

### **Licensing provisions applicable to plumbing and drainage work only**

The Department is frequently asked to clarify the extent of work that must be performed by a licensed plumber or drainer under the *Sewerage and Water Supply Act 1949*. For example, does a person who installs sewers or water mains, including the property service and the local government's water meter, need to be licensed.

Section 15 of the Act defines the scope of the various licences that may be issued under the Act. A licence entitles the person to perform either plumbing work or drainage work governed by the Laws. Under the Laws plumbing work is defined as "water plumbing work" or "sanitary plumbing work". Drainage work is 'sanitary drainage work'. This work is usually contained within premises and does not include work on sewers or water mains.

Section 16 requires a person who performs work covered by a particular licence category to be licensed for that category. The emphasis being on the person possessing the appropriate licence that entitles the person to perform the work. For example, a person must have a plumbers licence to undertake plumbing work.

There is no licence category for performing 'sewerage system work' or 'water supply system work'. This work is defined in the Laws as the work on utility infrastructure. Therefore a person who installs infrastructure does not need a licence under the *Sewerage and Water Supply Act 1949*. However, the person performing the work must comply with the relevant standards/guidelines for the installation of local government utility infrastructure.

As the licensing provisions in the Act cover only plumbing and drainage work only persons who perform plumbing and drainage work need to be licensed.

### **The relevant definitions in the Standard Water Supply Law are –**

**'water plumbing work'** – includes installing, changing, extending, disconnecting, taking away, repairing and maintaining water plumbing, including hot water plumbing.

**'water plumbing'** – means apparatus, fittings, and pipes for carrying water within premises.



**‘water supply system work’** – includes the building, change, extension, repair and maintenance of a water supply system.

**‘water supply system’** – means infrastructure used to reticulate and supply water and consisting of water mains, *property services* and valves, pumps, etc.

**‘property service’** – means a short length of pipe installed for connecting premises to a water main.

The extent of the property service is clarified in AS/NZS 3500.1.2, where the property service is shown as including the water meter<sup>1</sup>.

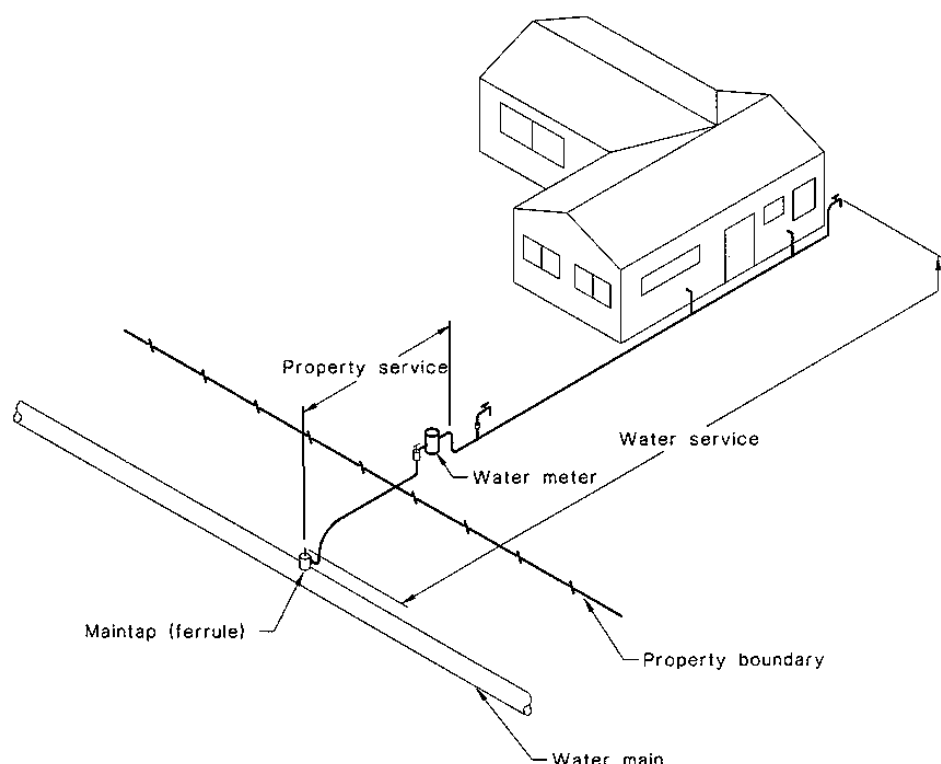


Figure 2.1: AS/NZS 3500.1.2:1998

The relevant definitions in the Standard Sewerage Law are -

**‘sanitary plumbing work’** – installing, changing, extending, disconnecting, taking away, repairing and maintaining sanitary plumbing.

**‘sanitary plumbing’** – means apparatus, fittings, fixtures and pipes that carry sewage to a sanitary drain.

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<sup>1</sup> A local government’s water meter is the meter used by it to measure, and charge for, water supplied to premises. This is usually the single meter installed in the property service, but may be other meters installed elsewhere in premises or in a premises group if the individual occupants are charged directly by the local government for the water they use. Any other meters, including those owned by a body corporate to apportion bulk water to individual lot owners are part of the water plumbing and must be installed by a licensed plumber.

**‘sanitary drainage work’** - installing, changing, extending, disconnecting, taking away, repairing and maintaining sanitary drainage.

**‘sanitary drainage’** – means apparatus, fittings and pipes for collecting and carrying discharges from sanitary plumbing or from fixture directly connected to a sanitary drain, to a *sewerage system* or on-site sewerage facility.

**‘sewerage system’** – means infrastructure used to receive, transport and treat sewage or effluent, and consisting of sewers, access chambers, etc.

### **Effect of proposed future changes to the Sewerage and Water Supply Act**

The Department of Natural Resources is proposing to transfer the infrastructure provisions currently in the Sewerage and Water Supply Act and the Laws to new water industry legislation. Consequential amendments to the Act to remove all of the infrastructure provisions from the Act and the Laws will take effect when the proposed new legislation commences.

From that time, the Act will regulate only on-site plumbing and drainage work and it will be clear that the licensing provisions apply only to plumbing and drainage work.