

Building newsflash number 404

Regulations for electricity sub-metering and amendments for air-conditioners and alternative water sources

Purpose

To advise amendments for electricity sub-metering and minor changes to the requirements for air-conditioner standards and use of alternative water sources in commercial buildings commence on 1 January 2010.

Background

The Queensland Government's Cleaner Greener Buildings policy proposed setting requirements for electricity sub-metering in new multi-unit residential and office buildings by the end of 2009.

Since 1 September 2009, [Queensland Development Code \(QDC\) Mandatory Part \(MP\) 4.1—Sustainable buildings](#) has included requirements for air-conditioners with a cooling capacity of up to 65 kW that are installed in houses, townhouses and units (class 1 and 2 buildings) to meet a minimum tested average Energy Efficiency Ratio (EER) of 2.9. Also, the Electricity Regulation 2006 has banned the sale of air-conditioners with an EER of less than 2.9 from 1 September to complement the installation ban.

From 1 January 2008, [QDC MP 4.3—Alternative water sources—commercial buildings](#) required the use of alternative water sources in commercial buildings (classes 3 to 9 and class 10 buildings associated with or ancillary to those buildings). The code specified that water requiring treatment for use on site should not be stored for longer than 24 hours.

Legislation

Building Regulation 2006

Electricity sub-metering

From 1 January 2010, electricity sub-meters will be required to be installed for each sole occupancy unit in new class 2 (units) and 5 (office) buildings. The sub-meters must be labelled appropriately and located in a position so that meters are able to be easily and safely read and maintained. Meters will allow users to be aware of their tenancy's energy use and it will allow energy costs to be shared based on use rather than floor areas or lot entitlements. These new requirements are regulated through [QDC MP 4.1](#) and they will complement and be additional to any changes made to the Building Code of Australia 2010 version relating to electricity metering.

Air-conditioners

Amendments to the definitions of 'air-conditioner' and 'EER' in [QDC MP 4.1](#) have been made to clarify the types of air-conditioners to which the requirements apply and to provide guidance on the types of testing methods that can be used to meet the requirements.

Commercial building water harvesting

[QDC MP 4.3](#) requires alternative water sources to be used in the building. This entails the harvesting of available water sources such as rainwater, grey water, cooling tower bleed water, fire test water and stormwater. This water must be treated on premises and then used as a substitute for drinking water for specified end uses such as toilet flushing, washing machine cold water and irrigation. From 1 January 2010, available water sources (excluding greywater) harvested and treated on site, may now be stored for a period longer than 24 hours. The treatment requirements for the re-use of greywater have remained the same, however the treatment requirements for all other available water sources must now meet the water quality standards as specified in a new Table D1 of [QDC MP 4.3](#).

Electricity Regulation 2006

Air-conditioners

The Electricity Regulation 2006 has been amended to clarify the definition of a ‘prescribed air-conditioner’ for the purposes of the Queensland sales ban. This will clarify the types of air-conditioners to which the sales ban applies. There has been no change regarding the scope and types of units covered by the sales and installation bans.

Contact for further information

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