

Latest building consent news from Selwyn

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Update on services

Processing

- Acceptance and processing of new applications continues while our team are working from home

Inspections

- Now is a good time to check that you are up to date and uploaded the required documentation to the AlphaOne portal – this will help save unnecessary delays with your inspections
- We're currently not taking any new building inspection bookings; these will resume under Alert Level 3
- Inspections booked for 18 & 19 August will move to working day 2 & 3 at Alert Level 3 respectively
- Inspections from 20 August to 30 September have been cancelled and will need to be rebooked once we've moved down to Alert Level 3
- The inspection booking app will not be available to book inspections until we're at Alert Level 2

Communicating with us

- Respond through AlphaOne – this is the quickest way to get information directly to the person working on your project, or
- Call our Customer Services line and they will get your message to us – 0800 SELWYN (735 996).

Any changes from last time?

Yes there is!

- We'll go back to asking the questions at time of booking inspections:
 - Is there anyone onsite that has been to a location of interest in the last 14 days?
 - Is anyone at your property unwell with flu-like symptoms?
 - Does your site meet the Covid 19 construction protocols?
 - Is there anything else you think we should know for access to the property?

If you answer yes to the first two questions, your details will be collected, however your inspection may be deferred depending on what the inspection is.

- There are new mandatory requirements – most notably:
 - wear a mask on site
 - you are legally required to display an NZ Covid tracer QR code for each location – this applies at all alert levels so get one from the Ministry of Health website – **no QR code, no inspection**

Keep an eye regularly on our [building page](#) for up to date information on inspection bookings and getting ready for inspections.

Building and Code Staff Appreciation Day - 1 September

Happy Building and Code Staff Appreciation Day to everyone working in building and building code.

This is celebrated every year on 1 September!

If this is your field, then chances are you don't feel the love every day, so live it up! Although in the current Covid lockdown it's a little hard to celebrate with a department lunch, perhaps one of our inspectors may decide to wear a smiley badge if they're able to get out and about on this day.

If you don't work in Building and Code, then today's an opportunity to show your appreciation to those often overlooked people who ensure your building safety – be nice, give them a compliment, or at the very least don't be grumpy with your inspector or processor today.

Since the origin of Building & Code Staff Day is unclear, it may well be a cry for recognition from within the industry itself – all the more reason to show your support!

Talking about Building Code...

Updates to NZ building code

Every year the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) carry out an annual review of parts of the Building Code.

The most recent changes from November 2020 are in a transitional period for 12 months. They will become the current version from 3 November 2021.

Please take some time to review these changes now before they come into force on 3 November.

Below is an example of a change (but not the only change) that shows what the changes are to the acceptable solution.

CLAUSE E3/AS1 - Version 7

3.1 Lining materials

3.1.1 Floors

The following finishes to floors satisfy the performance for impervious and easily cleaned surfaces in spaces containing sanitary fixtures or sanitary appliances. In open plan spaces this surface shall extend at least 1.5 m from all sanitary fixtures and sanitary appliances:

COMMENT

The requirement for impervious and easily cleaned floor surfaces applies to spaces such as kitchens, bathrooms, laundries and toilet facilities. This requirement applies regardless of whether containment is required by Paragraph 2.0.

- a. Integrally waterproof sheet material (e.g. polyvinylchloride) with sealed joints and sealed or coved at edges where watersplash may occur.
- b. Ceramic or stone tiles having 6% maximum water absorption, waterproof grouted joints, and bedded with an adhesive specified by the tile manufacturer as being suitable for the tiles, substrate material and the environment of use. Edges of the tiled area where watersplash may occur must be sealed or coved, and tiles must be laid on a continuous impervious substrate or a membrane specified by the manufacturer as being suitable for the tiles, substrate material and the environment of use.
- c. A slab-on-grade concrete floor having a steel trowel or polished finish, sealed at edges where watersplash may occur, when used in a domestic laundry within a garage, or in a building that contains only sanitary facilities.

COMMENT

Other floor finishes may also be capable of satisfying the performance for impervious and easily cleaned, if installed in a manner that prevents gaps or cracks within the finish and at any parts of its perimeter that are exposed to watersplash, and/or if the surface is sealed with a suitable durable coating. However such other finishes are outside the scope of this Acceptable Solution.

Heatpump placement for noise considerations

With people working from home during lockdown, the number of complaints have increased around a number of issues. One of these is noise complaints relating to heatpumps and ducted heat pump systems.

As self-certified electrical installations these systems are not considered during the building consent process.

Designers, installers, builders and homeowners should however consider maintenance, heat pump selection and placement, and insulation as part of the build planning process to help lessen potential noise issues so all of our residents can enjoy their home environments without unreasonable noise.

For more information check our [website](#).