing work** - work involving the installation, alteration, extension, disconnection, ventilation, repair or maintenance of water supply, sanitary and/or drainage plumbing systems where the total value of the work is equal to or less than \$750.

All major plumbing work, except emergency work, will require the lodgement of a Notice of Intention to the Board, at least 24 hours prior to the commencement of that work, and a Certificate of Compliance within five working days of completing the work.

All minor plumbing work will not require the submission of a Notice however a Certificate of Compliance will be required. The Certificate of Compliance will be a multi-entry type certificate that can record up to 25 individual jobs and will require lodgement at the end of each calendar month.



To better understand how the proposed Compliance and Inspection Regime would work, attend one of the scheduled industry forums listed in this newsletter. Alternatively, contact the Plumbers Licensing Board on (08) 9282 0478 to register to receive a copy of the discussion paper.