

# Plumbing Regulation News Update

Plumbing Regulation News Update 12/09

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## **WATER AND SEWERAGE INDUSTRY REFORMS REGISTERING BACKFLOW PREVENTION DEVICES**

### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Plumbing Regulation News Update is to advise industry, local government, property owners and plumbing practitioners of changes to the registering of backflow prevention devices consequent upon changes made by the *Water and Sewerage Industry Act 2009* that commenced on 1 July 2009.

### **BACKGROUND**

The *Plumbing Regulations 2004* ('the Regulations') previously required each council general manager to keep a register of backflow prevention devices. These are devices authorised under special plumbing permits to give protection against backflow from any device, zone or property rated as a *high hazard*.

Testable backflow prevention devices are also authorised under special plumbing permits to be installed to protect against backflow from a device, zone or property of *any hazard rating*.

### **CHANGES FOR REGISTERING BACKFLOW PREVENTION DEVICES**

As a result of the recent changes, the Regulations now only require council general managers to keep a register of backflow prevention devices approved under a special plumbing permit in respect of protecting backflow from device(s) or zones and not from the whole property.

Council Permit Authorities will still check the provision of backflow prevention in respect of certain devices or zones (for example they will need to assess the activities on-site to determine whether protection between zones/activities or protection within a zone from a device is required). However, permit authorities are no longer responsible for checking the level of protection to the water infrastructure of the corporation which would require the property to have a backflow prevention device fitted at the boundary; e.g. containment protection.

The water and sewerage corporations will be able to require backflow prevention devices to be fitted if containment protection is not proposed by the applicant. This will be determined when persons wishing to do building or plumbing works affecting the corporation's interests have to obtain a certificate for certifiable work from the relevant corporation.

A condition of this certificate may be that the person must install a backflow prevention device in respect of the activities or devices on that property and the risk of contamination to the water supply and that the device be tested on a regular basis (containment protection).

There is no requirement in the corporations' Act (the *Water and Sewerage Industry Act 2008*) for the corporation to keep a register of backflow prevention devices installed in respect of a property. However, it would be envisaged that the corporations will give high priority to keeping such information in a readily accessible form as a matter of risk management.

The register previously kept in respect of backflow prevention from the property is expected to be transferred as a record from councils to the new water corporations.

## **SUPERSEDED PRE 1 JULY PLUMBING REGULATIONS 2004**

### **Regulation 11. - Backflow prevention devices**

Each general manager is to keep a register, in respect of his or her municipal area, of all:

- (a) backflow prevention devices authorised under special plumbing permits to be installed to protect against backflow from any device, zone or property rated as a high hazard under the Tasmanian Plumbing Code; and
- (b) testable backflow prevention devices authorised under special plumbing permits to be installed to protect against backflow from a device, zone or property of any hazard rating.

## **POST 1 JULY PLUMBING REGULATIONS 2004**

### **Regulation 11. - Backflow prevention devices**

Each general manager is to keep a register, in respect of his or her municipal area, of all:

- (a) backflow prevention devices authorised under special plumbing permits to be installed to protect against backflow from any device or zone rated as a high hazard under the Tasmanian Plumbing Code; and
- (b) testable backflow prevention devices authorised under special plumbing permits to be installed to protect against backflow from a device or zone of any hazard rating.

The removal of the phrase 'or property' is the subtle change referred to above. This change removes the obligation for the permit authority to assess the containment backflow protection which refers to the protection provided at the boundary water supply connection.

### **FURTHER INFORMATION**

For more details about plumbing legislation contact the Workplace Standards Tasmanian Helpline:

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Plumbing Regulation News Updates are issued to assist in the interpretation of Tasmanian plumbing legislation and to provide advice on technical issues within the plumbing industry.

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