

Building newsflash number 401

Implementing stage one of the swimming pool safety improvement strategy and clarifying the scope of a drainer's licence

Purpose

To advise of the commencement of stage one of the government's swimming pool safety improvement strategy and of amendments to the Plumbing and Drainage Regulation 2003 (PDR) to allow licensed drainers to install an onsite sewerage facility with a license endorsement.

Background

Swimming pool safety improvement strategy

On 14 December 2008, the Honourable Anna Bligh MP, Premier and Minister for the Arts announced the most comprehensive review of Queensland's pool safety laws in nearly 20 years. As part of the review, an expert committee developed a report to the Queensland Government setting out 23 recommendations for improving swimming pool safety.

A swimming pool safety improvement strategy will be implemented in two stages to allow industry and pool owners time to adjust to the changes. Stage one will commence on 1 December 2009 and includes:

- simplification of pool fencing laws to the latest pool fencing standards
- provisions to allow temporary fencing for pools under construction
- ensuring all new swimming pools undergo mandatory final inspections
- CPR signage that meets current best practice.

On 22 September 2009, [newsflash 391](#) sought feedback on the draft Queensland Development Code (QDC) Mandatory Part (MP) 3.4—Swimming pool barriers which was made available on the Department of Infrastructure and Planning [website](#). Further information on the draft code was also provided on 5 November 2009 in [newsflash 396](#).

Removal of endorsement for the installation of onsite sewerage facility

After stakeholders raised concerns about an increasing number of onsite sewerage facilities which were not operating properly due to poor installation and maintenance practices, the PDR was amended to clarify the licensing requirements for this work. From 1 January 2008, the *Plumbing and Drainage Act 2002* was amended to require all onsite sewerage work to be undertaken by a person holding a drainers licence. The PDR then required a licensed drainer to hold an endorsement for the installation and maintenance of onsite sewerage facilities.

Issues

Swimming pool safety improvement strategy

Amendments to the Building Regulation 2006 will apply from 1 December 2009 to:

- give effect to a new part of the QDC—MP 3.4
- allow the use of temporary pool fencing, with set inspection requirements and time limits
- require mandatory follow-up inspections for new swimming pools within a set time frame after the date of the building development approval
- amend cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) signage requirements for new pools
- amend miscellaneous provisions relating to swimming pools.

QDC MP 3.4 is available at on the department's [website](#).

Removal of endorsement for the installation of onsite sewerage facility

After further consultation with installers of septic tanks and wastewater treatment plants and local governments, it has been determined that the endorsement for installation work is not



required for licensed drainers. A person installing onsite sewerage facilities will only require a provisional drainer or a drainer's licence. The amendment to schedule 3 of the PDR will apply from 20 November 2009 and will remove the requirement for a licensed drainer to hold the endorsement for installation work in this context. However, an endorsement will still be required for the maintenance of on site sewerage facilities.

Information sessions

Newsflashes [395](#) and [399](#) advised stakeholders of free information sessions being conducted around the state, including an additional session being conducted at Forest Lake. Please note that these information sessions will not cover the amendment to the PDR.

Contact for further information

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