

# Latest building consent news from Selwyn

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## Fee changes

We've made some adjustments to our fees and charges from 1 July.

The main changes to our fees to be aware of are:

- Minor work applications (eg freestanding solid fuel heater, sewer connection) now \$405
- Inbuilt solid fuel heater fees will be charged on time and cost basis, including relevant number of inspections needed
- Accreditation fee now called 'Quality Assurance fee' is to cover costs associated with audits, use of consenting system software, and accreditation and other MBIE audits
- Annual Building warrant of fitness (BWOFF renewal fee now \$125)
- Changes to hourly rates for staff time, and associated increased in other fees which include staff time.

Check our new [fee schedule](#) on our website for more detail.

## Items causing consenting delays

We have identified a number of items that are causing consenting delays and adding to the backlog of work. These include:

- Applications in new subdivisions where s223 or s224 has been issued – these account for 24% of our 2021 work
- Evidence of ownership/full record of title not supplied
- Application forms not properly completed
- Insufficient information on site plans
- Site considerations – ground testing
- Incomplete drainage information
- Lack of weathertightness details
- No tanking information provided

Some questions to think about when you're applying for a project information memorandum (PIM) or a building consent with a PIM:

- If you're applying for a PIM at the same time as your building consent then there is likely to be very little information in the PIM that you don't already know
- If the subdivision development doesn't have s224 yet then the information on the PIM isn't going to be of much benefit. With information such as services and site fill not yet available the PIM content will be based on information council holds on the underlying allotment.

## Meet our new recruits

Six new recruits joined us in the building team on 5 July. We're excited to have them on board as part of the team.

Over the next 6 months they will be on an intensive training journey to learn what is involved with becoming a Building Surveyor. Their training will take them through the legislation, building code clauses, standards, acceptable and alternative solutions and much more, while also learning how to use our systems and procedures.

As they start to take on processing of residential projects under supervision, please be patient with them – there's a lot to learn and it takes years to build the depth of knowledge that our experienced Building Surveyors have.

Meet our team...



Rear (left to right) – Matt Barlow, Matt Crone, Delwyn Phillips

Front (left to right) – Mike Collett, Andrew Duckett, Jackie Eden

## Sediment control

Remember - you're responsible for keeping sediment on site during the build via some form of sediment control method. This can be through:

- minimising excavation
- creating bunds or channels to contain runoff within the site
- stabilising the exposed area
- installing silt fencing.

We're currently seeing a significant number of sites not managing sediments and erosion particularly well. Please help look after the community and community's assets.

### **Why is managing sediment on site so important?**

Sediments from excavation can end up in waterways and stormwater. When it does, it impacts natural habitats. It also ends up on our roads, which increases wear and tear of the road and can create potholes, creating public hazards and increasing Council maintenance costs.

On site it can cause damage to the building site, including structural damage to foundations, retaining walls and underground services.

Benefits of erosion and sediment control on building sites include:

- All-weather site access
- Improved drainage and reduced site wetness – making wet-weather working conditions better

- Reduced average construction time
- Fewer problems with mud and dust
- Reduced stockpile losses and clean up costs
- Fewer complaints and better public image
- Compliance with regulations
- Protection of water quality in receiving waterways.

Erosion and sediment control is monitored by Environment Canterbury. They've developed a [helpful toolbox](#) on their website with tips and a range of resources.

## Solid fuel heater applications

It's important to provide us with all the relevant information, including exact details for any solid fuel heater consent applications.

Check our [solid fuel heater information](#) on our website, particularly the [solid fuel heater consent application checklist](#).

The checklist will help you ensure that you supply all the information we need to assess your consent application. In particular be clear with the following details:

- Exact make and model
- Exact flue being installed
- Clear Air Certification number
- New or secondhand
- free standing, or inbuilt
- Fuel type – eg wood, multifuel or diesel
- Wetback – if included supply the certifying plumber name and licence number

If your application isn't complete and doesn't provide the necessary information then we may reject it.

## Lot number/address signage for inspections

Help us to find you on your building site.

Having suitable and clear signage in place will greatly help our inspectors find your site. This means less delay getting to you in their already busy schedules.

In particular make sure your site is well signed with lot and/or address if you are in:

- a new subdivision
- rural or remote area.

## Update on inspections to flood affected areas

Our Civil Defence staff are still busy working on the recovery from the recent flooding.

Flood damaged roads and bridges causing disruptions and time delays means that we still aren't able to reach some areas in a timely manner. These areas also have a limited amount of building activity.

Inspections remain limited to the following areas:

- Some high country places on **Wednesdays**:
  - Includes Arthurs Pass village, Castle Hill township, Flock Hill, High Peak and Mt White Stations
  - Doesn't include other high country areas.
- South of State Highway 1 and west of Selwyn River on **Tuesdays and Thursday mornings only**
  - Includes Irwell, Doyleston, Leeston, Southbridge, Dunsandel, Rakaia Huts.

### No inspections until road access improves/is re-established

- Area bounded by Waimakariri River, Rakaia River and Kowhai River (encompassing areas north of Springfield township, west of State Highway 73 and north of State Highway 77)
  - Includes Windwhistle, Lake Coleridge, Kowhai Bush, Whitecliffs
  - Doesn't include Coalgate and Glentunnel

Inspections to all other areas continue as normal, including in the area between State Highway 1 and State Highway 77.

Please note that we will review this on a regular basis – so please keep in touch with our Customer services Team for updates via 0800 Selwyn or email [contactus@selwyn.govt.nz](mailto:contactus@selwyn.govt.nz), or sign up for our newsletters [here](#).

## Update on processing workload

Our processing workload remains very fluid, with a good stream of work still coming through. The impacts of the bubble of consents received in March means that consent timeframes are going over 40 days.

### What's the current situation?

- Consent numbers received on a month by month basis continue at high levels and adding to our backlog
- Processing is extending well over the 20 working day statutory timeframe, sitting at double currently – so plan ahead and allow a large buffer in your planning
- We continue to receive high volumes of required documents
  - you can help your inspections and CCC by uploading these before booking each inspection, allowing our inspectors to check them off at the inspection rather than after the inspection
  - we are making progress on catching up with the backlog of documents submitted in the system, with over 100 cleared in the last two weeks.

We're trying the best we can to work through applications as quickly and efficiently as we can, and we apologise for the delays.

## Bidet spray backflow

If a freestanding bidet sprayer hose is installed, we will be checking at final inspection:

- waterproofing, and
- what backflow device has been installed.

A pressure or atmospheric type vacuum breaker is adequate to protect from back siphonage.

You will need to provide us with product evidence for the device that is installed with your code compliance (CCC) documentation.

## Bath cradle internal membrane inspections

We've had queries as to when internal membrane inspections are required for bath cradle.

This has been causing some confusion as very few baths are installed as per E3/AS1.

We will no longer need a tanking membrane inspection for a bath cradle. But you will need to provide a PS3 from the waterproofer if there are tiles installed around the bath.

You will still need a tanking membrane inspections for **all** tiled showers.



Building consents are no longer needed for a number of common projects in both urban and rural settings. Non-consented building work changes include:

- Single-storey detached buildings such as sleepouts, sheds and greenhouses (up to 30 square metres)
- Carports (up to 40 square metres)
- Ground-floor awnings, verandas and porches (up to 30 square metres)
- Solar panel arrays
- Permanent outdoor fireplaces or ovens
- Water storage bladders for irrigation and firefighting purposes

- Short-span (small) bridges
- Hay barns and pole sheds.

It's understandable that many of us would like to get started immediately. But, there are still rules to be followed to ensure our homes and buildings are safe and sound.

For some work, you need to hire the right professional. Do your research on builders, engineers and plumbers before you get started.

If you are able to build it yourself, brush up on what you can and can't do. Hire a qualified tradesperson if you're not sure.

Remember, every building project still needs to adhere to the Building Code and other relevant laws. No consent doesn't mean no rules.

Take a look at [building.govt.nz/buildit](https://building.govt.nz/buildit) to find out which building projects don't need building consent, and the details for each type of non-consented building project.

No single formula can be applied across all building types so check out the website to find out the detail. Then get started on turning those dreams into reality.

### How Buildit works

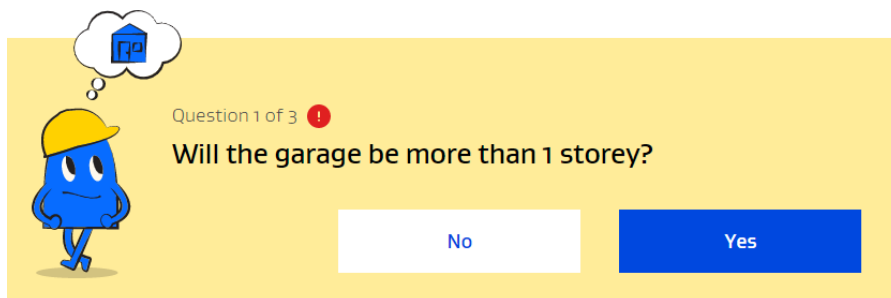
To use the Buildit tool, follow these three easy steps:

1. Find your project



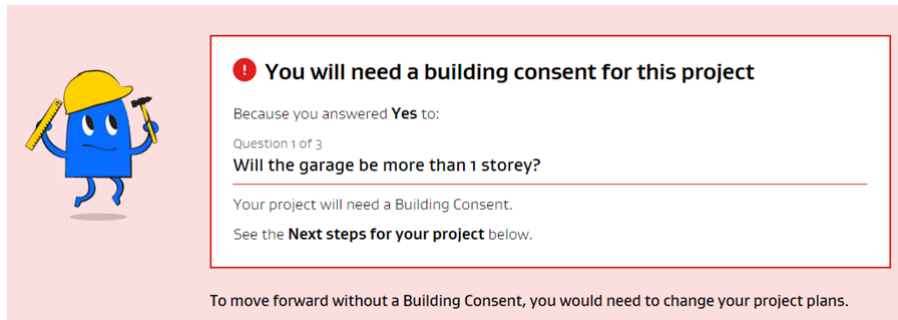
Type in a project and choose the closest match.

2. Answer the questions



Make sure all questions are answered about the project.

### 3. Read through your next steps



Based on the answers submitted, the Buildit tool will determine whether the project needs a building consent, or if it may be exempt, and will give you a set of next steps to read through. These could include:

- Any additional rules and restrictions for the project
- Links to the full project guidance on MBIE's Building Performance website
- How to comply with the Building Code
- How to contact your local council to ensure your work complies with the District Plan
- Useful rules and legislation to read through
- Professionals you can contact if you need any further guidance.

#### Updated guidance available soon

Remember to keep checking the guidance document on [building work that does not require a building consent](#).

This document is updated frequently by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) to help make the guidance easier to understand for everyone. An updated version will be available on their website soon.

#### The Building Amendment Bill update

New legislation to support the use of new, innovative and efficient building methods, and improve trust and confidence in the building system has been now been passed into new legislation.

The changes under the Building Amendment Bill will help improve compliance, discourage poor or illegal behaviour and improve enforcement of the building regulatory system to ensure that buildings are safe and the public are protected from harm.

Changes included in the Bill include:

- Introduction of a voluntary certification scheme for offsite manufacturers of modular components, giving manufacturers who meet certain standards the ability to sign off their own designs and builds

- Requirement for minimum information for building products
- strengthening the CodeMark product certification scheme
- changes to the way the Building Levy can be spent
- [new and updated offences and penalties](#) to deter poor behaviour and incentivise compliance.

The Ministry of Building, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) have indicated that these changes are the first phase of a wider work programme to lift the efficiency and quality of building work, and provide fairer outcomes if things go wrong.

You can read more on the building law reform programme [here](#).