

Latest building consent news from Selwyn

In this newsletter

- [Update on our workload](#)
- [Holiday season close down](#)
- [Pre-application approvals required](#)
- [LBP details required restricted building work inspections](#)
- [Requirement for smoke alarm compliance from 1 November 2024](#)
- [New Zealand Electrical code of practice for electrical safe distances](#)
- [Strategic Relationships Managers](#)
- [Periodic swimming pool inspections](#)
- [Reminders on legislation and building code changes](#)

Update on our workload

Inspection timeframes

Our inspections are generally back at 48 hours from booking. This may change at short notice as we anticipate many projects aim to complete before Christmas. Please bear this in mind with your scheduling of work and inspection requirements.

Processing timeframes

At the end of September:

- The average working days for building consents being issued was 12 days (note this is an average)
- 94% of applications were processed within 20 working days.
- New commercial consents are generally being processed within 23 working days.

Note that timeframes depend on the quality of your application.

Holiday season close down

Now is a good time to plan for the holiday season. Our closing and reopening dates are:

Inspections

- Last full day of inspections – Friday 20 December 2024
- Inspections resume – Monday 6 January 2025.

Note: reduced inspection numbers may apply dependant on available resource to allow for our team to have a break too. This is not normally an issue at the time of year given most builders and trades take leave at this time.

Office

- Office closes – 5.00pm Tuesday 24 December 2024
- Office reopens – 8.30am Friday 3 January 2025.

Remember the processing statutory clock stops on 20 December 2024 and restarts again on 10 January 2025 in accordance with the definition of ‘working day’ under the Building Act 2004.

This does not mean that we don’t work on lodged applications, just that the days don’t count as working days. Please ensure your customers understand this.

Applications can continue to be submitted 24/7 as normal during this period via the AlphaOne online system.

Pre application approvals

An engineering acceptance certificate may be required from 1 November 2024 in addition to [current requirements for applications](#).

A certificate will be required where more than one dwelling is intended to be constructed on a single allotment (eg minor residential units, medium density housing/multiunit developments, industrial multiunit, and commercial builds).

This is to provide confirmation of a lawful outfall and service layout requirements for the project from the network utility operator (NUO).

If you have any further questions on this please [Contact us](#) or phone 03 347 2800.

Requirement for smoke alarm compliance from 1 November 2024

Requirements for smoke alarms in household units changed from 1 November 2024 following revisions to acceptable solutions C/AS1, C/AS2, F7/AS1, and verification method C/VM2.

The acceptable solutions now define a Type 1 smoke alarm system as being an interconnected system, which can be mains-powered or wireless.

Selwyn District Council interprets that as part of compliance with section 112 of the Building Act 2004 applications for alterations to household units are required to:

- upgrade to interconnected smoke alarms in line with NZS 4514:2021 and the updated acceptable solutions, or
- demonstrate that any deviation from full compliance is justified under as nearly as reasonably practicable (ANARP) which must consider the benefit versus cost specifically in relation to the building being altered.

This approach is expected to meet MBIE intentions of significantly reduce fire-related injuries and fatalities by ensuring early detection and warning in the event of a fire.

LBP details required for restricted building work inspections

Details of the Licenced Building Practitioner (LBP) **must be** provided when booking an inspection that covers restricted building work.

Going forward we will be firm that these details **must** be provided. This requirement is noted on [our website](#).

Before you make your booking, please ensure you have the following handy:

- LBP's full name, and
- LBP's licence number.

The AlphaOne customer portal links to the LBP register, therefore any AlphaOne user can add an LBP by searching the licence number. This will then show up in our booking system when an inspection is booked.

If the email or phone number pulling through from the register are incorrect, this should be updated by the LBP via the LBP website under [Update your profile](#).

What if the LBP licence is expired or suspended?

Either:

- the LBP will need to relicense via the LBP website before undertaking restricted building work and booking inspections – refer [Relicensing](#), or
- you will need to use an LBP with a current license that will supervise the work of the unlicensed LBP.

New Zealand electrical code of practice for electrical safe distances

Safety concerns related to building activity near overhead electric lines have been raised with the Minister for Building and Construction.

NZEC:34 – Electrical Safe Distances sets out the minimum distances needed between a building or structure and overhead power lines, which help with protection from electrical hazards.

The distance you need to leave to keep yourself safe depends on the type of line and voltage of the line – with minimum distances as follows:

Voltage	Minimum distance beneath power lines	Minimum distance to side of power lines
Not exceeding 1kV	4m	3.5m
Exceeding 1kV but not exceeding 11kV	5.5m	5m
Exceeding 11kV but not exceeding 33kV	7m	8.5m
Exceeding 33kV but not exceeding 110kV	7.5m	9.5m
Exceeding 110kV	Refer table 2 NZEC34	

So keep safe out there, and if you are doing any building work near or under power lines, contact your local power line company for advice before you start. For more information visit Orion's website.

Note that non-compliant building work could be subject to offences and penalties under the Electricity Act 1992.

Strategic Relationships Managers

Emma O'Neill and Neil Donnellan have joined the council team as Strategic Relationships Managers. The purpose of these roles is to:

- understand the strategic customers future plans, to assist SDC to forward plan resourcing,
- connect between the different departments at council, identifying any potential issues and removing roadblocks,

- be aware of the strategic customer applications within council to provide updates back to the customer.

The strategic partners will work with organisations and companies that have large social and environmental influence within Selwyn and may include large companies including high volume housing companies, infrastructure, education, and emergency services.

Periodic swimming pool inspections

Please note that if your 3 yearly residential pool inspection is due over the next month or two that there will be two inspectors onsite. This is while we train a new inspector.

It won't affect what you are charged for your inspection, with periodic pool inspections charged out at a fixed fee.

Reminders on legislation and building code changes

Have your say

The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) are currently consulting on the following key topics:

- [Consultation on increasing the use of remote inspections in the building consent process](#)

This consultation is seeking feedback on options to increase the use of remote inspections to streamline the inspection process.

Consultations are open now, with submissions closing on 29 November 2024.

Legislation

The Government has amended the following regulations:

- [Building \(Forms\) Amendment Regulations 2024](#)

This amends Form 2 for an application for a project information memorandum and/or building consent by making specific provision for alternative plans and specifications, and alternative product certificates to be attached to an application if the applicant wishes.

- [Building \(Minor Customisations\) Regulations 2024](#)

Define the minor customisations that may be made to the plans and specifications for which a national multiple-use approval has been issued, and provides for minor customisations to plans and

specifications.

- [Building \(Minor Variations\) Amendment Regulations 2024](#)

Amends the Building (Minor Variations) Regulations 2009 by expanding the definition of minor variation; clarifying when the substitution of a comparable product is a minor variation.

Building code

- 1 November 2024 – end of the 12-month transition period for the 2023 Building Code compliance changes around protection from fire (notably the requirement for interconnected smoke alarms in housing) and plumbing and drainage (with the exception of lead in plumbing, which has a longer transition period).
- November 2024 – updated Building Code documents (Acceptable Solutions G12/AS1 and G12/AS3) will be published with the extended transition period end date for lead in plumbing and other minor changes.
- Standards – over the next two years a funding boost of \$3 million from the building levy will be used to improve the alignment of building and construction standards between New Zealand and Australia for standards that relate to functions under the Building Act.

Prioritisation will go to standards with high relevance to the Building Code. Broader factors will also be considered, such as whether it provides opportunities for innovation or contributes to strategic priorities for the sector. Some standards will not be eligible for funding, as they do not relate to functions under the Building Act and cannot be funded via the building levy.