



# building today

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE REGISTERED MASTER BUILDERS ASSOCIATION

## Ice cream in a container!



### INSIDE:

- Key Building Act changes for LBPs
- Bunting: The Building Act — what's reasonable?
- Innovative wood treatment approved



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We take a look at some of the important changes that have already become law and others being phased in during the course of this year.

Meanwhile architect and columnist Don Bunting provides food for thought by pointing out that the changes fail to address what he says are the central weaknesses in current legislation — the core of which is the lack of effective management and control by the MBIE over some 70 individual Building Consent Authorities.

Read his thought provoking column on page 27.

And look out for some upcoming design and content changes in *Building Today* which we hope will make it an even better read for you.

**Andrew Darlington**  
Editor

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*Ice cream in a container! Read what's happening in this Dr Who-like "factory".*

**Publisher:**

Taurean Publications Ltd  
P O Box 35 343,  
Browns Bay, Auckland 0753

**Editor/Advertising Manager:**

Andrew Darlington  
**Ph:** 09 478 4888 **Mob:** 021 90 11 56  
**E-mail:** andrew@buildingtoday.co.nz

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# chief's chat

by ceo warwick quinn

## Insurance — sum it up!

**Y**ou may recall about this time last year I wrote an article on changes to the way properties were going to be insured as insurance companies were moving away from an open ended replacement cost to a fixed sum insured approach.

At the time I had been talking with insurance companies who were conscious that the public may want to seek advice from building experts on how much it would cost to rebuild their home in the event of a loss, and they thought builders were a good source of information.

I recommended that you not provide that sort of advice unless you knew what you were doing as it is full of fish hooks and your insurance probably didn't cover you for this sort of professional service.

My concerns related to the very high chance of home owners being under-insured, and in the event of a shortfall of funds looking to the one who provided the advice on the current replacement cost to make up the difference.

Should that person be "suitably qualified" — for example, a builder, valuer, quantity surveyor, engineer or architect — the courts would most likely be sympathetic to any legal action by home owners and you could be forced to pay the shortfall — unless you were adequately insured.

So one year on has anything happened to change my mind? The simple answer is no.

If anything, I believe there is a real risk that we are under-insured as a nation, and in the event of another Christchurch happening somewhere, property owners will find themselves short on the amount of money needed to replace what they had before.

I have spoken with insurance brokers and others on the [www.buildingtoday.co.nz](http://www.buildingtoday.co.nz)



subject and they agree. Indeed, there is one quantity surveying firm who believes more than 90% of New Zealanders are under-insured.

Why do I think this? Well, as annual insurance policies rolled over during 2013 most switched to the fixed sum insured model. Now, there is nothing wrong with this as long as you know what you are doing.

Many insurance companies provided support to home owners by having an online calculator so they can estimate the replacement cost of their home, while others had a default amount of \$2000 per square metre (psm) based on a house of 200 to 220sq m, if not told otherwise.

This may not seem too bad to your average punter, and many think that \$2000 psm is plenty if they had to rebuild today.

Well, it might be, today, but it is not today you have to

worry about — it's tomorrow, and tomorrow could be five to six years away, and by then it could include a whole lot of other costs and unknowns, and be a different amount (for the same property) depending on what your insurance covers or does not cover.

Huh? I hear you say. Well, let's say it does cost \$2000 psm to rebuild your home today and you lock that figure in. The insurance period runs for 12 months so you have to assume you have a loss on the last day — 365 days from now. So you have already lost any inflationary increases over the past 12 months.

Assuming you have a total loss on day 365, it will then take 12 to 18 months to sort out (if it is a one-off single incident — for example, a house fire), so you have lost another year and a half of inflationary costs.

At present, that \$2000 psm has gone to about \$2200 psm (at a 3.5% compounded per annum national construction cost index).

But, if your claim formed part of a large natural disaster as in the case of the Christchurch earthquakes, it could be five to six years before you get to rebuild your home.

And we know from experience that the construction cost index in Canterbury has been about 10% for the

past few years, and if that continues even at 5% for the next two years then after five years your \$2000 psm has gone to \$2935 psm. This does not take into account demolition costs or other unknowns that may eventuate.

If you are caught with being under-insured you will be forced to

"cash out" and start rebuilding as quickly as possible. Trouble is, everyone else who finds themselves short will be doing the same.

In summary, I think it will take some time before we twig that we are potentially under-insured as a country. In fact, it might take a court case or two to reinforce that view.

In the meantime what did I do? I doubled my cover!

# Game on!

By RMBA president

David Fabish

One of the great benefits of belonging to the Registered Master Builders Association is the opportunity to attend the most successful building industry conference in New Zealand.

This has been running consecutively for 113 years, and this year's conference is now only a couple of months away.

It provides a unique opportunity to mix and mingle with interesting and successful like-minded people, with great opportunities to learn and network.

If you haven't attended before, I encourage you to seriously consider the benefits that the impressive array of speakers, presenters and workshops offer to grow your business — and yourselves.

Sir John Kirwan is the headline speaker and hardly needs any introduction after his stellar All Black exploits and international coaching career. However, his honest and courageous contribution to improving mental health and, particularly, the influence of this disease on men, is remarkable. He was recently voted the person Kiwis trust the most in a *Readers Digest* poll.

Currently he is the Auckland Blues coach and, luckily, is available to us because of the break in the Super 15 for the June internationals. He is due to speak after the opening address by Minister for Building and Housing Maurice Williamson, who is attending for the seventh consecutive year.

Olympic gold medallist and a key member of our America's Cup team Rob Waddell, and Dr Ian Brooks,



industry leaders and advisers to inspire and inform those attending.

As always, industry suppliers will contribute to an outstanding trade show of new and innovative products.

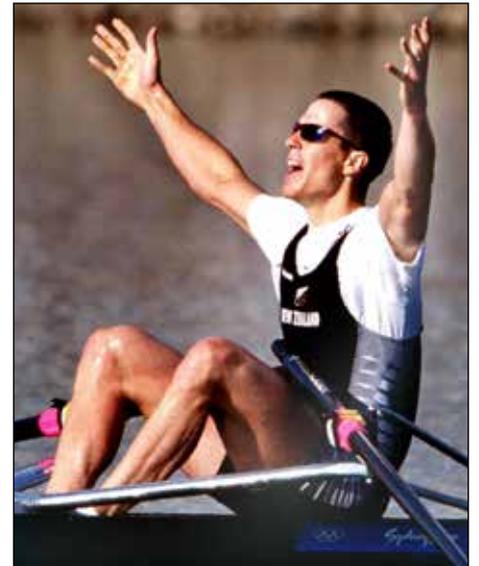
I always enjoy the tremendous camaraderie and social side of the conference, and I'm sure Taupo RMB president Mark Allen and his executive will provide a memorable experience in New Zealand's most visited tourist destination.

The conference is being held at the Wairakei Resort, Taupo, on Thursday 5 and Friday 6 June, ending on Saturday morning.

Details can be found on the Registered Master Builders web site, or contact Bev McKay on 04 385 5630 or email [bev.mckay@masterbuilder.org.nz](mailto:bev.mckay@masterbuilder.org.nz).

the most prolific business author in New Zealand with 16 books, complete our keynote speaker line up.

Workshops and presentations will also be taken by



*Sir John Kirwan (above) is the headline speaker at the Registered Master Builders Association conference in Taupo in June. Rob Waddell (above right) is also among the keynote speakers at the conference.*



## Registered Master Builders Association Conference 5-7 June 2014 Wairakei Resort, Taupo

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# Dream win for Brockie Renovations Ltd

**P**aul Brockie of Brockie Renovations Ltd says it was surreal to win the Renovation Award up to \$250,000 at the Registered Master Builders 2013 House of the Year.

He says getting up on stage and being recognised for his team's hard work was a fantastic feeling.

"Getting to the finals is a huge achievement, and when you're announced you do a bit of a double take — I remember thinking, was that my name they just called out?" he says.

"When I got back to my table, I realised I had completely missed what the judges had to say about the house. You just have no idea what's happening around you.

"We've been renovating for a long time, and that's the market we want to be in. The under \$250,000 award is exactly where we want to be. If I had a choice of any award we could have won at House of the Year, that would be it. I couldn't really have asked for anything more."

Mr Brockie says this was a particularly rewarding win for the team.

"The client needed better spaces to suit their family, particularly kitchen and living areas. Everyone has a wish list and a dream, but achieving those dreams on a budget is really special," he says.

"All work is challenging in some way, so it's fantastic to be rewarded. We like entering House of the Year and being judged. It keeps us in the renovation market and keeps us raising our standards."

The judges said the small retreat home was a total surprise, calling it a more than deserving winner of this category.

"Originally built in the early 2000s, dramatic improvements have been undertaken to suit this home's just retired owners," they said.

"The builder has achieved a seamless transition between old and new with an increased floor



*This Brockie Renovations Ltd entry won the Renovation Award up to \$250,000 at the Registered Master Builders 2013 House of the Year.*



*From left: RMBA director Richard Carver, Paul and Beth Brockie.*

area, new kitchen and extended decking to improve flow and offer choice of living areas.

"Modern decoration and a fantastic use of limited space mean this wonderfully blended addition has allowed the owners to remain in their preferred location, while accommodating their lifestyle needs."

Mr Brockie says there are a number of business advantages in taking part in House of the Year and being part of Registered Master Builders.

"The Master Builder brand is very strong, and winning awards helps strengthen our brand. House of the Year is great for networking too

— here in Nelson we can sometimes be a bit isolated, so meeting other builders who can share knowledge and experience is fantastic.

"I joined Registered Master Builders in 1994 to be part of a powerful brand and to give me the confidence to be successful with its support.

"We'll absolutely continue to enter House of the Year. This year we've got another renovation entered — we'll see what happens!"

The Awards are made possible through the support of PlaceMakers, James Hardie, GIB, Nulook, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, Future-Proof Building, Carters, ITM, Plumbing World, Resene and Westpac.



# Platinum Award for chuffed Bay of Plenty builder

**M**ark Haimes of Haimes Building Ltd was thrilled to take out the Nulook New Homes \$600,000 – \$1 million category and the Platinum Award at the Registered Master Builders 2013 House of the Year.

The Platinum Award is presented to companies that win five or more national category titles, recognition that Mr Haimes is particularly proud of.

He says House of the Year is a tough competition, and winning or losing can come down to the tiniest detail.

"The team put so much effort into this house, and into all of our entries over the years — we worked really hard on the detailing and making sure the build was exactly how we wanted it," he said.

"The Platinum Award is fantastic recognition for the company. It's a strong indicator of the quality of work we deliver, showing that we perform at a consistently high level.

"Winning a House of the Year award speaks volumes. It's a pat on the back, and it's recognition for all the effort you put in and what you've managed to achieve."

The judges said the build comprises of comfortable living and easy access to sheltered outdoor spaces to maximise the sun and views.

"Custom made for a retiring couple, this lakeside home in Taupo is very well crafted with excellent attention to detail, design and planning. The large verandas, dormers and dark weather boards create an abode of unique character," they said.

"Briefed to create a property that best responds to the site, a traditional gable form with an attic upper level was selected, allowing generous



*This Haimes Building Ltd entry won the Nulook New Homes \$600,000 – \$1 million category at the Registered Master Builders 2013 House of the Year.*

space without creating a bulky two-storey building.

"Sustainable in their approach, the owners have consciously invested in new and practical services technology, ensuring the house will be comfortable and enjoyable for decades to come."

Mr Haimes says every builder should experience being part of Registered Master Builders and the House of the Year competition.

"I joined Registered Master Builders for the whole atmosphere of being part of your peer group. It has so many support systems in place that you feel like you have back up — Master Builders offers that camaraderie.

"When you join Master Builders, it's up to you how much you get out of it. Get involved and utilise the benefits, don't just sign up for the sticker.



*From left: Nalco sales and marketing manager Mark Gilbert, Mark and Tanya Haimes, Phil Pool.*

"The same can be said for House of the Year — even if you don't win, take on all the feedback the judges give you. You'll come out a better builder!"

The Awards are made possible through the support of PlaceMakers, James Hardie, GIB, Nulook, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, Future-Proof Building, Carters, ITM, Plumbing World, Resene and Westpac.



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# Judge spills the beans on new and improved Apprentice of the Year practical

The Registered Master Builders Carters 2013 Apprentice of the Year competition saw the practical building component undergo a massive overhaul, with the format and building task completely transformed.

In previous years, national finalists were tasked with completing three small challenges, such as building a set of stairs or constructing a dovetail joint. In 2013, contestants were given five hours to construct a children's playhouse, which was gifted to a local charity on completion.

Apprentice of the Year national judge Paul Mitchell says the new format took the competition to a whole new level.

"The concept of building a finished product was great. It was very visual, and you could stand back and see what the contestants had produced. It was really satisfying for the apprentices and for those watching," he says.

"For the judges, observing the contestants while they completed a project of this nature from start to finish gave us great insight into their planning and work processes."

2013 also saw the practical judging component held at The Cloud on Auckland's waterfront in front of friends, family and the public, as opposed to a private warehouse in Lower Hutt.

"When we originally scoped the new practical, we were a bit concerned that having so many people watching the apprentices while they competed might stress them out," Mr Mitchell says.

"On the day, we realised we had no reason to worry — they loved it! Having people cheer for them really seemed to spur them on. It was an exhilarating environment.

"The highlight of the practical for me was seeing the charities that were to receive the playhouses come along. We had one charity bring 10 or 15 kids down to The Cloud to cheer for their apprentice — that was fantastic."

Mr Mitchell says there are a number of things the judges look for in a winner.

"The first thing apprentices need to prove in a practical carpentry challenge is that they are able to carefully



*The finished products after the 2013 practical carpentry challenge.*



*The apprentices hard at work, being cheered on by friends, family and the general public*

follow a set of plans and instructions. At the beginning there might be a temptation to rush in and get started, but you need to take the time to make sure you're on the right path," he says.

"At some point during the practical, there comes a choice between speed and accuracy. Contestants can either go fast and get the job done, or make sure what is being produced is high quality.

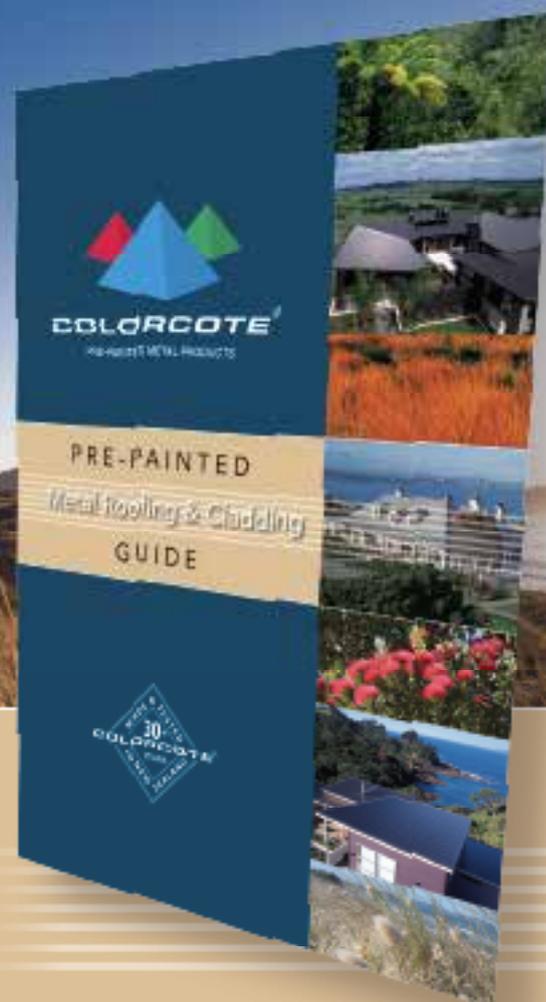
"For an apprentice, it's so important to be able to be neat and accurate. Speed will come with practice. Our 2013 winner demonstrated both of these components — he was very efficient and got through the job, but also produced good quality work.

"We're looking forward to seeing what level of skill is brought to the table in this year's national final."

Entries for the Registered Master Builders Carters 2014 Apprentice of the Year competition open on Tuesday, April 1.

The Apprentice of the Year competition is made possible thanks to principal sponsor Carters, the Registered Master Builders Association, the Building and Construction Industry Training Organisation (BCITO), and supporting sponsor the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE).

# Free advice on roofing and cladding for New Zealand homes



The ColorCote® Metal Roofing & Cladding Guide gives you helpful advice and design tips on colours, using the correct materials for your home, important information on mistakes to avoid and how to save thousands of dollars over the lifespan of your roof or wall cladding.

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# Key Building Act changes to affect LBPs' work

**T**here have been recent changes to the Building Act (the Act) that affect the work of building practitioners and the home handyman.

The changes are in the Building Amendment Act 2013 that became law on November 28, 2013. Some changes came into force immediately and some will come into effect this year.

They include changes to the types of work that do not require building consent. More low-risk work is exempt from building consent, and there are limits on potentially high-risk work.

You will be able to demolish a detached building that is not more than three storeys high without building consent. Previously, you could only do this if the building was damaged.

This means, for example, that an old, single-storey detached bach could be demolished to make way for a new dream home without applying for building consent. The new dream home will require building consent though!

It's also possible to remove a potential earthquake hazard without building consent, such as the upper part of a brick chimney that is protruding above the roof.

Some existing outbuildings, such as carports, garages, greenhouses and sheds can be repaired and replaced without building consent, whether they are damaged or not.

The building work may be exempt from building consent if the new outbuilding is the same size or

smaller than the original, and is on the same footprint and is a comparable outbuilding to the original.

You can't, for example, replace a carport with a garage without building consent, nor can you shift a shed to another part of your property and add an extension without building consent.

The do's and don'ts of exempt building work are listed in Schedule 1 of the Act, which has been reformatted to make it easier to navigate.

Schedule 1 has been split into three parts. The first part contains building work that anyone can do (including the home handyman). The second part deals with sanitary plumbing and drainlaying, which must be carried out by people authorised under the Plumbers, Gasfitters and Drainlayers Act. The third part covers building work which requires input from a chartered professional engineer.

The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's (MBIE's) guidance document will contain examples of the kind of work that is exempt, and examples of work that requires building consent.

## Seek good advice

The guidance also advises readers to seek good advice on any building work before they start. It reminds readers that all building work must comply with the Building Code, and that any alterations or additions to an existing building must not adversely affect the building's compliance with the Building Code.

The guidance will be published soon. In the meantime, refer to Schedule 1 of the Act for details of work that

can be done without building consent.

Other immediate changes to the Act include:

- higher penalties for work done without the proper consent,
- councils have more powers to restrict entry to buildings that are near other dangerous buildings,
- the MBIE has more power to hold building consent authorities to account, and
- there have been changes to the way dams are defined and measured.

Changes that come into effect later this year include new regulations to protect consumers who are building a house or making major renovations to their home.

Building practitioners will have to give consumers information about their skills, qualifications, licensing status and business record when they are engaged to build a house or extension.

## Written contracts

Practitioners will have to provide written contracts for work over a certain sum, and can be fined if they don't comply with the law.

There will be a 12-month "defect repair period" when building practitioners will have to fix any defects they have been told about without question or additional charge.

The MBIE will develop the regulations over the coming months. For more details about the Building Amendment Act 2013 go to [www.dbh.govt.nz/building-amendment-act-2013](http://www.dbh.govt.nz/building-amendment-act-2013). You can download a fact sheet or read the key information on the web.

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# Miles is wrestling with a serious P issue

MethMinder is helping to keep rental properties drug-free. And landlords worry free.

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P (methamphetamine) is becoming increasingly common in New Zealand and for residential landlords it's more than just a social concern, it's a serious financial problem. Criminals increasingly rent suburban houses as labs to cook the illicit substance.

Auckland-based MethMinder is helping landlords nationwide to sniff out the good tenants from the bad. The company's world-first combination of chemical detection and remote monitoring technology lets landlords keep a virtual eye on their property portfolio – meaning no massive clean-up bills and no loss of value.

It's machine-to-machine technology that can be installed anywhere the Vodafone 3G network reaches. In the world of MethMinder, crime doesn't pay but preventing it sure does.

To see how other Kiwi businesses are already making use of Vodafone technology to do business better, check out [vodafone.co.nz/mobility](http://vodafone.co.nz/mobility)

**Miles Stratford**  
Brand Director,  
MethMinder, Auckland.



# Innovative wood treatment obtains building code approval

An engineered wood product that has the potential to transform construction has been included in the New Zealand Building Code.

Laminated beams made from glued veneers of radiata pine are well known for their strength, stability and uniform sizing. Now improved durability can be added to the list.

Laminated Veneer Lumber (LVL) treated with Azotek, a novel product developed by New Plymouth-based Zelam Ltd, has been included in the New Zealand Building Code as an acceptable solution for internal framing.

"This is a world-first," Zelam marketing manager Noel Coxhead says. "It essentially makes wet solvent treatments for LVL and plywood obsolete, and opens the door to much wider use of LVL framing in construction."

"LVL is the key to precision construction using wood. But because of the well-known difficulties associated with wet solvent treatment of LVL, wood processors have been reluctant to go down that track," Mr Coxhead says.



*Straight and true: Azotek-treated LVL is a precision building material.*

"It is difficult to get traditional treatments to penetrate the glue layers that bond the layers of LVL and plywood. The liquids involved also affect the dimensional stability of the finished product — which needs to be dried after treatment.

"In contrast, our new treatment takes place during manufacture, so the finished timber is dry and ready for use as soon as it rolls off the production line.

"Because the treatment compounds are present from the surface to the core of the timber, it can be drilled, sawn and notched during construction without any loss of integrity or need for re-treatment."

Azotek-treated LVL has been available on the New Zealand market for more than 12 months, enjoying a steadily growing market share from designers and builders seeking precision wood products.

Its first commercial use was in Christchurch's cardboard cathedral, where LVL beams were used for the main structural elements.

But despite having Standards approval as a treatment, the previous lack of formal Building Code approval has been a barrier to the wider use of Azotek-treated LVL, according to Nelson Pine Industries (NPI) Australasian sales engineer Andrew van Houtte.

NPI has been producing Azotek-treated H1.2 LVL since 2012. Because it is a dry process, Mr van Houtte says treated beams have precise tolerances, adding to the dimensional stability that LVL is known for.

"To my mind Azotek is the best treatment on the market. In a technical sense it is better than anything the industry has ever seen — exactly the right amount of chemical is applied and it penetrates throughout the product.

"It takes durability to a whole new level, and it also has great environmental and health and safety credentials."

He says most of the LVL produced by NPI is used in common structural applications, such as beams, rafters, joists, lintels and bearers.

Mr Coxhead says Azotek is made up of two fungicides that are widely used on food crops, but are new to wood treatment — triadimefon and cyproconazole — plus bifenthrin, a standard wood treatment insecticide.



*Large dimension plywood after the H1.2 decay test. The Azotek-treated sample is at the bottom and the untreated sample at the top.*

"Finding suitable fungicides was a long journey for Zelam. We had many setbacks. Not only did the active ingredients have to be fit-for-purpose, they had to be readily available and affordable," he says.

"Azotek is the only combination that met all the essential criteria. Having two fungicides in the mix means it provides broad spectrum protection against rot and decay organisms, and a barrier against selection for resistance."

Before Azotek was approved as an H1.2 treatment for LVL it was tested in rigorous trials by Scion and in-house by Zelam. These were designed to determine Azotek's performance in conditions designed to simulate what happens when water leaks into a wall cavity.

Although Azotek-treated LVL has New Zealand and Australian Standards approval for H1.2 treatment, it is sold only in New Zealand because the H1.2 standard does not apply in Australia. Trials of Azotek H2 and H3-treated LVL and plywood are now underway, and Mr Coxhead says these are looking very promising.

H2 treated framing is widely used in Australia, because this standard of treatment provides termite protection. When approvals come through for Azotek H2 and H3-treated LVL and plywood, these are likely to be well received by wood processors and builders on both sides of the Tasman.

"But the bigger prize is likely to be the United States, where a lot of engineered wood is used in housing construction. Already wood processors there are showing a lot of interest," Mr Coxhead says.

# LBP SKILLS MAINTENANCE POINTS: WE'LL HELP YOU WITH THAT.

Keeping up with your LBP Skills Maintenance points quota is simple with PlaceMakers. We're running PlaceMakers Skills Maintenance Seminars around the country during the year and our magazine, Under Construction can also contribute to your points requirement. We know time is money, so spend your time wisely, join us for a Skills Maintenance seminar and sign up for your monthly copy of Under Construction.

## UPCOMING SEMINAR DATES

BRANCH	DATE	TIME
PlaceMakers Cranford St & PlaceMakers Christchurch South	Monday, 24 March 2014	5:00pm - 7:00pm
PlaceMakers Riccarton	Tuesday, 25 March 2014	7:00am - 9:00am
PlaceMakers Ashburton	Tuesday, 25 March 2014	5:00pm - 7:00pm
PlaceMakers Timaru	Wednesday, 26 March 2014	7:00am - 9:00am
PlaceMakers Twizel	Wednesday, 26 March 2014	5:00pm - 7:00pm
PlaceMakers Oamaru	Thursday, 27 March 2014	7:00am - 9:00am
PlaceMakers Dunedin	Thursday, 27 March 2014	5:00pm - 7:00pm
PlaceMakers Blenheim	Tuesday, 29 April 2014	7:00am - 9:00am
PlaceMakers Nelson	Tuesday, 29 April 2014	5:00pm - 7:00pm
PlaceMakers Motueka	Wednesday, 30 April 2014	7:00am - 9:00am
PlaceMakers Porirua	Wednesday, 30 April 2014	5:00pm - 7:00pm
PlaceMakers Kaiwharawhara, Evans Bay, Seaview	Thursday, 1 May 2014	7:00am - 9:00am
PlaceMakers Kapiti	Thursday, 1 May 2014	5:00pm - 7:00pm
PlaceMakers Levin	Friday, 2 May 2014	7:00am - 9:00am

Dates and times may change. Contact your local store for more information and to confirm session times.



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# Earthquake strengthening start up to guide building owners

**S**eitech is a newly-formed company offering earthquake strengthening expertise to building owners. The start-up has completed seismic strengthening projects at Britomart Precinct in Auckland, and Auckland Airport's domestic terminal.

The company's launch comes at a time when building owners are coming under pressure to ensure their properties will perform well in the event of an earthquake.

The Government recently announced new legislation that will give building owners 20 years to either strengthen their earthquake-prone buildings to a minimum 34% of the new building standard, or demolish them.

Seitech founder and director Tim Jones saw an

opportunity to provide a more comprehensive service to building owners grappling with new earthquake-strengthening responsibilities.

"Seitech specialises in the implementation of seismic strengthening solutions," Mr Jones says. "We work alongside structural engineers to assess the 'buildability' and methodology of their designs, then we manage and implement the solution for the building owner."

The Government estimates there are 15,000 to 25,000 at-risk buildings in New Zealand, and territorial authorities must have completed building assessments within the first five years of the legislation taking effect.

A publicly accessible register of earthquake-prone buildings will be established by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment.

"This level of transparency is likely to help accelerate earthquake strengthening for many buildings," Mr Jones says.

"Building owners will come under pressure from tenants and insurers to make the seismic upgrades in less than the allowable 20-year time frame."

Seitech has also established a joint venture with structural steel fabricator D&H Steel.

The latter recently formed an alliance with StarSeismic, which manufactures buckling restrained brace (BRB) systems for new and existing structures.

Seitech's new partnership enhances its capability and capacity, and allows it to offer clients a complete implementation service — fabrication, construction and seismic engineering.

## Housing company helps build successful futures

**N**ew Zealand group builder G.J. Gardner Homes is launching an exciting series of educational and development schemes that will aim to help those looking to secure a career in the construction industry.

Starting imminently, the master franchise is introducing a Future Leaders Development Programme for G.J. employees across the country. It aims to encourage team members to reach their full potential by providing a structured training programme over a two-year period.

In addition, the Rodney franchise holder for G.J. is establishing a local Rodney District scholarship to someone that is studying a relevant qualification in the

construction trade.

As well, it is offering one local person the opportunity to be professionally trained, through an apprenticeship programme.

"G.J. Gardner Homes has been the number one home builder in New Zealand for the past decade," G.J. Gardner Homes master franchise managing director Grant Porteous says.

"We recognise the overall performance of the company is directly related to the performance and skill level of not only our franchise holders, but the key individuals who make up their teams.

"By running the Future Leaders Development Programme, we aim to be able to provide opportunities to a range of people to help them in their future

careers.

"For example, those that qualify from the programme could go on to fill a senior management role within a G.J. franchise or potentially be a future franchisee themselves!"

G.J. Gardner Homes Rodney franchise owner Elaine Morley says this is an exciting time at G.J.

"We need to ensure young people are getting access to the right training required. When we left school, we didn't have to worry about being able to secure a job," Ms Morley says.

"Our young people are not as lucky. So, anything we can do to help them is really important, as it also ensures we have quality trained people coming through the ranks.

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# Bluescope Steel seeks Commission clearance for acquisition

The Commerce Commission has received an application from Bluescope Steel (NZ) Ltd (Bluescope) seeking clearance to acquire some of the assets of Pacific Steel Group's (PSG) steel production business.

Under the proposed acquisition, Bluescope would acquire PSG's rolling and wire mill manufacturing operations in New Zealand, along with its long steel distribution, marketing and sales operations.

Bluescope is a wholly owned subsidiary of Bluescope Steel Ltd, an ASX listed company. Bluescope Steel Ltd's New Zealand operations include steel production and iron sand mining.

They produce a range of steel products, including slab, hot and cold rolled coil, welded steel beams, pipes and hollow sections.

PSG is a business unit of Fletcher Steel Ltd, a wholly

owned subsidiary of Fletcher Building Ltd. In New Zealand, PSG comprises three businesses — Pacific Steel, Pacific Wire, and Fletcher Pacific Fiji.

PSG also produces a range of steel products, including billet, reinforcing bar and coil, wire, rod bar and rod coil.

When considering a proposed merger (or joint venture) or acquisition, the Commission must decide whether the competition that is lost in a market when two businesses merge is substantial.

The Commission will give clearance to a proposed merger only if it is satisfied that the merger is unlikely to have the effect of substantially lessening competition in a market.

A fact sheet explaining how the Commission assesses a merger application is available on the Commission's web site at

[www.comcom.govt.nz/merger-assessment](http://www.comcom.govt.nz/merger-assessment).

## PlaceMakers correction

An article in the February edition of *Building Today* regarding PlaceMakers' newly-built store in Whangarei was incorrect in stating the store had already opened.

The store is not open and, in fact, Kerr Construction have not long finished the profiles and were recently working on the footings. The store is due to open in the spring of 2014.

*Building Today* apologises for any inconvenience caused by the error.

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**Using non-compliant steel can take on a new meaning if something goes wrong.**

---

# Disaster.

**(noun.)** *A calamitous event, especially one occurring suddenly and causing great loss of life, damage, or business failure.*

- The implications of using non-compliant steel are potentially a disaster waiting to happen.
- Not only do you risk the safety of the structures and the occupants but if detected you could face heavy penalties which may impact on your business and reputation.
- Whether you are an engineer, certifier, specifier or builder, it's important to be confident that structures have been built correctly and comply with the Australian/New Zealand Standards and the Building Codes.
- Understanding how you can protect yourself is critical. You have the power to refuse to use non-compliant steel.
- Remember, not all steel is created equal - Don't leave steel compliance to chance.

---

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## Fire engineers celebrate Christchurch launch

**O**2 Fire and Risk celebrated the launch of their company in Christchurch

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recently at an event that was attended by many from Christchurch's construction industry, and which coincided with the International Symposium on Fire Safety Science at the University of Canterbury.

The new fire engineering consultancy is a joint venture between New Zealand's OnFire Consulting and Australia's Olsson Fire & Risk Consulting Engineers.

O2 fire and risk director Per Olsson is confident the fire safety engineers will do well, especially in Christchurch, and has relocated his family to the city from Melbourne. His wife Nicola is from Christchurch and is happy to be home.

"There are just so many great opportunities in Christchurch, and we felt it was really important to have a presence here in the city. We are really looking forward to getting underway," Mr Olsson says.

### Addressing major shortage of fire engineers

The new company hopes to address the major shortage of fire engineers not only in Christchurch but other parts of New Zealand. Mr Olsson says that recently the shortages have led to many projects being delayed.

The company has the capacity to draw not only on its sound local knowledge, but the additional capacity that partnering with a large Australian company brings.

Director Debbie Scott, originally from Christchurch, is "excited to be helping the city rebuild". Ms Scott is an independent expert for the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE), and has had considerable input into the Protection from Fire framework as part of New Zealand's new Building Code.

The company's Wellington office is led by Nick Saunders, a former building standards senior advisor at the MBIE.

Olsson Fire & Risk is one of the largest fire engineering firms in Asia Pacific, and has experience in airports, civil defence, commercial, education, fire station, healthcare, high rise, hotels, industrial, office buildings, rail tunnels, residential, retail and shopping malls.

OnFire Consulting Ltd is a boutique fire engineering consultancy that works on a variety of large and small projects throughout New Zealand and the Pacific.

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# Royal Wolf creates 'Ice Cream Factory' in a container

Leading shipping container company Royal Wolf has modified a 40 foot container into a portable ice cream factory for Auckland-based business Joy Ice Cream.

The mini ice cream manufacturing plant will be based in Auckland and supply Joy's retail-selling "Pods" which are located around the city.

There are plans for three other ice cream factory containers — known as "Hubs" — to be produced by Royal Wolf for the Australian market which will be operational in the first half of next year.

Joy Ice Cream, a company which assists young people into their own ice cream selling businesses, plans to locate more of the portable factories in other cities around the world.

In the past, Royal Wolf, which specialises in the hire, sales and modification of shipping containers, has customised containers for projects ranging from Pop-Up cafes to retail shopping malls.

Royal Wolf North Island sales manager Glen Millen says the ice cream factory is one of Royal Wolf's most ambitious and challenging projects to date.

"It was a fantastic opportunity to create a quality bespoke product for a new and exciting business with very specific requirements," Mr Millen says.

Royal Wolf worked closely with Auckland architect Frank Tonetti to ensure every component of the container factory was built strictly to specifications.

One of the biggest challenges was building multiple internal rooms in a small area where temperatures will range from -22°C in the freezer to around 20°C in the main factory room.

"That's more than a 40°C temperature variance within a 29 square metre space which is a big ask," Mr Millen says.

"And we had to construct it all within a very tight time frame to meet the client's deadline — because they wanted to start making ice cream. It's also the first bright pink container we've ever painted," he says.

Joy Ice Cream co-founder James Coddington says the container factories will ensure the quality of Joy's ice cream is properly controlled no matter where it is being sold in the world.

"We aren't just a bunch of nutty scientists," Mr



*Ice cream maker Ross McCallum — aka the "Ice Cream Wizard" — outside the portable ice cream factory.*

Coddington says.

"We want to replicate these micro factories and ship them to other parts of the world so that we have control over our product. We want people to experience the world's best ice cream no matter where they are around the world.

"It doesn't matter if it's being sold on street corners in Auckland, Sydney or New York — we know it will taste the same because we have control over the manufacturing process and we control the mix."

The mini container factories have the capacity to produce enough ice cream to supply 50 Joy Ice Cream Pods per day.

Mr Coddington says the beauty of the containers is that they can arrive in a city and start operating within a week.

Also key to the project is the fact the containers are a sustainable, long-term and highly transportable product.

Ross McCallum, the guru behind Kapiti ice cream and co-founder of Kapiti Cheese Ltd which he sold in 2003, is Joy's advisor (aka the "Ice Cream Wizard").

He says while ice cream has been made and sold in a similar way in the past, there has been nothing as sophisticated as "The Hub".

"This is a totally integrated mini ice cream plant that's highly transportable to any location in the world, while allowing us to retain control over the product. In essence, it is a mini version of an ice cream factory. We churn it in the mini factory, we add the flavour, and we pack it."

And the ice cream factories are only part of the story. Joy was started by Mr Coddington and business partner Tony Balfour, formerly general manager at Icebreaker clothing, almost two years ago, with a focus on addressing youth unemployment around the world and getting young people into their own businesses.

Or, as Mr Coddington and his team put it, "to create one new entrepreneur every single day forever".

"Nothing's really been done about youth unemployment, and we thought it would be cool to create a brand that reflects the values of youth and, at the same time, deliver to their wants and needs as well," Mr Coddington says.

# Masterspec NextGen2 a platform for the future

Construction Information Ltd, the producers of the Masterspec specification system, have developed and now released to its subscribing offices the Masterspec Nextgen2 operating platform.

This is a fully cloud-based information management and sharing tool that “not only produces up-to-date and accurate specifications, but also enables the sharing of digital information between members of the design and construction team”.

The move to digital information sharing and Building Information Modelling (BIM) in the construction industry is gaining momentum, and it has shown real benefits overseas.

A US-based HVAC contractor has used BIM information sharing to achieve a reduction in variation costs from an average of 18% to just 3%.

Universal Homes has been trialling the new NextGen2 approach and the results are already impressive.

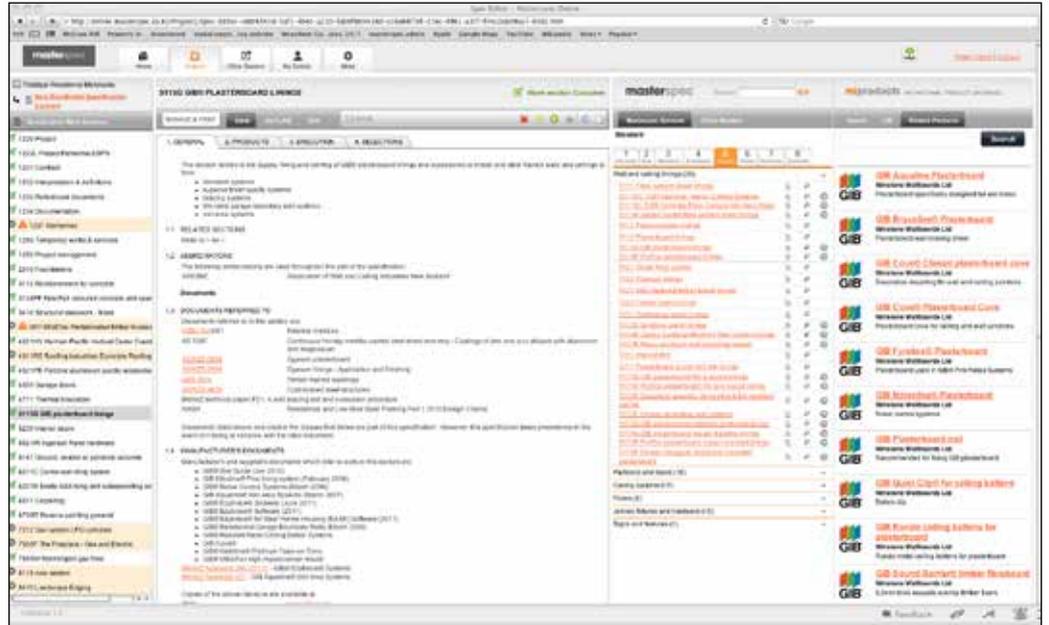
“Previously a full specification took about half a day to create,” Universal Homes’ consent administrator says.

“However, with Masterspec NextGen2 we have that down to around an hour and a half. With more than 200 specs a year that’s a huge saving for us.

“An update manager automatically flags if there have been any changes to a specification due to new Codes or Standards, and making the change is just a single click of the mouse.”

The future of construction will require the ability to share information, and the Masterspec NextGen2 system is an important and useful step in that direction.

For more information on Masterspec Nextgen2, go to [www.masterspec.co.nz](http://www.masterspec.co.nz).



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# ACRS — eliminating breaks in the 'chain of certification'

In existence since 2000 as a not-for-profit body to provide a cost effective, credible means of verifying that construction steels supplied to building sites consistently meet the requirements of engineers, specifiers, builders, building certifiers and customers, ACRS is now boosting its profile in this country . . .

**Q**uality construction projects require quality materials with demonstrated compliance. Selecting construction materials based on price alone can end up costing significantly more than using materials that are selected on the basis of quality and performance, particularly if it is determined that fault in law could be found.

Put simply, it doesn't matter how well you build if you have built in a high risk of structural failure through using unverified materials from an uncertified supplier.

Certification by the Australasian Certification Authority for Reinforcing and Structural Steels (ACRS) from the mill to the end supplier provides a simple tool to manage this risk — the supplier's ACRS certificates.

Steel reinforcement, prestressing steel and structural steel are integral parts of any building or structure. While to the casual observer, all steel may look to be created equal, in reality this is far from the case.

Whether as a result of inferior raw materials, contamination during manufacturing, incorrect or inappropriate manufacturing processes, or manufacturing to alternative Standards, there are steel reinforcing, prestressing and structural steel products which quite simply do not meet the requirements of the relevant Australian and New Zealand Standards.

Notwithstanding the potential safety issues that can result from using sub-standard construction materials, in these days of widespread litigation and strict "chain of responsibility" legislation, the use of non-compliant steels can spell disaster for engineers, certifiers, specifiers, suppliers and builders in more ways than one.

## Expert third-party steel assessment

With these issues and risks in mind, ACRS provides fully independent, non-biased, expert third-party assessment and verification of steel construction materials supplied to the construction industry, to ensure they meet Australian and New Zealand

Standards.

Quite simply, ACRS certification reduces the risk of buying and using steel which does not meet minimum requirements, and enables feedback and corrective action in case problems arise.

Major construction clients, designers and contractors worldwide recognise and even specify ACRS and its product certification scheme to confirm the technical competence of suppliers and gain assurance of consistent product quality.

ACRS is the expert, independent, third-party product certification scheme for construction steels supplied to AS/NZS Standards.

It was created in 2000 as a not-for-profit body to provide a cost effective, but credible means of verifying through direct, factory and in-market assessment, that the construction steels supplied to building sites consistently meet the requirements of engineers, specifiers, builders, building certifiers and customers.

Independent of any commercial interests, ACRS assessors, auditors and management are all experienced engineers, certifiers or metallurgists with extensive experience in steel manufacture, supply, design and construction.

ACRS provides a centralised, streamlined certification process for:

- Reinforcing bar, wire and mesh
- Prestressing bar, wire and strand
- Cold-formed steel hollow sections
- Hot-rolled steel plates, bars and sections.

ACRS currently certifies more than 150 manufacturing locations, in 15 countries around the world, and has undertaken more than 700 technical conformity assessments to AS/NZS steel Standards. These include:

- AS/NZS 4671 — Steel reinforcing materials (manufacturing and processing of materials)
- AS/NZS 4672 — Steel prestressing materials
- AS/NZS 1163 — Cold formed steel hollow sections
- AS/NZS 1594 — Hot-rolled steel flat products

- AS/NZS 3678 — Hot-rolled plates, floorplates and slabs
- AS/NZS 3679.1 — Hot-rolled bars and sections
- AS/NZS 3679.2 — Welded I sections

## Warning

Just because the steel originally came from an ACRS certified mill, does not mean the end product is "ACRS certified".

When it comes to ACRS certification, there are only ever two options, either:

- The supplier is ACRS certified and all of its materials are declared, assessed and verified to AS/NZS Standards, or
- The supplier is not ACRS certified (and therefore the onus is on the customer to verify the supplier's claims of conformity).

It is fraudulent for a supplier to claim that a product is "ACRS certified" simply because the end product used materials from an ACRS certified mill.

The full "chain" must be ACRS certified. Failure to verify that the products are from an ACRS certified supplier may result in you using non-compliant materials for which you may be held liable.

## Certificates — quick and easy web-based verification

ACRS also provides real choice. It certifies not just domestic suppliers, but also world-class overseas manufacturers, giving Australian and international customers the widest choice of products complying with Australian and New Zealand Standards.

With ACRS it's easy for your suppliers, easy for your customers and easy for yourself.

For further information about the validity of supplier certification for any materials being supplied into your project, visit the ACRS web site at [www.steelcertification.com](http://www.steelcertification.com), phone ACRS on 0061 2 9965 7216, or email [info@steelcertification.com](mailto:info@steelcertification.com).

back in time

## BT's Back in Time

Welcome to Back in Time, where we delve into our magazine archives and discover what was making news way back when . . .

### 20 years ago:

- The merger of the New Zealand Master Builders Federation and the Housing Industry Authority (HIA) brought together the two major organisations representing New Zealand's construction industry.

The merger provided for the HIA to become the Housing Industry Council, operating under the umbrella of the Federation.

Federation president Frank Hart said the HIA and the Federation had become increasingly active in many of the same areas. "It has now reached the point where, for a country the size of New Zealand, this overlapping of interest makes it logical to join forces," he said.

### 15 years ago:

- The Building Industry Authority (BIA) launched the country's only legally recognised building product certification under the brand name Codemark.

BIA chairman Sir George Chapman said Codemark would become the ultimate accolade for any building product, material or system in New Zealand.

Codemark was the seal of approval for BIA accreditation of building products. BIA accreditation was binding on all territorial authorities and building certifiers. Its legal standing is what set it apart from an appraisal.

### 10 years ago:

- A report by construction analysts BIS Shrapnel predicted the total value of building authorised in the New Zealand construction industry to grow by 9% in the 2004-05 financial year.

The report said the primary driver of overall growth was the strong underlying demand for dwellings in the residential sector.

This demand originated from the historically high intakes of annual net long-term and permanent migration into New Zealand since 2001-02.

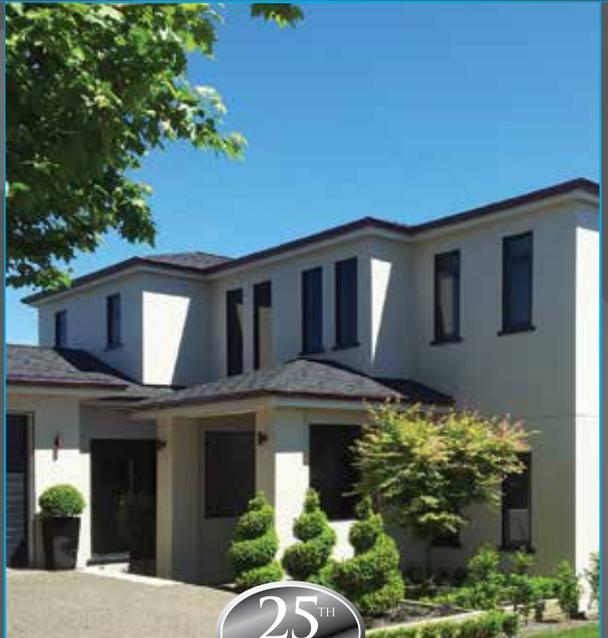
### 5 years ago:

- The Government should plan ahead and obtain advance design and environmental approvals for future infrastructure projects, according to the Association of Consulting Engineers New Zealand (ACENZ).

The organisation welcomed the Government's multi-million dollar package of infrastructure spending to help stimulate the economy, with many projects being fast-tracked.

However, ACENZ president Brent Meekan said New Zealand should follow the example of a number of European governments which ensure they have a supply of approved "shovel-ready" projects.

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## Fall protection designed with builders in mind

**D**esigned by builders with builders' safety in mind, Chippy Catcher is a strong knitted polyethylene fabric which is fixed to the top of any residential wall frame.

Once spread across the top of the wall frames, the fabric is pulled tight and stapled down. The top plate is then fixed into position and the building progress can then proceed as normal.

Chippy Catcher is ideally suited for under any roof areas where trusses are fitted, or where the builder needs to work from above rather than from underneath.

Tested and certified to AS/NZ4389:1996 Safety Mesh standard, the product is designed to catch a falling person from above wall height, and stop them from hitting the floor below. It can be used on timber or steel framed buildings alike, although slightly different fixing methods are required.

Chippy Catcher protects those who work above wall height from landing on the floor, should they fall. The system has also been designed so it doesn't impede on traditional building methods or timing, and can be simply installed between standing of the wall frames and the erection of trusses.

Another advantage is the ability to re-use any large undamaged "cut-outs" once fall-through protection is no longer required — simply cut out the larger rooms with a sharp knife and save these larger pieces for the next building job.

It also offers the added advantage of catching overhead debris and falling tools

that would ordinarily fall onto the floor below and possibly injure those below on the way down.

It is very easy to install, with full comprehensive instructions provided with each order. Chippy Catcher is extremely strong, carries a seven-year UV rating, and is fully recyclable.

The product was developed by Craig Lipscombe, a qualified builder who, after 14 years on the tools, traded his apron in on a desk job running a design and build business.

He was concerned for his building staff always being at risk of falling and was unhappy with other systems on the market, or with the certified installers to fit them — who never seemed to turn up when they were needed.

He offers an obligation-free quote where builders can email their house plans and receive a proposed layout with an associated cost delivered to their location of choice within 12 hours — and any orders made will be dispatched within 24 hours.

"Once builders have used the Chippy Catcher on a couple of houses, they will then be able to work out where they can re-use previous cut-outs themselves, and place a new order for the remainder," he says.

Chippy Catcher is currently available in nine sizes — 8x7m, 8x10m, 8x12m, 8x14m, 8x16m, 12x10m, 12x14m, 12x16m and 12x18m, and comes in easy to handle packs of approximately 1.1 metres square.

To purchase, either ask for it by name at your preferred building supplier, phone 0800 30 40 30, or email your plans to [info@chippycatcher.co.nz](mailto:info@chippycatcher.co.nz). Otherwise, visit [www.chippycatcher.co.nz](http://www.chippycatcher.co.nz) for more information.

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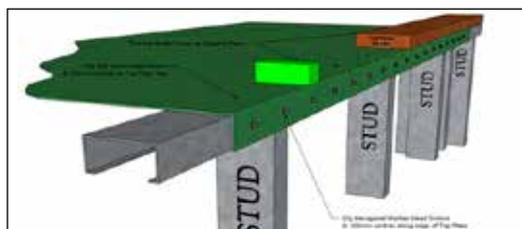
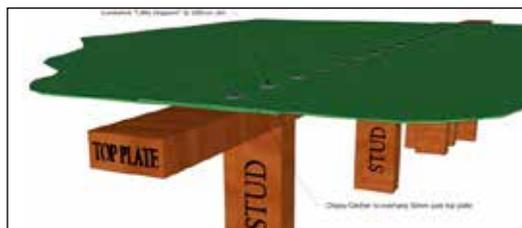
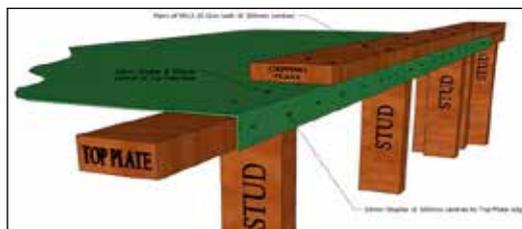
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# Flexible tape features high grade bitumen

**W**atertight is a flexible flashing tape used around framed joinery openings as a secondary weather-resistant barrier.

It is designed to prevent water penetration around window and door openings at framing junctions, and to keep any water that gets past the cladding or through the joinery from coming into direct contact with the framing to which Watertight has been applied.

Techno Insulation, the company that imports and distributes the tape, says Watertight offers builders a tape made with the best raw materials, but still at an affordable price.

It is a multi-layered 1.5mm-thick tape that offers



improved nail sealing ability. The top layer is pure aluminium, while the second layer is made of high-strength polyethylene raffia. The third layer is a self-adhesive bitumen and the last layer is made of siliconised polyethylene.

The bitumen in the tape has been designed for New Zealand climatic conditions, with an installation temperature range between 5°C and 50°C," Techno Insulation director Sasha Dontschenko says.

"In other words, if the incorrect type of bitumen is used — for example, if it is formulated for the temperature range of a tropical climate — then it may crack during installation in the South Island winter.

"Bitumen has proven to be the most effective barrier against water penetration. Construction in New Zealand requires reliable products that will last longer, save energy and give peace of mind to builders and home owners.

"Watertight has a service life as long as the cladding," Mr Dontschenko says.

# Geogrid raft foundation ideal for seismic protection



**T**he use of a Geogrid reinforced aggregate raft foundation is a well-known and respected method of ground improvement in seismic events, and has been identified by the Department of Building and Housing as one of the suggested methods for use in TC3 areas.

This method is currently used by engineers in the Christchurch rebuild and many other locations around New Zealand in residential and commercial applications.

Cirtex offers Geogrids for TC2 and TC3 foundations with added benefits for the design engineer.

The series of earthquakes in Christchurch has once again proved the benefit of Geogrid reinforced structures in seismic engineering. The combination of a SecuGrid Geogrid with higher tensile modulus (stiffness) and a granular material provides a composite

mechanically-reinforced foundation layer.

The TC2 and TC3 guidance document recognises the Geogrid reinforced raft foundation as an option available to the design engineer, and gives guidance for the use of Geogrids in foundation applications.

Triaxial or radial stiffness can be described as the tensile modulus of the Geogrid in three or more directions or, more importantly, at its weakest point. Cirtex offers the SecuGrid range of Geogrids where triaxial or radial stiffness is required, which demonstrate excellent radial stiffness, in most cases significantly better than other options.

In addition to proven and documented bearing capacity improvement and composite mechanically-stabilising performance, SecuGrid offers the added benefit of high strength at low elongation, and can therefore be considered for resisting lateral spread, a key function

for some sites.

This removes the requirement for multiple grid types on one site, and time-consuming cross layering of narrow uniaxial grids.

SecuGrid is very easy to install due to its low memory (recoil effect), and because it comes in 4.75m wide rolls, reducing on-site wastage and overlap.

Cirtex is able to assist in many Geosynthetic applications, including reinforced soil walls, pavements and embankments, subsoil drainage filtration, slope stability, earth anchoring, landfill and environmental barrier systems, stormwater management systems, erosion and sediment control, coastal protection, surfacing reinforcement, dewatering and landscape edging.

Contact Cirtex to discuss any Geosynthetic challenges you may have on 0800 247 839 or visit [www.cirtex.co.nz](http://www.cirtex.co.nz).

# BCITO scholarships and grants available in 2014

**A**s part of the BCITO's commitment to those in the construction industry — including their training, professional development and career success — the BCITO presents its scholarship and funding initiatives for 2014, targeting trainees, graduates and employers.

Whether you're a school leaver or a qualified tradesperson, the Gateway Scholarship and Employer Development Grant might just be your path to quality training, improved skills and recognised qualifications.

So what are you waiting for?

## Gateway to BCITO apprenticeship

The BCITO is offering five Gateway Scholarships to apprentices who are just starting out in the industry.

The scholarship is to cover the full cost of the apprentice's chosen BCITO programme and associated BCITO resource material.

For more info and to apply, visit [www.bcito.org.nz/apprentices/gateway-scholarships](http://www.bcito.org.nz/apprentices/gateway-scholarships), or talk to your training advisor.

## Employer Development Grant

Supporting employers in running successful, lasting businesses is just part of the BCITO's commitment to the industry.

Ongoing training and professional development have been proven to increase workplace productivity, staff retention and on-site success, ultimately improving a business' bottom line.

The Employer Development Grant is an initiative aimed at upskilling construction professionals who are

already working in the industry. Fifteen grants are available in 2014 for employers of current BCITO trainees.

Applications are open to all employers of BCITO apprentices, including supervisors/managers of an employing company.

Grants can be used to pay course fees of study programmes — up to a maximum of \$3000 — for any training or development assistance.

Employers interested in applying for a grant can access the application pack at [www.bcito.org.nz/employers-and-industry/employers/employer-development-grants](http://www.bcito.org.nz/employers-and-industry/employers/employer-development-grants).

**• If you have any questions or need any further information about scholarships and grants, or anything else BCITO-related, phone the BCITO on 0800 422 486.**

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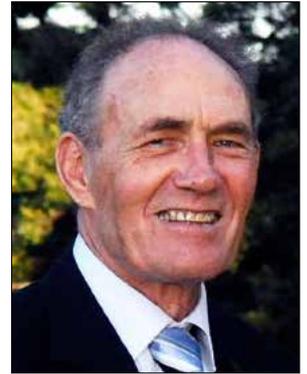
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# Bad acting

Architect **Don Bunting** says much heartache and frustration is caused by the liberal use of the word “reasonably” in the Building Act.



**T**he latest attempt to provide a more robust regulatory framework for the construction industry is the Building Amendment Act 2013.

The amendment is proposed as a comprehensive review of the Building Act 2004 to improve the construction sector, ensuring that it delivers good quality, affordable homes and buildings, and contributes to a prosperous economy.

Some changes take immediate effect — in particular, certain terms and definitions and higher penalties for non-complying work — while others will be introduced progressively during 2014.

Later changes include mandatory written contracts for work over a certain value, new remedies for breaches of implied warranties, and a 12-month defect repair period.

All these changes are necessary, but still fail to address the central weaknesses in our current construction legislation. At the core is the lack of effective management and control by the MBIE over some 70 individual Building Consent Authorities (BCAs).

There has been consideration given to a single national building consent bureau as part of the planned, but not yet implemented, online consenting project. What is proposed in these draft proposals should improve the current slow, unevenly implemented and very expensive process.

However, both the online consenting system and its associated central bureau, intended to act as a first filter for building consent applications, is some way off. In the meantime, the industry is being ill-served by the current system.

At the heart of dissatisfaction by designers and contractors/developers is Building Act clause 45 (c). This relates to an application for a building consent and states: “(the application must) contain or be accompanied by any other information that the building consent authority reasonably requires”.

The word “reasonably” is scattered liberally throughout the Building Act, and in this particular instance is the cause of much heartache and frustration. Leaving it to individual BCAs and individual inspectors, many with only in-service training, to decide what is reasonable, is just plain dumb.

Let’s consider the downstream effects of this one little word. A document much in demand by BCAs is what is known as a producer statement. This, when properly and appropriately used, is an effective way to ensure that designers and installers have clearly grasped and accepted their responsibility to ensure that their design or their installation meets the performance requirements of the Building Code.

However, search the current Building Act and you fail to find even a single mention of a producer statement. So, essentially, this document has no statutory authority and is effectively left to the whim of individual BCAs to decide what it should contain. Again, dumb.

And getting even dumber, if that were possible, is that another useful and commonly used supporting document, a BRANZ Appraisal, also has no statutory standing. Why not?

While I am sure there are other reasons, the core one is that a BRANZ Appraisal supports a branded product. And to the bureaucratic mind, mentioning a branded product versus using an often inaccurate generic description of a product type, is an anathema.

My personal view on acceptable solutions is essentially a negative one. The key reason is that acceptable solutions are generic and not branded. A more important reason is that acceptable solutions are simplistic “cook book” attempts to meet the performance requirements of the Building Code clauses and sub-clauses.

I remember sharing the occasional Scotch with Professor Helen Tippet, who chaired the original committee on creating a performance-based Building Act and Code, and discussing the rationale behind providing such fixed solutions.

Her view was that acceptable solutions and, to a lesser extent, verification methods, were there to help the bottom feeders; those without the ability and knowledge to use and take advantage of a performance-based approach to compliance. Unfortunately, they have now become the benchmark.

While I sympathise with, and understand why BCA inspectors should take this view, I fail to understand why any self-respecting professional should feel that a standard generic “cook book” is the best approach for their projects.

Bluntly, E2/AS1 is no panacea to preventing leaky

buildings and I’m not convinced it hasn’t caused a few.

In 2001 a proposal was put to the then Building Industry Authority to introduce branded acceptable solutions, based on a series of “acceptable principles” prepared and promulgated by the Government. In the rush to find who to blame for leaky building problems the suggestion was quietly shelved.

However, the concept of encouraging product suppliers and manufacturers to face up to their responsibility and show how their products meet the performance requirements of the building code is back on the agenda.

As set out in the Building Amendment Act 2013: 14G (2) A product manufacturer or supplier is responsible for ensuring that the product will, if installed in accordance with the technical data, plans, specifications and advice prescribed by the manufacturer, comply with the relevant provisions of the building code.

There have been a number of proposals to provide manufacturers and suppliers with a straightforward and affordable way to meet this responsibility, below the level of obtaining a Codemark or BRANZ Appraisal. That is, a way for manufacturers and suppliers to show how their products meet the performance requirements of the building code, within a stated scope of use.

The key to the success of such an initiative is to find a way for manufacturers to do this — preferably using a structured, online tool. But more importantly, such a performance statement must meet the needs of those approving building consents — essentially, to be satisfied that the product complies “on reasonable grounds”.

The recently reported case in Auckland where inappropriate or non-complying fire safety and fire stopping products were being discovered in completed buildings highlights the need for a system of clear, unequivocal performance statements by product manufacturers and suppliers.

Coupled with a national database of construction products, those faced with signing off on compliance will finally have the tools they need to do their job.

# Plan to secure your future

Terry Sage of Trades Coaching New Zealand says, however, that change must come from within.

**B**y the time you read this almost a quarter of the year has already gone — that's 25%, 13 weeks out of 52 (just trying to get your attention here). And if you're like me, you are still meeting people who ask "how was your Christmas?".

On one hand it is long forgotten, but on the other it only seems like yesterday we were drinking the screwdrivers in the sun.

The point I am trying to make is if you are not careful you will be drinking on the beach again celebrating Christmas 2014 and, hey, nothing has changed. There is that dear old saying that goes, "If you do what you've always done, you'll get what you've always got".

For some of you the "same old" is just what you desire, and there is nothing wrong with that. But for most, you either want to change or really need to (for some they are not aware of this need).

Let me tell you of a chap I met recently, a tradesman for the past 30 something years (straight out of school).

He works in the sub-trades, there are only four of them operating in a town of 75,000 people, he's scared to employ anybody, has got plenty of work, isn't making

a fortune, is doing everything himself, his wife helps out a little but has a full time job and kids to look after, he works 7am to 6pm six days a week, and comes home at night, has dinner and then hits the paperwork. Sound familiar?

His first question to me was "I can't see any future. Another 10 years and I will be retiring. I am so tired of the work hours and the monotony, but I don't know of anything else I can do. Where did I go wrong?"

The answer is he hasn't done anything wrong — he's just done what he knew. If there is any criticism to be had it could be that he should have recognised that a change was needed earlier.

To be fair though, when you are head down bum in the air, and up to your armpits just trying to keep the business going and money coming in, considering any type of change is far from the front global mass of reasoning in an overcrowded brain.

Is our man here beyond help? Of course not. He has 13 years left before retiring and that's not a given finish line — he could still have an earning capacity far beyond 65 if the company is structured correctly. On this point, make sure you read next month's *Building Today* when I will talk more about this.

Our man here has no savings, no investments, a mortgage, limited insurances, good health, and has to find a way of living for 20-plus years after he retires — a really scary prospect and one I come across regularly.

## So what are we going to do for our long-suffering tradesman?

So what are we going to do for our long-suffering tradesman? First up, we are going to give him hope by putting a plan in place, then we are going to systemise the way he does business to maximise his time.

We'll look at his charge out structure and invoicing method (no longer will invoices be sent out months after the job's finished). His cash flow will improve, his creditors will be paid on time and his stress levels will come down.

He will no longer have to sit up until midnight doing quotes, invoices and GST. We are looking at alternative marketing ideas and new unique revenue streams for that dreaded retirement period we all crave.

It all sounds so easy scribbling it down on paper and, to be honest, it is. Because for a Trades Coaching New Zealand coach it's what we do every day for our clients. Is it easy for our tradesman? No, it takes a leap of faith and a complete attitude change.

My first conversation lasted more than two hours with our man. He started off with a non-smiling and a slightly "whatever" attitude, but by the end there was a twinkle in his eye as he lovingly caressed his favourite pipe wrench — and that's not what he calls his wife by the way. However, she was smiling too as she could see there was hope.

So don't wait any longer to explore the alternatives. Call Trades Coaching New Zealand now on 09 945 4880.



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**Trades Coaching New Zealand**  
THE BUSINESS SIDE OF CONSTRUCTION

# The colossus of Leshan

Dr Kerry Rodgers undergoes a spiritual experience.



**W**hile watching a documentary called *Rediscovering the Yangtze*, I found — as a geologist in a former incarnation — the geomorphology mind blowing.

There was much I had never seen before. But that experience was eclipsed by the superb aerial footage taken in and around the Leshan Buddha.

I had long been vaguely aware of this colossus, but seeing its monumental size and superb detail in close-up shots left me pondering how on earth the Chinese managed to construct it some 1200 years ago. It shows what the human species is capable of given the right motivation.

And it all started back in 713 AD.

A monk named Haitong had the notion of carving a Buddha in the precipitous cliffs at the triple junction of the Minjiang, Dadu and Qingyi rivers in southern Sichuan province.

This was an important waterway but the extreme turbulence of the waters at this complex confluence proved a bane to shipping. Haitong was convinced Buddha could calm the torrent.

The devout monk was equally sure a small Buddha just wouldn't do the trick. So he set about constructing the largest stone Buddha ever. Since the cliffs were some 80 metres high at the site, it seemed appropriate to fill them to their full elevation with a sculpture of the Enlightened One.

Not only would the resulting seated figure be complete in all details, but it had to appear perfectly proportioned when viewed from the water.

Haitong had craftsmen make a model that he used to determine the best placement of the main event. When the sheer sandstone cliff was chosen it was quickly apparent that construction was going to require considerable manpower and vast material resources.

However, the Tang Dynasty ruler at the time must have considered it worthwhile as resources were soon provided. Thousands of workers were marshalled to begin rough-shaping the site. Construction ran for several years and, inevitably, costs mounted.

When court auditors moved in, it seemed unlikely that funding for the project would continue. In protest, Haitong is alleged to have gouged out his eyes. Following his death, construction ceased.

Seventy years down the track the local military governor decided to restart the venture, agreeing to provide the necessary sponsorship. Construction was recommenced and finally completed in 803 AD.

The results speak for themselves. Buddha is 71 metres high, and his body engineered to fully drain water after rain.

His head is 10 metres across, with a nose 5.6 metres long and eyes 3.3 metres wide. Those exquisitely detailed ears are created in wood.

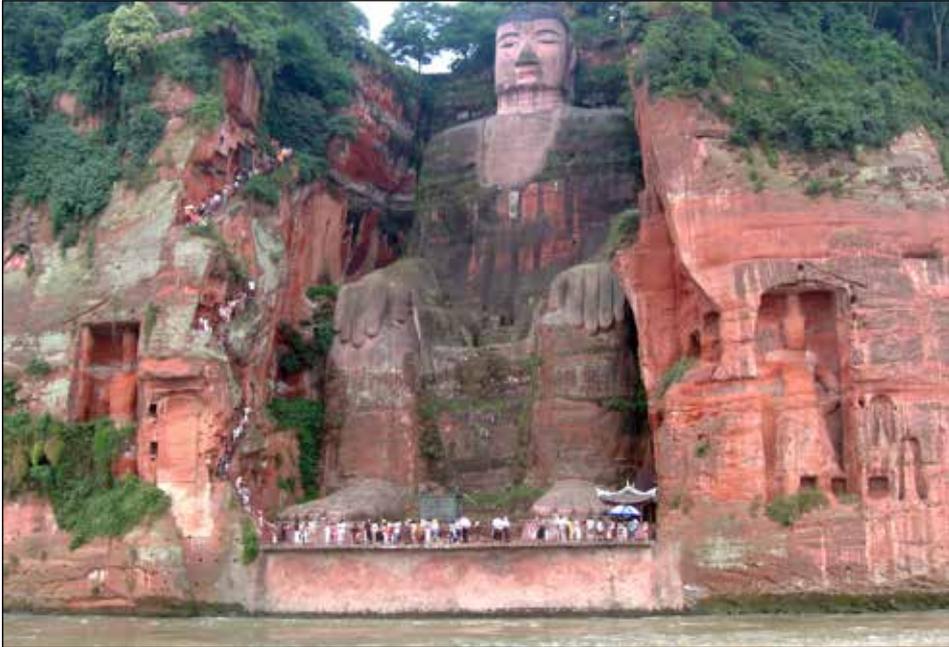
His shoulder width is 28 metres, fingers average 8.3 metres, and each foot is 8.5 metres long and complete with toenails. His hair consists of 1021 individual

strands that appear as curly bumps on his head.

The massive construction saw most of the excavated stone dumped in the river.

The volume involved was such that it substantially altered the flow pattern of the rivers, making them safe for shipping. Make of that what you will.

Today it is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.



Leshan Buddha

Image Ariel Steiner, Wikipedia Commons



Coiled hair locks and a wooden ear. Image: Wikipedia Commons



View from below.

Image: Wikipedia Commons

# New Court of Appeal decision — Blain v Evan Jones Construction Ltd

Timothy Bates of Auckland law firm Legal Vision asks if a head contractor owes a duty of care to the council when undertaking commercial construction contracts.



The fact surrounding this case were as follows:

- The Greymouth District Council entered into a construction contract whereby Evan Jones Construction Ltd (EJC) agreed to construct an aquatic centre for the council.
- The council also entered into a design and contract administration contract with LHT Design Ltd (LHT) in respect of the construction of the aquatic centre. LHT, in turn, engaged Mr Blain and Kevin O'Connor & Associates Ltd (KAL) to independently review parts of the design work for the aquatic centre.
- The essential problem with the centre related to the

deflection levels contravening the building code, and the use of untreated LVL rafters which had a negative consequence for its structural integrity. Corrosion of the galvanised steel nails was evident.

The council sued LHT in contract, negligence and under the Fair Trading Act 1986. It sued Mr Blain and KAL in tort and under the Fair Trading Act. It also sued Carter Holt Harvey Ltd (CHH) for negligent misstatement as regards the instruction relating to the installation and use of the LVL beams, as well as under the Fair Trading Act.

Significantly, no claim was brought as against the EJC by the council despite it being the party it directly contracted with to construct the aquatic centre. It is not clear from the judgment why this was.

LHT, CHH and Mr Blain/KAL brought third party claims as against EJC based upon the fact that it, along with them, owed a duty of care to the council, which made it a joint tortfeasor. They sought a contribution from EJC in the event liability was established as against them.

In the High Court, Associate Judge Mathews ruled the law does not recognise a cause of action in negligence against a builder of a commercial building.

He found that the existence of the construction contract as between council and EJC was inconsistent with a duty of care being owed by EJC to the council in tort.

He also found that the disputes procedure set out in the Construction Contracts Act 2002 was consistent with the fact that all obligations as between EJC and the council were exclusively governed by the contract.

This was only an interlocutory proceeding so it was not necessary for the court to decide finally whether, in fact, in this instance a duty of care was owed by EJC to the council. The question for it to decide was whether the claim that a duty of care was owed by EJC to the council was so clearly untenable that it could not succeed.

The Court of Appeal considered the following issues were at stake:

a) Is it arguable that the law recognises a cause of action in negligence against the builder of a

commercial building?

b) Is it arguable that the terms of the contract between the council and EJC are consistent with EJC owing a duty of care in tort to the council?

c) Is the Construction Contracts Act relevant to the existence of a duty of care in tort owed by EJC to the council?

The Court of Appeal considered the law on whether a duty of care is owed in respect of commercial construction contracts, as being in an unsettled state. It also saw similarities between the leaky school cases and this claim, which it considered not a strictly commercial situation.

The authority of Spencer on Byron as regards a duty of care being owed by the council to a commercial property owner in respect of the issuance of a Code Compliance Certificate also gave some support to a duty of care being recognised in this instance.

The court concluded it was at least arguable that a duty of care was owed by EJC to the council.

The Court of Appeal also found that it would not be inconsistent with the strict terms of the contract for a duty of care to be owed via tort in this instance, and that, potentially, this duty of care could co-exist with the contractual duties, without unduly extending the liability of EJC.

It was also decided that the dispute mechanism set out in the Construction Contracts Act 2002 had no relevance in assessing whether a duty of care may co-exist with the contractual obligations, as between EJC and the council.

The third party claims were reinstated by the Court of Appeal having been previously struck out by the High Court.

This decision is a further example of the court's willingness to apply the tortious duty of care to commercial situations.

**Note:** This article is not intended to be legal advice (nor a substitute for legal advice). No responsibility or liability is accepted by Legal Vision or *Building Today* to anyone who relies upon the information contained in this article.

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**Principal: Timothy Bates LLB (Hons)**

DOI: 09 379 9668 ext: 1 | F: 09 379 9670  
tim@legalvision.co.nz www.legalvision.co.nz  
PO Box 147423 | Ponsonby 1144 | Auckland  
Unit 63 210-218 Victoria Street West | Central Auckland 1010

# Building Consents Information

For All Authorisations, January 2014

Dwellings	\$632,923,000
Domestic Outbuildings	\$8,826,000
<b>Total Residential</b>	<b>\$641,749,000</b>
Non-residential	\$288,581,000
<b>Total All Buildings</b>	<b>\$930,330,000</b>
Non-building Construction	\$21,117,000
<b>Total Authorisations</b>	<b>\$951,446,000</b>

## Number of new dwellings consented

	Jan 2014	Dec 2013	Jan 2013	Jan 2014	Dec 2013	Jan 2013	
Far North District	16	19	7	Horowhenua District	4	10	3
Whangarei District	37	27	36	Kapiti Coast District	33	29	7
Kaipara District	9	10	12	Porirua City	4	8	13
Rodney District	85	56	100	Upper Hutt City	10	10	21
North Shore City	38	96	30	Lower Hutt City	14	15	9
Waitakere City	54	88	52	Wellington City	61	29	24
Auckland City	135	215	83	Masteron District	1	7	9
Manukau City	62	179	32	Carterton District	3	6	6
Papakura District	37	54	51	South Wairarapa District	16	2	3
Franklin District	35	29	33	Tasman District	16	19	21
Thames-Coromandel District	10	15	8	Nelson City	24	14	23
Hauraki District	1	3	0	Marlborough District	14	18	7
Waikato District	23	28	20	Kaikoura District	1	2	4
Matamata-Piako District	4	8	7	Buller District	2	7	1
Hamilton City	47	83	29	Grey District	8	1	0
Waipa District	24	33	21	Westland District	1	9	5
Otorohanga District	2	1	1	Hurunui District	14	3	14
South Waikato District	1	3	1	Waimakariri District	81	85	103
Waitomo District	3	1	2	Christchurch City	288	345	152
Taupo District	9	16	6	Selwyn District	92	96	58
Western Bay of Plenty District	16	23	25	Ashburton District	17	12	20
Tauranga City	70	55	54	Timaru District	22	23	14
Rotorua District	6	6	8	Mackenzie District	4	7	9
Whakatane District	7	2	1	Waimate District	1	6	2
Kawerau District	0	0	0	Chatham Islands Territory	0	0	0
Opotiki District	1	0	0	Waitaki District	2	7	6
Gisborne District	4	9	2	Central Otago District	10	17	10
Wairoa District	1	1	3	Queenstown-Lakes District	50	39	36
Hastings District	17	26	11	Dunedin City	15	25	12
Napier City	8	14	9	Clutha District	9	2	1
Central Hawke's Bay District	2	3	3	Southland District	7	6	4
New Plymouth District	26	25	28	Gore District	0	3	0
Stratford District	0	1	1	Invercargill City	10	5	4
South Taranaki District	8	9	7	Area Outside TA	0	0	0
Ruapehu District	3	3	1				
Wanganui District	7	5	1	<b>Total</b>	<b>1640</b>	<b>2035</b>	<b>1312</b>
Rangitikei District	1	0	0				
Manawatu District	4	8	14				
Palmerston North City	6	14	12				
Tararua District	2	0	0				

- Based on 2006 census areas
- Each dwelling unit in a housing project is counted separately
- Figures in these tables may differ from published statistics

Source: Statistics New Zealand

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