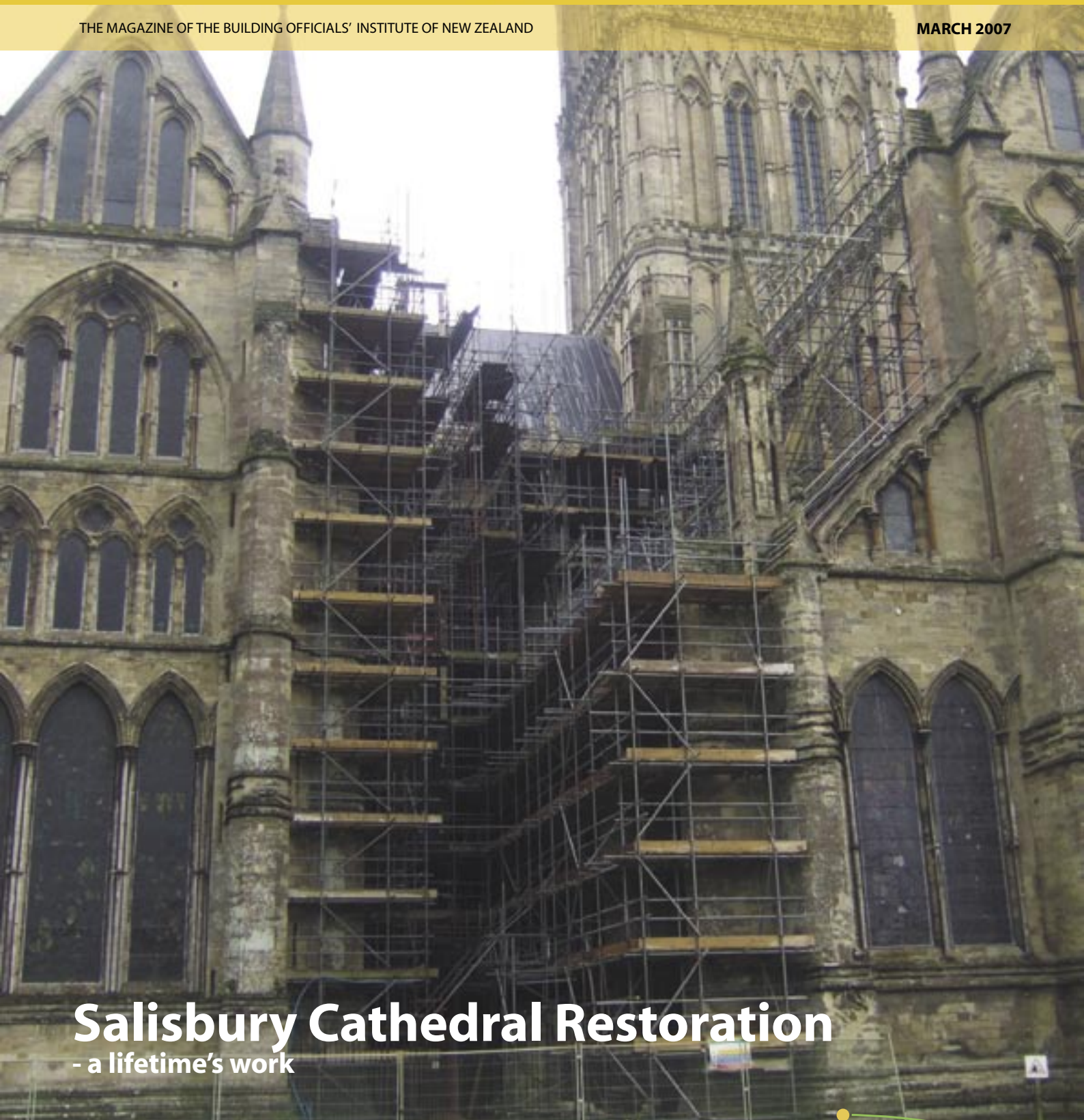



# straight up

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MARCH 2007



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# straight up

## IN THIS ISSUE

News from Len	2
Profile - Canterbury/Westland Branch - Kelvin Newman	2
Profile - Shaz Sazegara, Building Officer, Wellington City Council	3
Raintank Use in the EcoCity	4
Fire Industry Profile - Paula Beever	6
Design Profile - Gina Jones	7
On-site wastewater management and Practitioner training	8
National Qualifications for Building Officials	10
A milestone celebrated in construction	11
Consents	14
BOINZ Pool Compliance (Fencing)	16
Horizons Woodville	17
Pool Compliance	18
A wastewater treatment plant has just been constructed in Wanganui...	19
Simon Cooper – a self-made man	22
Reflections on... bridges	24
From Hybeam to Hyjoist	26
Out and About - Water wasted - shop till the last drop	27
Building Officials Institute of New Zealand Annual Conference & Expo 2007	28



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## NEWS FROM LEN



Welcome to 2007!

I hope you all had a happy festive season and managed to get a break.

I would like to take this opportunity to personally thank all our members and corporate partners for their valued support throughout the past year.

We look forward to providing you with the same outstanding service you have become accustomed to.

On the subject of looking forward, we are well underway with new initiatives and exciting events for 2007 and I would like to update you on the scope of our activities for the new year.

Firstly, there is the Annual Conference and Expo in Rotorua from 1-4 April 2007. This key event is an excellent opportunity for you, as a building official, to be informed on the latest developments in the industry and to network with your colleagues from around the country. This year is our 40th birthday so join us in a celebration of this milestone.

We are also currently finalising the training programme for 2007 which we hope will once again provide you with ongoing professional development opportunities. This year, in addition to formal training workshops, we are planning to offer a series of presentations from corporate partners who would like to share their industry knowledge with you.

The building officials' licensing programme continues to gain momentum and I would like to encourage all members of the Institute to further investigate this exciting initiative and consider

the benefits and value to you as a building professional.

Since my last update to you, I have had a series of meetings with the Department of Building and Housing, the Local Government Governance Group, and Local Government New Zealand to discuss the strategic direction of the industry and how the Institute can facilitate positive outcomes in this area. There are a number of big ticket items on the horizon that are important for you to know about. First, the process of local authorities to become accredited Building Consent Authorities has been gathering steam recently. I have been invited to be on the Steering Group to facilitate distribution of funds for this project and am pleased to advise that the initial framework has been developed. I look forward to keeping you further updated on this subject.

Second, the Institute has taken a lead role in the development of national qualifications for building officials. I have taken the opportunity to update you more fully on this project later in this magazine.

Whew, I think that will be enough to keep us busy for the next year or so!

On a different note, we often hear people bemoaning the length of time it has taken for their renovations to be completed. The photo on the front cover of this edition is of Salisbury Cathedral located in the south of England which is currently being renovated. And I say "currently" rather tongue in cheek as it is purported the renovations will take 21 years to complete!

I look forward to keeping you posted on a regular basis this year on our progress. In the meantime, grab a coffee, sit back and catch up on the news from the industry in this edition of Straight Up.

Lennard Clapham



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## BOARD MEMBER PROFILE

### Canterbury/Westland Branch - Kelvin Newman

My involvement in the building industry started when I left school (a very long time ago) as an apprentice carpenter and I moved through the trade to become a foreman.

The work was varied and ranged from domestic housing to large commercial projects.

I cut my teeth in the regulatory landscape with the Selwyn District Council, at that time a smaller district council that employed five building inspectors who processed plans and inspected that work. To think of those simple times when plans came on the back of the old lunch wrapper or better still the building was going to be constructed just as the other one that the builder had done at old Mike Petersons place! It wasn't really that bad but I think everyone will agree that we have come a long way in regard to documentation (that part of the new regime isn't so bad) and if we were to look at the plans we were consenting only 2 years ago we might be a little embarrassed.

While working for the Selwyn District Council I achieved the qualification of Building Certifier and then, yes, like many others,



Kelvin Newman



moved into the business of building certification.

When the Building Act was changed and it was apparent that the certifier system was to be abolished I closed the business and worked as a consultant for the then Building Industry Authority.

From there I moved to the Christchurch City Council and then later to Prime Building Compliance where I am the Operations Manager.

The Canterbury/Westland area is growing at a similar rate to other areas throughout the country. Those in the frontline of building controls have the same issues to deal with - poor plans, resource problems, public perception, workloads, substituted product, etc. Having a training plan that that quantifies the type and quality of documentation required to meet the regulatory requirements is important, as is ensuring that all building consents applications contain the necessary information for processing. I hope that this year that the construction and regulatory industries get a break from Central Government and the changes that have been implemented show fruit and we can have long enough to appreciate the advances made while taking a breath before the next change sneaks up on us.

**Shaz Sazegara**  
**Building Officer,**  
**Wellington City Council**

I was born in Milan, Italy where I spent the first 8 years of my life. As my father is a Diplomat, I came to New Zealand around 10 years ago, which is the longest time I have lived anywhere. My parents were re-posted overseas in 2000 and I decided to stay on as I liked it here. Wellington is my home now because I've spent my young adulthood here, I went to uni here and I'm now a New Zealand citizen. I think that after seeing so many other parts and extremes in the world, New Zealand feels untouched and pure compared to the rest. Kiwis are the most down to earth and friendliest people. For some Kiwis who haven't travelled, they may take New Zealand for granted and don't know how good it is.

I studied at Victoria University doing a Bachelor of Building Science (BBSC). I also did a graduate diploma in electronic commerce. I have worked in different industries such as sales, marketing and retail until last year when I realised I wanted to get involved back in the building industry. I was lucky to get an opportunity to work for the Wellington City Council and I've been here for a year now.

It's been a great experience over the last few months as I've been involved in major projects, helping more senior building officers to make overviews of building

MEMBER PROFILE

inspections and being involved in pre-construction meetings with developers, owners and designers (providing information and informing them of requirements/ expectations so we can all achieve the best end results). It's great seeing the process from start to finish and the amount of detail you need to go through to make sure everything has been checked and covered off.

I am still learning and it's been a very steep learning curve for me and great challenge. My current role is more face to face, dealing with the public - providing advice and checking their building consents. I really enjoy my role as Building Officer and working at the Council (a great working environment) and I hope to work in this industry for quite some time.

I have done the following courses: reading and accepting building consents, fire course on C documents, Acceptable solutions 1(C/AS1) and Weathertightness - beyond E2/AS1. I look forward to doing other training in the future.



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# Raintank Use in the EcoCity



As part of its ecocity image, Waitakere City has introduced a Water Conservation Strategy. A key focus of the action plan is to encourage the benefits of using raintanks to save water.

To encourage residents and developers to retrofit or put in rain tanks from the start of the building process, the council offers a \$500 subsidy on rain tanks put in by residents. This service is actively promoted through the council's Water Wise Up programme, which is run on behalf of council by a partner organisation, the EcoMatters Environment Trust.

Another resource available for those considering water and energy efficiencies is the free advice of an Eco Design Advisor. Waitakere City is one of three councils in NZ that currently has a pilot project going to fund up to two hours of advice by a sustainability expert. The scheme, which may extend to other areas of the country, is partly funded by BRANZ (the Building Research Association of NZ). Household holders who access the service are given general information on choices they can make to save money on their water and power bills, through take 'wise' steps i.e. installing devices such as rain gardens, swales, the use of impermeable paving, solar panels, rain barrels, etc.

## Background to Waitakere's water demand management programme

In 1993, Waitakere City Council declared Waitakere to be an eco city – a place that shows how to be a sustainable community, with people who are active, healthy and content. In meeting that challenge, the council sets out various strategies to enable it to provide a benchmark of excellent service, with minimum adverse impacts.

The council's Water Conservation Strategy actively promotes the use of rainwater detention devices in new and established developments. To reduce erosion in streams or to avoid overloading under-capacity systems, the city's new developments need to install rainwater detention devices which will reduce peak flows by releasing water slowly over a longer period of time via reduced orifices. In some cases, by installing such devices, the developer is able to achieve hydraulic neutrality under the Resource Management Act regulations.

EcoWater, a department of Waitakere City, manages Waitakere's three waters of drinking water, waste water and storm water.

Richard Taylor, EcoWater's Assets and Network Manager, says: "With 960 kilometres of streams in the city, many of which are in urban areas, protecting and enhancing the streams in the city is recognised by the council as a strategic priority. Although rainwater tanks are the detention device of preference, in limited cases, other devices such as permeable paving, swales and rain gardens are also used for attenuation of peak flows. Reuse of water is also encouraged, although not mandated at the moment, as this enables a more sustainable use of our water resource. In the home situation, water efficient appliances such as shower heads and front loading washing machines are encouraged."

## Voluntary use of raintanks, as well as a mandatory requirement

In addition to rainwater tanks required as part of resource consent conditions, the council actively encourages the voluntary use of rainwater tanks on existing houses by providing a subsidy of \$500 for new rainwater tank installations that meet the following criteria:

- Rainwater must be used effectively (eg to supply toilets, laundry and garden).
- Tanks must be plumbed into house systems correctly, including an approved backflow prevention device. (Household plumbing work requires a registered plumber and Building Consent).
- Tanks shall be privately owned and serve only one house.
- Minimum tank size for the subsidy is 4500 litres (1000 gallons). Larger tanks are preferable – but it depends on the roof area and water demand.
- Tanks must be installed according to manufacturer's recommendations and Council guidelines.
- Subsidy does not apply to rural properties where a rainwater tank is needed as the primary water supply or when the detention tank is needed to mitigate an adverse effect.
- Subsidy does not apply to new developments where a storm water connection is not readily available – i.e. where a rain tank is the only sensible method of disposing of rainwater and allows a Building or

Resource Consent to be granted.

- The offer is limited to the first 50 applicants per year
- Preference will be given to installations being retro-fitted to existing houses and also to problem catchments where the tanks will be of benefit for reducing storm water runoff.

## Rainwater consent requirements

To further encourage the use of a rain tank, Waitakere City also waives the consent fee for installation of a rain tank for those retrofitting.

All rainwater tank installations will require a building or minor plumbing and drainage consent for construction. To obtain a building consent from the council for a rainwater tank, an applicant must submit a drainage plan showing its location, expected point of overflow discharge, calculations of capacity and orifice diameter, maintenance manual and manufacturer's specification.

The rainwater tank required to satisfy resource consent conditions for a new house must be sized to accommodate either one or a combination of the 2, 10 or 100 year(s) storm events, with a maximum discharge not exceeding the pre-development 2-year flood. The discharge requirement is to minimise erosion in streams. Urban sites usually have tanks in the order of 2,000 - 5,000 litres.

Above ground detention tanks are preferred over underground detention tanks because of maintenance issues. Underground tanks are much more difficult to inspect and require costlier maintenance. When orifices are blocked, water immediately goes into overflow and hence the detention aspect ceases to operate; which is not easily noticeable if the tank is underground.

Once a building consent for a rainwater tank is granted, the applicant must meet the following condition of consent: "Provide a Producer Statement from a suitable qualified person confirming that the required storm water management methods and devices have been constructed in accordance with the approved plans and that they are functioning as the design intended. Include the approved design plans, an As-Built plan, and a copy of the maintenance manual for recording on Council's Hazards and Special Features Register to enable the storm water devices to be monitored for ongoing compliance. It is the owner's responsibility to fully maintain all device(s) in proper working order."

The council is currently working through the process of ensuring compliance for ongoing maintenance. The most likely outcome would be to ensure that a certificate from an approved maintenance practitioner be submitted to the Council at set intervals depending on the recommendations of the Operation and Maintenance manual.

Waitakere City also provides its residents and developers with specific information on rain tanks, as part of its Water Wise Up programme. The following reflects some of the common issues surrounding rainwater tanks.

## Rainwater tanks

### WHY USE RAINWATER?

Using rainwater reduces demand for on the city's water supply and also helps you reduce your water rates.

It can also reduce flooding and erosion by providing temporary storage for rainwater which means less pollution of our waterways and less wet weather sewage overflows.

### WHAT CAN I USE RAINWATER FOR?

Rainwater can supply up to 65% of your household's water. You can use it for:

- watering the garden and lawn
- washing vehicles
- supplying the laundry and toilet

### WHY SHOULDN'T I DRINK IT?

Urban tank water is not recommended to be used for drinking, cooking and bathing due to potential contaminants.

If you wish to drink the water you will need to have the quality regularly tested and install filters.

### WHAT SIZE TANK DO I NEED?

The size of tank you need will depend on the following factors:

- How you plan to use the rainwater
- The amount of water you use
- The roof area available to collect water from

*continued on page 16*



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# Paula Beever

BSc(hons), PhD, CEng, FIPENZ, FIE(Aust), MIFireE, MSFPE



## CURRENT POSITION

National Director Fire Risk Management  
New Zealand Fire Service

## CAREER PROFILE

Since October 1998, Paula Beever has held the position of Principal Fire Engineer with the New Zealand Fire Service, becoming a Director of the Fire Service in 2001, and National Director Fire Risk Management in 2004. Prior to that she worked at Victoria University in Melbourne, Australia starting as an Associate Professor in March 1996, engaged in teaching and research activities in fire safety engineering.

Paula Beever worked with Ove Arup and Partners, based in the UK, from 1989. As a Director, she ran a team of fire safety engineers, undertaking work on all aspects of fire safety design in major buildings worldwide. Previously, she worked for 10 years at the Fire Research Station in the UK, carrying out research in industrial fire and explosion hazards. In 1986/87 she spent eight months in the USA at the National Institute of Standards and Technology.

## FIRE SERVICE AND COUNCILS: SHARING GOALS

The New Zealand Fire Service and the building inspection industry (a role traditionally carried out by Councils in NZ) have had a long tradition of cooperative association. Under the obsolete NZS 1900 Chapter 5 legislation, Councils and Fire Boards came together to discuss requirements and review plans. Fire safety officers and building inspectors carried out joint local government inspections known as 628s and 636s as well as other inspections relating to liquor licensing and massage parlours. But that's all a long time ago... Since the early 90's the roles of the two bodies

have become formally much more separated: the fire service has been at arms length from building legislation and is principally responsible for the monitoring and approval of evacuation schemes in buildings under its own Act and Regulations (Fire Service Act 1975 & Fire Safety and Evacuation of Buildings Regulations). The 2006 redrafting of the Evacuation Regulations made much more explicit exactly where fire service responsibilities with respect to buildings begin and end.

One formal new relationship that we do have with Councils arises out of the Building Act 2004: Fire Service may provide comment to Councils under ss46 and 47 of the Act with respect to means of escape and firefighting. The Fire Service must now receive from Councils copies of most applications for buildings consents (apart from houses and small commercial premises) that are designed as alternative solutions.

We had to recruit skilled fire engineers from around the world to rise to the challenge of providing that comment and formed a new team – the Design Review Unit (DRU) in 2005. The work requires great focus because comment has to be provided to Councils within two weeks, and great care has to be taken not to provide any advice that goes beyond the requirements of the building code.

With limited feedback from Councils, last year we had two independent audits carried out to ensure that the comment we provide is technically accurate. Though the audits highlighted a few opportunities for improvement for the DRU, the most significant outcome was that both audits were highly critical of the quality of the documentation that supports building consent applications that make use of fire engineering designs. This is a serious issue for Councils, and we need to work together with IPENZ, LGNZ and DBH to try and improve matters. The audit reports are available at: <http://www.fire.org.nz/building/DRU.htm>.

An area where we have recently gone out proactively to strike a productive relationship with many Councils is in the area of voluntary installations of sprinklers, particularly in houses. This is an exciting opportunity, particularly for new developments, to virtually eliminate the risk of life and property loss from fire. This has only recently become practicable with the publication of NZS 4517:2004 Fire Sprinkler Systems for Houses, that is tailor-made to be effective and affordable. Information from communities in the USA where all new buildings are sprinklered by law shows a dramatic drop in fire damage and the near eradication of fire fatalities. In urban areas, on a cost-per-life-saved basis this is a cheaper way of saving lives than, say, roading improvements in the long term. The benefits of home sprinklers can hardly be overstated in rural areas where you have properties without close neighbours to notice something untoward and summon the Fire Service, longer times for Fire Service attendance once they do get called, and probably no reticulated water.

The public seems to be responding well to the advertising campaigns: the immediate challenge is to get enough trained plumbers who can do the job for a good price around the country. Some Councils have embraced and promoted the idea with great enthusiasm: some are more cautious and see potential water supply issues. We need to work together to understand these real and perceived problems and to find solutions that work to everyone's benefit. With Fire Service offering concessions on firefighting water in sprinklered developments we hope to work with Councils to achieve their goals and ours of sustainable and safe communities.

But we would very much like to hear from Councils with suggestions as to how we can engage better with them.



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## Gina Jones



**Gina Jones is widely regarded as one of New Zealand's top woman construction industry figures.**

To celebrate their 10th anniversary; the National Association of Woman in Construction (NAWIC) recently honored Gina as a joint winner of the inaugural Helen Tippett memorial award for the woman who has made the greatest contribution to the construction industry for the period 1996 to 2006 (Jane Cumming of Placemakers was the co-winner).

It is now 20 years since Gina graduated from Wellington's Victoria University with a BBSc and a BArch, and started her career with the iconic Toomath Wilson practice (TWIA), where she quickly rose to becoming an Associate. Since those early days Gina has been considered an achiever in the construction industry.

TWIA disbanded in the late 1980's following the retirement of one of the Directors, and TWIA morphed into two separate practices. One of those practices was Ampersand, which Gina was a Co-Director of with Grahame Anderson (The A from TWIA).

In 1995, Grahame Anderson relocated to Nelson, and Gina set out on her own and formed Accent Architects. "The first few years of practice post-Ampersand were certainly a case of starting over again" says Gina "I was doing a lot of kitchen and bathroom alterations, and not making a lot of money". The first five years of Accents' life saw the practice grow to become a significant player in the education

sector, however a dangerous reliance on the education sector developed, and almost resulted in Accent's undoing.

Accent set in place a number of strategies to build a brand, and broaden the practices work into the commercial and residential sectors.

Today Accent Architects is regarded as one of the Wellington region's foremost architectural brands, and has a work base split evenly between education, commercial, and residential work. "Six years ago we hadn't designed a new house," commented Gina, "now new houses not only form a large part of our business, but they also provide some of our more exciting projects".

Architecture is one of those professions where it is widely accepted that a practitioner becomes more competent with age.

"I was listening to a Radio NZ interview of Pritzker Prize (the architectural equivalent of the Pulitzer) winner Glen Murkett of Australia" says Gina, "in that interview; Glen Murkett made the comment that an architect needed to have been in practice 20 years before they could be

considered competent. Maybe because I was coming up to 20 years since graduation, the comment resonated with me. As an Architect I certainly see myself producing better work in the next 20 years than what I have in the past 20 years, and I am sure that most architects would think that. Certainly the opportunities that I am given are becoming bigger all the time, as a result of profile and reputation".

With the knowledge that her best creative years were ahead of her, and the passing of her 40th birthday, Gina decided to re-discover her creativity, by attending a number of art classes at Inverloch Art School in Wellington.

The combination of sheer joy that Gina experienced, in conjunction with the encouragement of one of her tutors, lead Gina to enroll in a Master of Fine Arts (MFA) program at Melbourne's prestigious RMIT University. RMIT enjoys a reputation as arguably the premier architectural School in the southern hemisphere. The benefit of this was the crossover of architectural references and influences into the art degree, and Gina flourished. Since completion of the MFA in 2005, Gina's artwork has been selected as finalists in both the 2006 Norsewear and the 2006 Waikato Contemporary Art Awards.

The art work that Gina produces is extremely architectural in nature and incorporates LED lighting. "Gina only now is beginning to believe in her formidable talent" Accent co-director Malcolm Fleming commented", with the artistic influences now being introduced into her architecture; the architectural work that Gina produces post MFA has the potential to be stunning and significant".

After 20 years of practice, you sense that Gina Jones is now ready to produce a body of work that will ultimately define her career.

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# On-site wastewater management and Practitioner training

**Ian Gunn, On-Site NewZ, Auckland**

On-site wastewater servicing has traditionally been associated with septic tank and soakage trench systems as a temporary measure in urban fringe, rural residential or holiday area development. The expectation is that on-site wastewater systems will have a short life, will eventually clog up and fail, and thus inevitably require connection to a sewerage system.

This traditional perception is currently being turned around by the availability of modern technologies together with new standards and practices for investigation, design, construction, operation, maintenance and monitoring. This is driven by a focus on management of the implementation and approval processes for design and installation, followed up by operation, maintenance and performance monitoring procedures all delivered by well informed and trained practitioners.

The framework for this new management focussed approach has been the joint Australia-New Zealand Standard AS/NZS 1547:2000 "On-site Domestic Wastewater Management". This standard recognises that in spite of the availability of design rules and system sizing guidelines from earlier standards and design manuals, a significant level of ongoing system failures and poor performance

of on-site systems is due to a deficiency in the overall procedures associated with system implementation, approval, supervision and monitoring. There are in fact no superior design rules for sizing, for example, trench systems according to soil type and effluent discharge quality. However, if robust procedures are in place for land use planning, site investigation, design, installation, approval and ongoing performance monitoring, backed up by good user guidelines and homeowner awareness, then on-site systems can deliver a sustainable wastewater servicing solution.

A key to delivering such an outcome is the level of training and experience associated with the range of practitioner groups involved in on-site wastewater servicing. These include planners, site and soil assessors, designers, equipment manufacturers and installers, drainage contractors, pumpout operators, performance monitoring inspectors together with regional council environmental officers and district council building consents officers.

AS/NZS 1547:2000 discusses training needs and requirements, but the expectation in the standard that training programmes would quickly be set up and functioning within three years of issue have not been met. Currently

training programmes for on-site wastewater practitioners are run on an adhoc basis. The Australian Centre for Environmental Training (cet) has developed a range of courses which have been delivered in NZ over the last five years. More recently (2006) BOINZ in association with On-Site NewZ presented a two-day introduction and design course on eleven occasions at nine centres throughout the country. Of the 300 attendees one third were consultants (involved principally in design), one third were district council officers (involved in approvals and building consents) and one fifth were contractors, installers and equipment manufacturers.

Meanwhile, Water Industry Training has developed a set of unit standards for on-site wastewater management which once approved by NZQA will provide a basis for future training course development. The draft standards may be viewed at <http://www.waterit.ac.nz/oswwm>. Eventually local government agencies will need to consider what level of training will be required for individual practitioner groups delivering on-site wastewater services within their jurisdiction.



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# National Qualifications for Building Officials

It would be fair to say that the creation of national qualifications for building officials has had a stormy past, and it is often difficult to be objective when discussing this topic without including a lot of the historical, or indeed hysterical, aspects of the project. However, it would also be fair to say that those who have been advocating for many years now, a set of qualifications for building officials, will be pleased to know that there is light at the end of the tunnel, and no, it is not the oncoming train! As we are now starting to develop for our building controls sector recognition of the increasingly specialised nature of the work of building officials and the expectations placed on them following the introduction of the Building Act 2004 and the requirement for there to be formal qualifications by 2013.

To give a brief history, there were unit standards placed on the NZQA framework several years ago. However, it was my understanding that very few of the industry took up the units, and that they were found wanting in terms of quality and consistency. I also recall at the New Plymouth conference in 2004, the shock horror at the thought being promoted by government agencies that building officials would have to go back to school in order to gain a qualification for our sector regardless of the length of service, knowledge and experience being even considered.

The Department of Building and Housing, due to what it believed to be its role and responsibility, tendered out for a preferred training provider for the Diploma programme which was launched in 2005 and ends in November 2007. The Department of Building Housing set up the preferred supplier arrangement, but over time

this has caused significant tensions between the students, the deliverer, and the industry at large. The Building Officials Institute of New Zealand Training Academy will not endorse any training provider unless it has proven that it can appropriately meet the needs and requirements of the industry. The current preferred status concept will not receive endorsement by your Training Academy until it meets certain pre requisites.

Over the past two years, the board of the Institute has directed that training, in the form of courses and recognised qualifications, be a priority for management. We have created a Training Academy and licensing of building officials as well as putting the development of the new national qualifications high on its list of priorities. As a result we have been working extensively with various parties to ensure that a robust qualifications matrix is developed that is both suitable to the needs of the entry level learner and recognises the skills base and experience of the current workforce in order to retain them in their important roles. Therefore, the most important aspect of this whole issue is the need for a clearly defined critical learning pathway and a clearly defined matrix comprising of qualifications that must be valid in its approach to competencies and knowledge taught. The need is to develop a framework that is a mix of both theory and practical, and relevant to provide coverage of the essential topics which will give learners and current practitioners a sound base for their future professional development. Validity and reliability are the hallmarks of a sound qualification framework and while they can be a challenge to get right, it is worth the effort to persevere so the

resulting curriculum is fit for purpose.

It may sound like a tall order, but the Building Officials Institute of NZ believes that well planned and properly implemented national qualifications will supply building control professionals with the skills and knowledge they need to meet the challenges of their role. New Zealanders rely on building officials to provide the much needed link in the building and construction process as they carry out their role in the areas of consent approval and site inspection with utmost professionalism. The Institute believes a set of national qualifications should underpin this important expectation so that the specialised nature of the building official role can be continued to be held in high regard.

To date, the Institute has become the lead agency in managing the development of national qualifications. Funding and resource has been obtained, largely from the Department of Building and Housing, to assist with the costs of the project. I have facilitated numerous meetings over the past few months with a wide group of people in the preparation of a framework that will go out to the industry for comment early 2007. In December, 2006, a key meeting was held in Wellington with subject matter specialists from within the industry who contributed to the development of the proposed draft matrix and framework for your further consideration. The group had the challenging role of reviewing and recommending for consideration a set of technical and non-technical competencies that would make up the initial structure of the new qualifications. There was a raft of information to review, such as existing unit standards, related overseas unit

*continued on page 12*

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# A milestone celebrated in construction

By Helen Hines-Randall, Site Safe New Zealand

Increasing the level of health and safety knowledge in an industry where people continue to be seriously harmed and killed can only be a good thing. On 27 September last year at the Ellerslie Convention Centre, Site Safe New Zealand and Unitec New Zealand officially launched its 40-Credit Certificate to the construction industry. The official launch combined with the Inaugural Graduation Ceremony was attended by Rt Hon Jenny Shipley, Hon Clayton Cosgrove – Minister of Building Issues and 170 key senior industry leaders and representatives from within New Zealand's construction industry.

Ms Shipley, who launched Site Safe in 1999 stated she was honoured to participate and be part of the construction industry. "Site Safe is probably the best example of achieving ownership of health and safety within an industry and the official launch and graduation is a tribute to the Site Safe team, led by Iris Clanachan, to get this far in such a short period of time. As Chairman of Mainzeal one of my roles is to lead and ensure we invest in our people. The New Zealand industry can be international leaders if we keep in step with Site Safe's goals. The issue of leadership is critical...if everyone leads a little...leadership changes."

Sponsors of the event - Fletcher Construction, Hawkins Construction, Mainzeal Construction, Dominion Constructors, EquipSafety and Leigh-Mardon were actively involved throughout the evening. Fletcher's Peter Neven stated "this Certificate programme will I am sure, become the industry benchmark for individual competence and commitment to health and safety practice in our construction environment. This was a huge hurdle back at the start of Site Safe and huge strides have been made to breaking down that 'not interested' attitude".

Seventy-six industry workers will be the first group from the New Zealand construction industry to be awarded the Certificate in Construction Site Safety. Site Safe, in collaboration with Unitec New Zealand, has developed the Certificate to provide the essential training that both workers and managers in the construction industry need to develop their health and safety knowledge and expertise in their chosen sector.

At any one time, over 140 000 New Zealanders work in the local construction industry – there are now going to be 76 men and women better equipped to influence health and safety management and initiatives in-house – contributing towards a safer industry.

The New Zealand construction industry needs more workers and an increased level of health and safety knowledge. This Certificate aims to provide individuals with training and a qualification the leads to lifelong learning and the development of leadership skill in health and safety – skills to promote a culture of safety and best practice.

This health and safety qualification is the first of its type for the New Zealand Construction industry. Instead of attending one-off courses, you are now able to gain recognition for past and current training. The Certificate in Construction Site Safety allows participants to attend a range of Site Safe courses that will earn them Certificate Credits – each course is valued between 3 and 14 Credits. Achieve 40 and you will complete the Certificate. Participants are able to choose from a range of courses that are specific to their trade and background and are able to work at their own pace – the timeframe for completion is very flexible.



Left to right - Richard Handley - Deputy President Corporate Services Unitec NZ, Rt Hon Jenny Shipley and Iris Clanachan - Executive Director Site Safe New Zealand.

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continued from page 10

standards and the requirement to develop new unit standards in various areas of competency, which needed to be considered in order to find the right mix of skills and knowledge that would qualify an individual in the area of building controls in New Zealand both now and in the future. The group vigorously debated the qualification structure that best suited the needs of Building Control Surveyors in New Zealand. The outcome of this debate was a two diploma structure that reflected the division used by Quantity Surveyors, Construction Managers and Architectural Technicians namely 'small buildings' as the first diploma grouping and 'medium and large buildings' as the second diploma grouping.

The meeting then considered the matrix of titles against two separate outcomes:

Firstly was the competency core to both diploma groups or specific to one; Secondly did the competency fall under the general headings of Communication, Quality Management, Construction Science, Site Inspection, Plan Assessment or Legislation.

This dual consideration assisted the group to clarify coverage.

The outcome of the meeting was a unanimously agreed qualification structure and competency matrix that where possible built on work already completed.

Once the draft framework was compiled, the first stage of the project was able to be completed. The four major milestones within stage one were:

- Research work completed to date and organisational perspectives of qualification needs
- Steering committee consideration of information, setting of qualification structure, agreeing developmental guidelines
- Practitioner workshop to consider qualification content, package knowledge and skills for qualification/s within developmental guidelines and identify gaps in unit standards currently registered on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF)
- Report back to BOINZ, DBH, LGNZ and SOLGM with a detailed project plan, identified milestones and key deliverables as a basis for stage two of the project, that being the development of material and registration of unit standards and National Qualifications on the NQF

In conclusion, anything that we do must be in consultation with you and your colleagues. As further developments are made, we will be in contact with you all. I hope you have found this update useful and I look forward to further achieving further milestones on this project.

**Len Clapham, Chief Executive**

**Building Officials Institute of New Zealand**



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## NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 40th Annual General Meeting  
of the Building Officials Institute of New Zealand (Inc),  
will be held at the  
**Energy Events Centre, Rotorua**  
on  
**Monday 2nd April 2007**  
**commencing at 3.40pm**

### AGENDA

1. Apologies
2. Confirmation of Minutes AGM – on 03 April 2006
3. Matters Arising
4. President's Report for the year ending 31 December 2006
5. Chief Executive's Report
6. Audited Annual Accounts for the year ending 31 December 2006
7. Appointment of Auditor
8. Subscriptions
9. Amendments to Constitution and Rules
10. Ratification of National Executive
11. Election of Life and Honorary Members
12. General Business



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## Foxton Seawall

On 15 December 2006 Environment Court Judge BP Dwyer approved a Consent Order reversing the Horizons Regional Council Hearing Committee Decision to decline consent to allow for the construction of the Foxton Beach Seawall in the coastal foredune at Foxton Beach.

The original application was declined by the Regional Council on the basis that the seawall, as proposed, was not in keeping with the natural character of the beach and was not the best practicable option to address erosion.

The Consent Order reverses that decision but is very specific and onerous in regards to the construction of the 107 metres of new seawall, modification of the existing 22 metre trial wall and how the sand balance at either end of the wall will be managed in the adjoining foredune system.

Benchmarking surveys of the beach profile to the north and south of the trial wall and in the area of the trial wall are required further to any construction of any new piece of wall. Those surveys will be referred to frequently in the years to come as the site is required to be continually surveyed over the lifetime of the consent. Erosion impacts that are noted in the survey will initially increase the frequency of those surveys and may result in the requirement for the seawall to be removed.

It is anticipated that the dunes on either side of the sea wall will both erode on one side and creep outward on the other within 100 metres of the walls edge. To manage this and to keep a sand balance for the dune system, sand may be taken from the aggrading dunes and placed at the eroding dune sites. Likewise sand from the carpark above the seawall will periodically be placed where dune erosion is occurring.

The seawall is comprised of hexagonal concrete blocks with hollow central voids. It is intended that while those voids may fill with sand other debris will be cleared from them regularly to maintain their energy dissipating function.



## RMA vs BA Hawkes Bay

The default on the RMA is that no discharge is allowed without a consent or unless it is permitted by a rule in a regional plan.

All regional councils have a rule in their regional plan which permits the discharge of treated domestic wastewater from a treatment and land application field subject to being able to meet a number of conditions. Those conditions generally relate to a maximum volume, (normally the equivalent of one to 2 houses); separation distances from surface water, groundwater table, water supply bores, property boundaries; may specify an effluent quality standard that the treatment plant must achieve; the design of the application area to achieve even distribution.

If the discharge cannot comply with the conditions then generally a resource consent is required. Some councils may specify certain areas of the region where any discharge requires a resource consent. Generally that would relate to a particularly sensitive receiving environment or where the risks of adverse cumulative effects may be high.

Hawkes Bay Regional Council operates a monitoring programme for those discharges requiring resource consent, and is trying to streamline this process so that only one council does the inspection. However, if building inspectors do manage to see the land application field before it is covered then that would meet HBRC's initial inspection requirement. It also has an audit monitoring programme to test the effluent quality.

If a discharge is permitted, then regional councils generally have little further involvement.

If a consent is required, this is generally sought prior to applying for the building consent. Generally secondary treatment plants are required. Regional councils assess the effluent quality produced by the treatment plant and the design of land application in terms of the environmental constraints that a particular property may have. Many councils use the Australia/New Zealand Standard 1547:2000 as a reference as well as ARC Technical Publication 58.

It is useful for building officers to be familiar with the permitted activity rule. District councils may provide checklists but if there are doubts, they refer the applicants to the regional council to check. Sometimes, district councils require a letter from the regional council confirming that what they are proposing is a permitted activity before they process the building consent.



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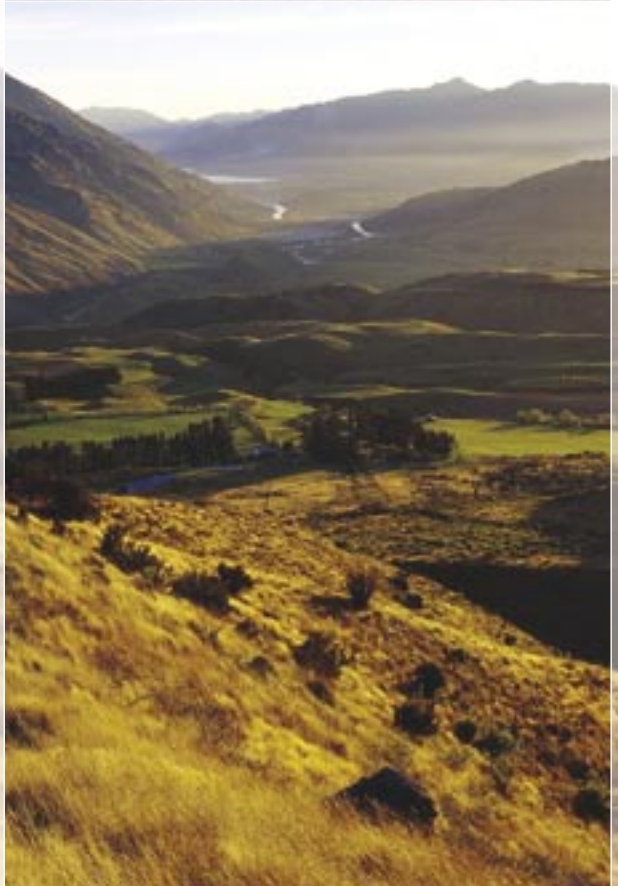
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## BOINZ Pool Compliance (Fencing) and NZS 8500 Safety Barriers and Fences around Swimming Pools, Spas and Hot Tubs



In 2004 BOINZ was contacted through the Auckland Regional Pool Fencing Liaison Group and Water Safe Auckland Inc. to assist in producing a training resource that could be utilised to provide consistency in interpretation and application of both the Fencing of Swimming Pools Act 1987, the Building Act and the Building Code.

Auckland's Regional Group consists of the seven Auckland Territorial Authorities, Whangarei District Council, Water Safe Auckland, Water Safety NZ, ACC, Plunket, Pool Builders Guild, Pool Suppliers and private pool owners.

Following consultation with BOINZ that a skill competency gap existed in both Building Officials and Pool

Fencing Inspectors, Building Networks NZ Ltd was contracted in to produce a training manual that once completed could be used to assess competency in this area and assist in determining competency for the BOINZ licensing system.

Building Networks was contracted by BOINZ to develop this training resource that incorporates both practical and legislative requirements in a progressive self-paced modular format that includes workshops lead by Judith Cheyne of Simpson Grierson. Water Safe Auckland, Manukau City and North Shore City Councils assisted in providing technical and best practice information

as well as proofing of the training modules.

Workshops have been well attended by both Building Officials and Pool Fencing Inspectors with everyone coming away with a better understanding of statutory processes, application of the required legislative process and a more consistent approach both regionally and nationally to providing a safe environment for children under 6 years of age around home pools.

Further information on the training modules can be obtained from the BOINZ website.

It is also of note that in December 2006 Standards NZ released NZS 8500 Safety Barriers and Fences around Swimming Pools, Spas and Hot Tubs in response to growing concerns over the application of pool fencing requirements.

The Standard reinforces past practices with pool fencing and has taken an innovative approach in embracing technological advancements by incorporating layers of protection to pools which may include pool alarms with certain pool covers as well as rationalising dimensional sizes for mesh fences, addressing issues relating to retain walls and balconies overhanging pool areas.

Also incorporated are extensive pictorial and diagrammatic examples to assist interpretation and application of the standard by architects, designers, pool owners and Territorial Authorities.

Presently the FOSPA BA04 and F4 of the BC1992 are being reviewed by the DBH to remove the conflict and confusion from the legislation

and until then the Standard is only a guidance document which may be used for Special Exemptions under section 6 of the FOSPA1987.

A major advantage the standard has over the current Schedule/Means of Compliance is that the standard can more readily be adapted to changing technology and circumstances by regular review (5 yearly) and does not rely on the legislation to be sporadically reviewed.

Details on a seminar series which started in Christchurch on 26 February and including Wellington, Taupo and Auckland, can be obtained from the Standards NZ website.

### COMMENT BY BUILDING NETWORKS:

The Pool Fencing Modules have been designed as a self-paced kit with relevant information and activities contained in each section. Participants are walked through the environment - dealing with pool owners and Council enforcement, the legislation and compliance solutions as well as processing considerations. The module on prosecutions is a one-day workshop lead by Judith Cheyne of Simpson Grierson law firm. Participants are taken through the legalities of enforcement through to preparation for court proceedings.

The Modules are designed to provide the underpinning knowledge required for work as a pool enforcement officer.

continued from page 4

### RAIN BARRELS

Rainwater barrels are suited to smaller roof areas. They are good if you just want to water the garden or wash the car. These are usually 240 litres and are reasonably priced. Do not use second-hand drums that have contained any toxic material, such as industrial chemicals.

### TANKS

Tanks come in a variety of sizes, however even small tanks can provide significant quantities of water for use around the house.

There are different types and styles of tank available. The most common are polythene or concrete and they can either go above or below ground. Putting your tank underground is a good option for urban dwellers with smaller sections.

To use a tank to flush the toilet and/or for laundry use you will either need to install the tank up high to create sufficient gravity or install a pump.

### TOPPING UP

If you install a tank which is topped up by the city mains supply you will need to install a backflow preventor to ensure the rainwater does not contaminate the city's water supply. Products are also available so when the rainwater drops below a certain level the tank is automatically topped up with mains water to ensure constant supply for toilets and laundry.

### COST

The average cost to buy, install and plumb in a rainwater tank and pump for use in the laundry, toilet

and garden with a pump is approximately \$2,800 - \$3,500.

### REBATE

Waitakere City Council is offering a \$500 rebate for people installing tanks to existing or new homes for garden, laundry and toilet use.

### THE TANK MUST:

- Be over 4500 litres (1000 gallons)
- Be used for supplying water to the laundry and/or toilet, and watering garden
- Not be the primary water supply
- Not be a condition of a Building or Resource Consent
- Preference is given to tanks being installed into existing homes and to areas where stormwater is a problem

Please note other conditions apply. For further information or to get an application form please contact the Council's call centre on 836 0400 or [www.waitakere.govt.nz](http://www.waitakere.govt.nz)

### DO I NEED A BUILDING CONSENT/PERMIT?

A building consent is generally not required for tanks used only for garden irrigation. A building consent is required for any tank connected to household plumbing. This includes rainwater collection systems that:

- connect to the mains water system as backup and therefore require a backflow prevention device
- exceed 25,000 litres capacity and are supported directly by the ground
- exceed 2000 litres capacity and are supported

more than two metres above the supporting ground

- exceed 500 litres capacity and are more than four metres above the ground
- Tanks larger than 6000 litres may require a resource consent to ensure that they meet certain criteria such as distances in relation to boundaries, etc. Please check with Council's Consent Services department.

All plumbing must be carried out by a registered plumber and should comply with the New Zealand Building code. This is covered by your building consent.

### WHAT ELSE SHOULD I KNOW?

- If you intend to collect rainwater from your roof, make sure the roof-paint is lead-free. Check your old paint for lead through your public health service.
- Regularly check and clean your gutters and tank to ensure they are clear of debris, leaves and dirt.
- Consider installing primary screening and first flush diverters to improve your rainwater quality and chlorinating the tank-water annually to reduce contamination.

Please note: If there are changes in the colour or odour of your rainwater, contact your local public health service and avoid using the water for watering vegetable gardens.

**For more information about using rainwater, contact the Waitakere City Council Call Centre on 839 0400 or [www.waitakere.govt.nz](http://www.waitakere.govt.nz)**



# Horizons Woodville

During the early part of 2005 Horizons Regional Council undertook a review of its operations in the Eastern area of its region. Through the review it was decided that Horizons needed to increase its profile and operational effectiveness by merging two old and low profile Service Centres at Pahiatua and Dannevirke into a new purpose built Service Centre in Woodville.

A project team was established to oversee project management and internal Human Resource issues. The Project Team is comprised of Project Sponsor, (General Manager, Corporate and Governance) Project Leader (Corporate Asset & Project Manager) an Architect (ProArch), HR/Communication Managers and representatives from the various staff who are future users of the building.

As Horizons at the time of starting the project didn't have the internal expertise to project manage the construction phase of the project this responsibility was contracted out to the project architects. This management structure now means that the Horizons Corporate Asset Manager carries out the role of representing the organisation at site meetings, project reporting to management and obtaining various financial approvals i.e. main construction contract, change requests and account payments.

The entire process has been driven by the internal project management system which has proven its worth given the project manager has changed three times within two years. Without the formal project management structure each new project manager would have had considerable difficulty maintaining a smooth transition and momentum. Resource consent was required from the Tararua District Council as the site is in a residential zone. ProArch designed the building with a residential feel; single storey, pitched roofs, and domestic construction, so it would fit in with the residential zone. The design also kept within height recession planes, noise control criteria, and light control criteria, so it won't have adverse effects on the residential neighbours.

Consideration was also given to how Horizons operations would affect the neighbours, as access to the site is from the bypass road through Woodville from Dannevirke to Pahiatua.

The District Council designated all the surrounding properties, (approx 12) to be effected parties, from which Horizons had to obtain consent. All but one affected party granted their consent, and most were happy with the development as it made use of a site which was otherwise vacant and causing some social issues in the area. Thus, the project had to be notified, on a limited basis, to the 12 affected parties.

This process ran its course without the council receiving an objection from the neighbour who had previously objected. However, the process highlights a problem with the Resource Management Act (RMA), which can allow one party

to delay a project without reasonable grounds: the desired outcome was achieved, but the project timeline delayed.

The building consent process was a lot smoother, and went through without any major issues.

Horizons Regional Council is the regional authority over Tararua, Horowhenua, Manawatu, Palmerston North City, Rangitikei, Wanganui and Ruapehu. It also encompasses some parts of Taupo, Stratford and Waitomo Districts.


Horizons is endorsed with protecting and maintaining the environment and managing the natural and physical resources of fresh air, clean water, productive land and natural ecosystems.

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For more information on Horizons go to [www.horizons.govt.nz](http://www.horizons.govt.nz)

**Grant Neilson**  
Corporate Asset & Project Manager  
Horizons Regional Council

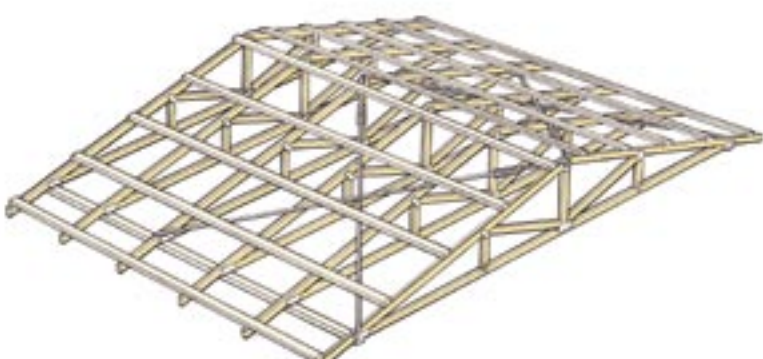


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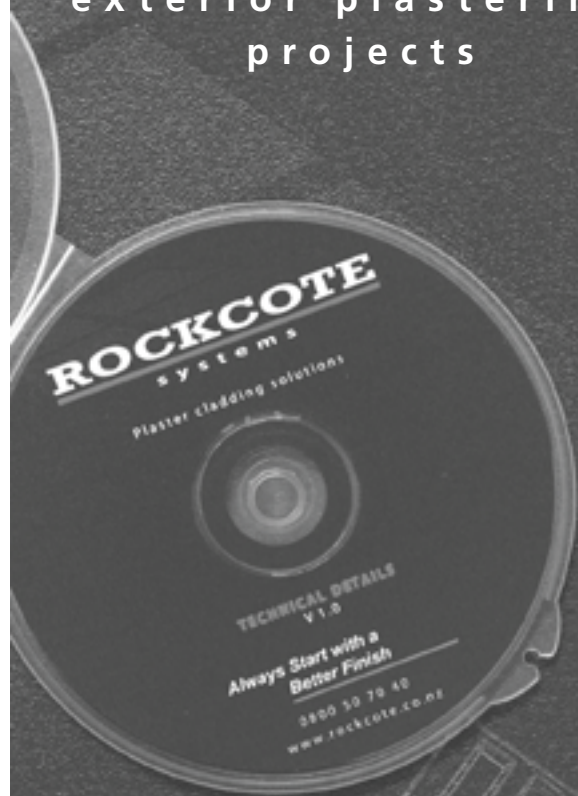


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# From the archives



*The National Office stores a lot of old documentation relating to the management of the Institute from days gone by. We have been reading through some of it lately in preparation for the 40th birthday celebrations at the conference in April.*

*The Institute was set up as a body in 1966, but was not incorporated until 1967.*

*The minutes below are from the meeting held in 1966 which sparked off the establishment of the Institute. It is interesting to note some of the items discussed, and one can get to wondering just how far we have come over the years.*

## **INAUGURAL MEETING OF BUILDING INSPECTORS**

**19TH OCTOBER 1966,**

**WAIMAIRI COUNTY COUNCIL CHAMBERS 7:45PM**

Chairman – Mr R. Barnes, Christchurch City Council

### **Invited Speakers**

Mr P.G. Scouler, City Engineer, Christchurch

Mr I. Clavert, County Engineer, Waimairi

Mr A. Dyhrberg, County Engineer, Paparua

### **Present**

Mr R. Upston, Borough Engineer, Riccarton

Mr M. J. Clark, County Engineer, Halswell

### **Building Inspectors**

Messrs Grigg, Perrin, Dellow, Higgin, Lawrie, Christchurch City Council; Messrs Hughes, Kennedy, Robertson, Waimairi County Council; Messrs Bridges, Crean, Paparua County Council; Messrs Slade, Graham, Riccarton Borough Council; Mr Davidson, Lyttleton Borough Council; Messrs Brown and Harty, Timaru City Council.

Apologies received from Mr Morgan, Dunedin City Council, Mr Gibbs, Christchurch City Council, and Ellesmere County Council.

The Chairman opened the meeting and spoke on the benefits derived from the local Bodies Engineers Committee, which has been dealing with NZSS 1900 and various associated problems. He spoke also on the difficulty that tradesmen now have to assimilate the knowledge required of building inspectors over and above normal trade knowledge.

Mr Calvert then spoke on the initial setting up of the Committee for NZSS 1900, the reasons for so doing and the gains obtained, both in exchange of viewpoints and the presentation of a reasonably common front and cited the recent trouble with mortar strengths as an example.

Instances of the difficulties of obtaining staff and the subsequent training of staff were mentioned.

Mr Calvert suggested that the present building inspectors should be accepted into a body, but in future perhaps, qualifications will be desired. This would immediately help sift applicants for any position.

*continued on page 20*



# A wastewater treatment plant has just been constructed in Wanganui...

- Quotes ranged from \$2.945 m to \$4.3 m for the excavation of 168,000 m<sup>3</sup> of spoil of which 122,000 m<sup>3</sup> was used to form embankments and 46,000 m<sup>3</sup> was locally stockpiled
- The pond has an under drainage system comprising nearly 8 kilometres of pipe work (from small to large pipes) and a surface area of 5.6 hectares (8 football pitches in soccer terms for all you world cup fans)
- An aerated lagoon, which is the large lagoon that does most of the treatment, is 10m deep and has an "active" volume of 117,000 m<sup>3</sup>.
- The settlement pond is 9000 m<sup>2</sup> and holds a volume of 34,000m<sup>3</sup> (or 34 million 1 litre "Coca-Cola Zero bottles")
- The pond is lined with high density black polyethylene (HDPE) which is 1.5 mm thick.

One of the big issues for building inspectors at Wanganui District Council in this project, was whether or not a big hole in the ground required a building consent?

First off they asked - is it a building? – so referred to Section 8 of the Building Act 2004 and also Section 9 to see if it was excluded. A visit to the 1st Schedule for exemptions was checked also.

The word "structure" appears in Section 8 and Brookers refers to legal cases which define a structure as "must be taken to have its ordinary and natural meaning". Maybe it's a dam? – and according to the Interpretation in part 1 of the Act it clearly is a dam – a(iii).

But interestingly in Brookers it is suggested that a water-retaining structure that does not come within the definition of "dam" is nevertheless a building for the purposes of Building Act 2004 and therefore required to comply with the Building Code.

Because it's a building and a structure and a dam, not only does it require a building consent, it also needs to be referred to the Regional Council (who now control dams).

For this project building inspectors handled the consenting process via PS1's (Design) and PS2's (Design Review) from the engineers. The consulting engineers provided an on-site inspection service (a Construction Monitoring programme) and provided PS3's (Construction) and PS4's (Construction – Review) at completion. As there were no conventional buildings in the first stage of the project described above, only some plumbing/drainage inspections and a final inspection were carried out.

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*continued from page 18*

The Inspectors would then be a much stronger position from a salary point of view. Mr Calvert was in no doubt that the strength available would be able to form on a National Basis and cited the pool managers' conference, with perhaps 35 members. This association admits firms as associate members, which is a sound idea. He was sure full support would be available from the County Engineers' Institute.

Mr P, Scoular agreed completing with Mr Calvert's remarks, and went on to speak of the training of future staff and the difficulty in which is Council will be faced in the future. His present staff had grown with the job and have absorbed new trends but he felt that tradesmen could not now be expected to take on the job and were in fact really only partly trained at that stage. Mr Scoular mentioned the Cadetship scheme in operation in the UK and also the NZ Certificate of Engineering or Building, perhaps arranged as an extension of the Apprenticeship Scheme.

It is quite likely that the Institute of Local Body Engineers would be prepared to form a joint committee with representatives of the building inspectors to set some form of syllabus and examination for qualification. In his experience, trade administrative and engineering experience were very desirable before an inspector was appointed.

The results obtained from the sharing of knowledge had been amply demonstrated by the Local Bodies Engineers' Committee. In Mr Scoular's view the establishment of a Building Inspectors' Institute was absolutely essential for everyone concerned.

Mr Dyhrberg opened his remarks by endorsing the previous points made in regard to the necessity of an Institute and went on to enlarge the difficulties of staff appointments having both trade and administrative experience of bylaws.

One very important point which was brought out was that of the inspector being able to present a good public image and being able to deal with builders in a fair and reasonable way. Mr Dyhrberg was of the opinion that the Inspector's job as not at all comparable with a Clerk or Works, and far more paperwork was involved.

He cited the difficult position of a health inspector, also employed as a building inspector, who had very little building knowledge and consequently was forced to fall back literally on the bylaws. This situation led to difficulties in public relations. In his view the proposal of an Institute gave immediate gain in status, recognition and a chance to set a pattern for future years.

Mr Clark endorsed the previous remarks and hoped that an Institute would be formed as soon as possible. He suggested that Mr Alderdice of the Trades Hall, Christchurch, and Local Body Officers' Union might be helpful.

Mr Calvert was thanked for his help in putting the proposals in motion.

Letters of encouragement from Dunedin City Council and Southland County Council were read. The following suggestions or points were then made by the Inspectors present.

1. Suggestion that the Institute of Architects be contacted in regard to their approach to Government on Local Body Building Controls as it affected Building Inspectors.
2. Would health inspectors have to pass both examinations? It was suggested that present health inspectors employed in a dual role could be perhaps accepted as associate members but that future dual inspectors should be fully qualified.
3. Uniformity of bylaws would need consideration. (This is being done as much as possible in Metropolitan Christchurch).
4. Investigation of training building inspectors by trade, correspondence course for clerk or works or similar and if possible obtain requirements operative in England.

**Motion** – At this stage the following motion was put by Mr Gribb:

"That steps be taken to form an Institute forthwith"

Seconded Mr Hughes, who added that he hoped no time would be lost in making a move.

**Carried Unanimously**

Mr Scoular suggested an interim committee be set up to bring down rules and aims and investigate the possibility of becoming an incorporated society. Also check on registration and sponsorship with the Engineering Associates Registration Board and see if a syllabus could be obtained from them.

Mr Lawrie brought up the point as to whether this is to be a Canterbury Branch or otherwise, but it was agreed that the body should be on a national basis.

Mr Calvert suggested that after the Institute is formed, some representatives should endeavour to go to other centres to initiate interest in the body.

Mr Scoular suggested that other centres should be invited in before acting nationally.

**Motion – Moved** by Mr Clark and Seconded by Mr Slade that he name should be "The Institute of Building Inspectors"

**Carried Unanimously**

**Directions to Interim Committee**

1. Approach to Technical Institute re courses as per Clerk of Works course.
2. Investigate possibilities for education of building inspectors including technical information and exchange of knowledge, both between councils and with other bodies and organisations including private firms.
3. Mr Carter stated the case of the Institute of Valuers with a salary bar until qualification and suggested that this may have some merit for new staff.
4. The meeting was of the opinion that building

inspectors at present employed in that capacity would automatically be full members of the institute but that in future it would be policy that only qualified building inspectors should be employed by authorities.

5. It was suggested that the valuer's examination may be worth investigating.

6. For larger authorities, the merits of cadetships should be investigated.

Mr Scoular undertook to raise the matter of the Institute with the southern branch of the Municipal Engineers Division at Timaru in November.

**Motion – Moved** by Mr Slade and seconded by Mr Grigg "that the attending engineers be thanked for their support"

**Carried Unanimously**

The Chairman added his thanks to those of the meeting.

### Supper Adjournment

#### Committee

**Motion** – After supper it was **moved** by Mr Slade and **seconded** by Mr Clark that the interim committee be five (5) in number. An **amendment** to the motion was moved by Mr Hughes and seconded by Mr Kennedy that the number be seven (7) with fuller representation of various local authorities.

It was pointed out that the body should be of a personal nature not of a territorial one.

The **amendment** was declared **lost** unanimously and the motion was then carried that the number be five (5).

Nominations were then called and the following elected.

Chairman: Mr R. Barnes (CCC)  
Hon. Secretary: Mr R. R. Robertson (WCC)  
Committee: Messrs P. Grigsby (SAC), T. Bridges (Pap. CC), N. Brown (Timaru CC).

The meeting was asked that the aims and objects be brought down to a meeting by the third Wednesday in November.

The meeting closed at 10:10 pm.

R. R. Robertson  
Hon. Secretary

---

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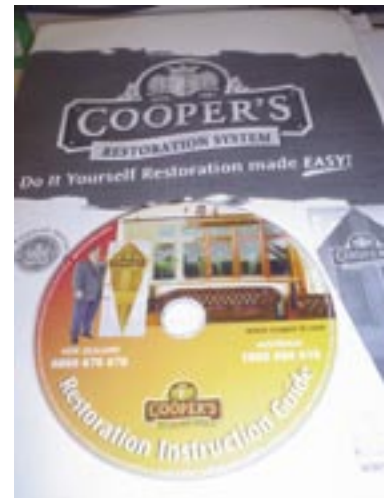


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**Simon Cooper – a self-made man  
Director, Cooper's Restoration**

It's a term you will know well – a self-made man. And it certainly describes the journey Simon Cooper has taken to become owner/director of a successful NZ company selling a NZ invented and locally manufactured product – his own stripping & finishing formula.



Simon Cooper is the name behind Cooper-it, a system that he has developed over the last 20 years through his furniture making and restoration business. His products to date have been sold exclusively through home demonstrations in both

NZ and Australia and have recently started to become available through selected retail stores. "When people see the ads on TV they assume they can go into a shop and buy it. They may decide on a Friday night 'I want to do this on Saturday so the product has to be immediately available' says David Chemis.

Brought up in a dairy farming family he attended Taranaki College. He described himself then "as not being academically minded" but says "he knew about wood". He made furniture from what he learnt at school and what he taught himself. "If one of my friends needed a chest of drawers I'd make it" he says matter of factly. Making furniture for family and friends gave him the start in his own business. And as proof of that success Simon Cooper has always been self-employed and has always worked with wood.

Realising that to make a profit in the restoration business he "needed to charge for the hours spent" Simon Cooper decided that if he could remove the old finishes without damaging the timber surface that was already sanded much wasted time would be saved. He researched the paint stripping subject in detail and after many trials and errors produced a group of products that stripped the wood clean without damaging the wood. He says: "Qualifications are fine but researching and linking ideas together works best for me – and having a good memory helps" he says. "I can read something and directly relate it back to something else that I have heard or read about". He describes that as lateral thinking. Soon clients he was restoring for started purchasing the products to do the [work themselves and the Cooper's restoration system was born.

"Simon has created a stripping product that is virtually pH neutral" says David Chemis, New Zealand Manager of Coopers Restoration. "This meant the wood would not be damaged through bleaching or fibre damage thus removing the need to sand. Ongoing experimentation and trials resulted in a range of tools and products being brought together to form a system, or in other words a complete method for the restoration of wood" says David Chemis. "It's a really good example of Kiwi ingenuity" he says.

Many clients firstly recommended the products by word of mouth. TV advertising followed with Simon Cooper presenting the product. "We have our diamond stripped doors but I wanted to give a face to the business and I had worn a fedora for years so it was suggested that I keep it on for advertising and to make it a bit more fun I added – 'you'll save time & money or I'll eat my hat' says Simon.

Married with three children, Simon Cooper runs the business with his wife Dorri, "who in amongst other things makes sure I get where I'm supposed to be" says Simon.

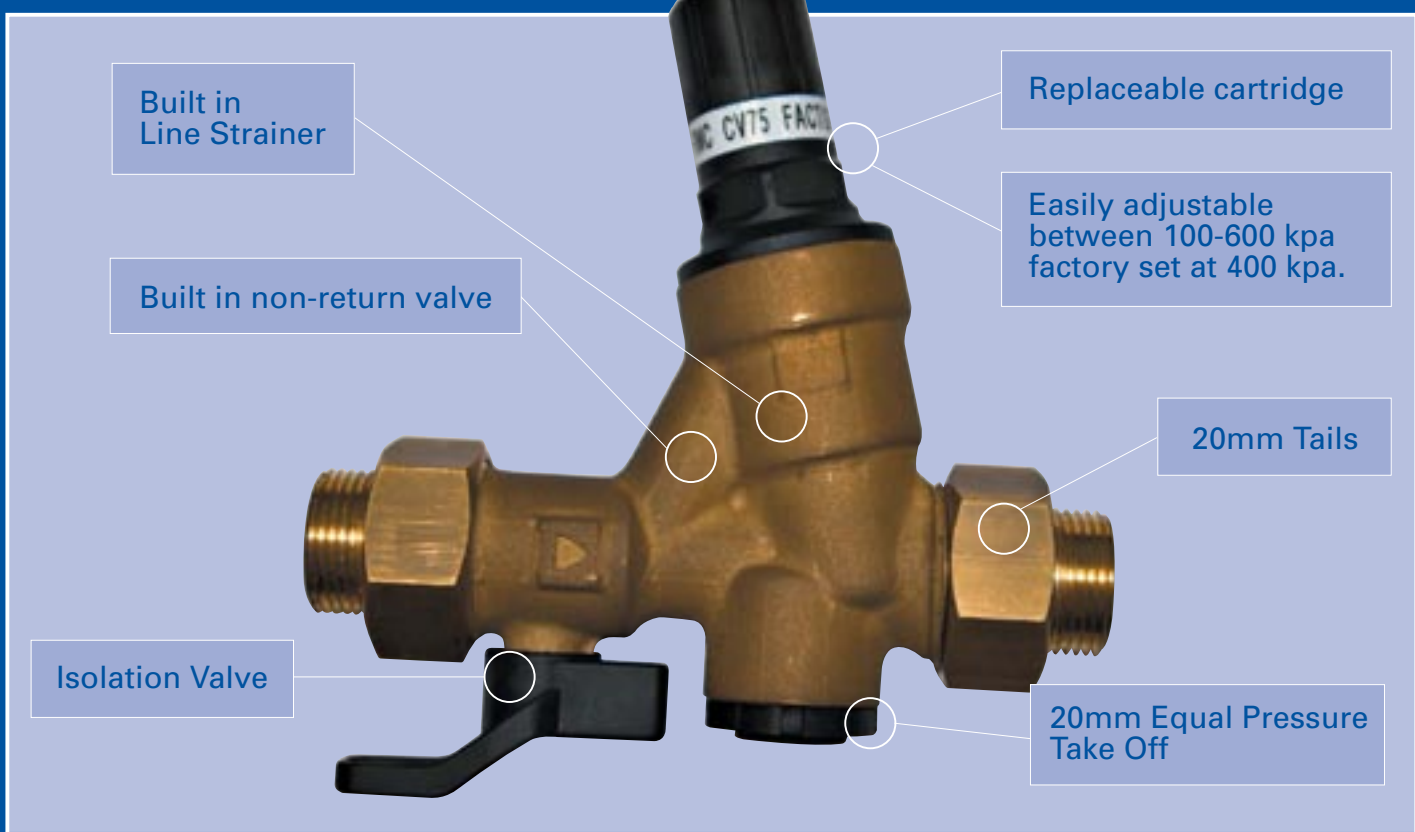
Simon Cooper says he has never thought of doing anything else. I asked him what do you think you might have done had you not discovered the "system?" To which he replied "Become an architect".





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# Reflections on... bridges ...more than just spans across water and land

You might think that bold and big is a more apt description than quaint for a country like Australia given its history of early settlement and the vast landscape of this continent. But I found an exception to this generalisation when on a recent visit there I was struck by a rather quaint example of bridge architecture in Batemans Bay, 269 km south of Sydney. It brought to mind an article I had read back home about bridges in New Zealand.

The Bridge over the River Clyde is the only access from the north in and out of Batemans Bay off the Princes Highway on the Eurobadalla Nature Coast. It carries thousands of vehicles a day and is a rare lifting span type - where provision must be made for the passage of shipping under the bridge and where it is impracticable to build the bridge high enough for complete clearance, a movable span is constructed and a girder is lifted by counter-weighted cables suspended from the two towers, so sayeth the website <http://www.southcoast.com.au>



The span is lifted on demand, an average of 1000 times annually. A sign on the bridge says "To arrange for the Bridge to be raised contact Mike at Batemans Bay Power and Sail on (tel. no.) An absolute minimum of one hour's notice is required". No microchips at work here to provide instantaneous results that we have come to rely on in so many other aspects of our lives. The Clyde River bridge has the quaint quality of going back in time. It is held in such high esteem by the locals that the anniversary of the opening of the bridge in November 1956 is celebrated annually by the Clyde River Carnival held on the first full weekend of November.

Steel bridges are somewhat relics of the past in Australia as well as New Zealand. The history of the bridge as stated on the website states that "prior to the war, about 65 new bridges were built each year on the Main Roads system, but during the war years the construction of necessary bridges in all parts of the State had to be deferred by force of circumstances and the annual programme had to be cut to about 25 percent of normal. As a result, there is now a large unfulfilled need for new bridges".

Efforts are being made to increase the number of steel bridges in New Zealand despite the fact that "the use of steel bridges here has declined since the late 1950s as concrete has gained popularity ... and is seen to be maintenance free for a 100-year design life" according to the Registered Master Builders magazine Building Today of October 2004, issue 14, no. 9.

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## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### Why is Weltec the preferred provider for the Diploma in Building Controls and when will the national qualification be available?

In the Diploma, the modules relating to office practice, the consent process, inspections, and residential construction (non-specific design) seem to consist of what I would call basic everyday internal procedures that would be learnt at induction time when first joining an organization. There are training needs in TAs and important areas that experienced staff should be looking at such as weathertightness and rectification processes to avoid recurrence of similar problems in the future; fire safety; legislation (legal implications of the work we do); not what to inspect but how to inspect; and time and risk management.

It is vital to provide a robust national qualification. It is difficult to convince staff to obtain further qualifications if this does not assist personal development and this needs to be balanced against the fact that under accreditation officials need to show a willingness for continuous improvement.

AP Roover

SU Building Inspection

Although some Councils do, as the article indicates, hand over inspection and certification actions to engineers via "producer statements" (PSs), most Councils will wish to ensure that the Building Inspector is proficient (and well trained) in on-site wastewater management practice in order to have confidence and competence in assessing and approving designs. You will note that during the BOINZ sponsored training programme last year just as many building officers (District Council staff) as designers (consultants) attended the courses. This is great, as I stressed during the programme that building officers need to be just as proficient in design procedures as are designers in order to ensure that consent applications are competently assessed. I came across one district council that did not send any officers for training as they currently handle all approvals and inspections via PS from engineers, but this approach is not used by all those Councils who sent officers to the training.

Re the article attached to your message, I take it that the writer is sounding off on the role of the building inspector in consenting "septic tank systems" (or on-site wastewater treatment and land application systems). The message is fairly subtle, but I guess most inspectors will know where the writer is coming from. There has always been a bit of debate about whether an on-site wastewater system is appropriately an extension of the building or is a separate facility to be controlled by a council officer other than the building inspector. In the past Environmental Health Officers handled the consenting of such facilities, but the Building Act then linked the tank and soakage field to the building consent procedures and building officers took over the consent process from Health Officers.

## Water wasted - shop till the last drop


**This new business started up in Wellington city just in time for Christmas shopping and is still there.**

But it doesn't really wash environmentally when you consider that other councils, Waitakere, Rodney, and North Shore all have water sustainability policies, such as providing assistance for people to install water tanks to reduce stormwater run off. Water issues could well be an election issue across the Tasman and in the not too distant future there could be significant shortages worldwide, The Dominion Post, 3 February 2007.

A news item recently reported that Wellington City Council may reward developers for a return to rainwater tanks by offering a cash-back rebate on their development levies if they promise to make new subdivisions more environmentally sustainable. C'mon Wellington, be absolutely positively sustainable!



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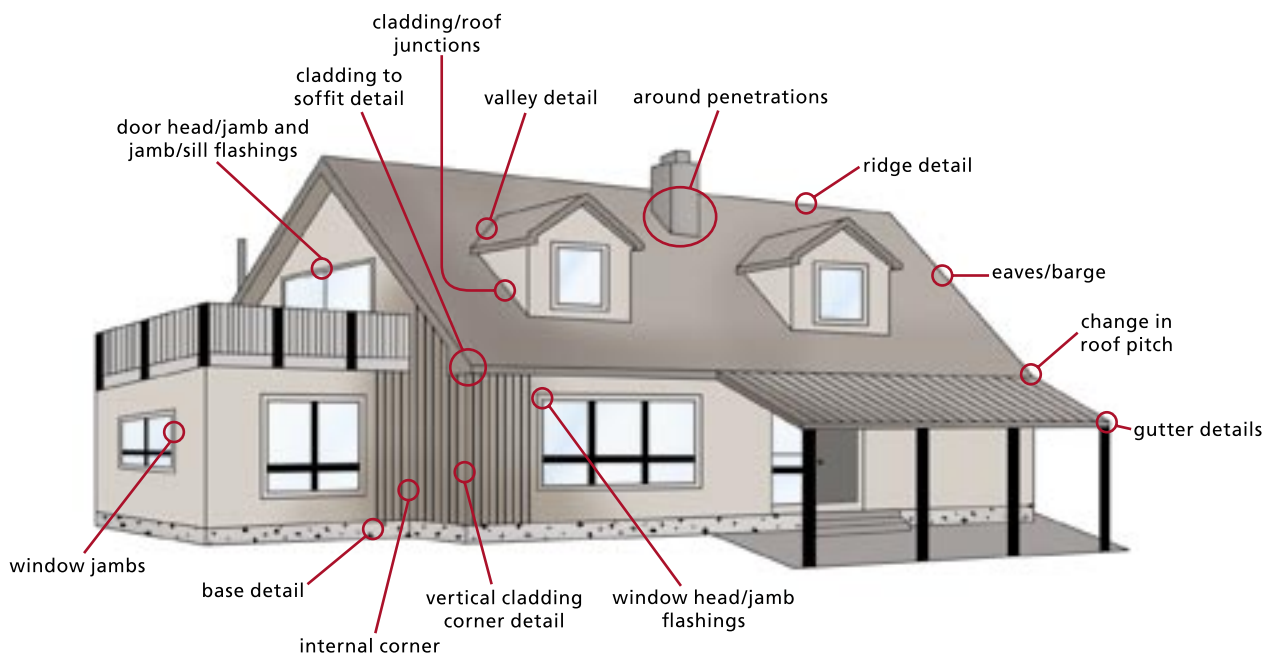
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