building matters

TAUPŌ DISTRICT COUNCIL BUILDING NEWSLETTER AUTUMN 2014

GREAT LAKE TAUPŌ
Taupō District Council

Unpredictable weather didn't stop the building activity over summer, with the industry continuing to hum over its busiest time of the year.

We have survived our annual period where our services are in high demand, with many wanting consents granted or lodged before Christmas. With the change of seasons, now is a good time to ensure your sites are being properly managed for dust and silt discharge as we tend to get the more changeable weather patterns occurring.

We recently sent out an electronic survey to a mix of consultants, designers and frequent users of our regulatory services. Of the 120 people invited to partake in this survey only nine completed it.

This was a disappointing result and doesn't give us a balanced view of the level of service we are currently providing. We will look at doing the survey again in a few months and will consider other methods to improve the response rate.

TENTS, MARQUEES AND SIMILAR LIGHTWEIGHT STRUCTURES

Given the number of events we hold in our district, we process a high number of building consents for marquees and light weight structures such as stages and bridges. There is always pressure on the event organisers/hire companies to get building consents lodged in an appropriate time for us to process and then get the inspections undertaken prior to the event. We understand the importance of events to our district, but also have a role to ensure safety for users of these structures.

There are some exemptions for tents, marquees or similar lightweight structures which comply with the following criteria:

(a) They do not exceed 100 square metres in floor area; and

(b) They are to be, or have been, used for a period of not more than one month

(c) They are built in accordance with the Building Code, particularly when it comes to safety and escape from fire.

Tents, marquees, and similar lightweight structures outside the exempt definitions are classified as building work and therefore require a building consent, which needs to be gained before the structures are erected.

There are a few issues we have with these structures that arise often and can be easily addressed to ensure we can process the consent in a timely manner.

- Ensure your building consent is lodged at least 20 working days prior to the event (the earlier the better);
- Make sure the engineering statement is up to date, less than 12 months old, on the design of the structure and addressed to Taupō District Council;
- A fire design and evacuation schedule has to be submitted – see our 'Building Consent – Temporary' application form for guidance at **www.taupo.govt.nz**
- Building inspections should be booked at least two days prior as the inspection will normally be on a Friday which is generally a busy day for inspections
- Ensure that all necessary safety features are installed and ready for the inspection
- The fire evacuation plan will also require an inspection from the NZ Fire Service, we need their approval before we can give the final okay.

Once a building consent for a tent, marquee or similar has been granted the building work may be undertaken. However, we need to inspect the structure to ensure it complies before it can be used by the public. We will issue a Certificate of Public Use that will allow the public to occupy the building. At the time of this inspection the inspector will need to collect the application for Code Compliance Certificate (Section 92 Building Act 2004) and any other documentation that needs to be submitted to support issuing the Code Compliance Certificate or Certificate of Public Use.

After the structure has been removed, the applicant will need to submit a producer statement (PS3) to Council confirming that the structure has been removed and any remedial work covered by the building consent has been completed. The Code Compliance Certificate (CCC) can then be issued. If the producer statement is not received the Building Consent Authority will need to undertake a site inspection to ensure the removal has been undertaken which may incur a further inspection charge.

WATER TREATMENT PLANT OPEN DAY

An open day is to be held at the recently completed water treatment plant on Lake Terrace for the community to explore within its walls.

Work on the plant finished late last year and it is now pumping up to 25,000 cubic metres of water through it each day.

The open day will be held on April 5 from noon to 4pm. Anyone interested can walk down the driveway off Lake Terrace to the bottom of the water treatment plant, where they will be able to take a self-guided tour through the plant and view information about the different components. Staff will be on hand to ensure safety and answer questions.

The last of the building work was on the roof of the water treatment plant, which provided a new platform for fantastic views across Lake Taupō. It was finished late last year.

The roof contains viewing hatches, seats, urban design features, fencing and landscaping.

ELECTRONIC CONSENT APPLICATION AND PROCESSING

We have started receiving and processing some building consent applications electronically and despite the usual teething problems involved with a new electronic programme we are already discovering the advantages of the system. When further information comes in electronically, it will now be simple to substitute the old sheets for the new and we aren't spending time disassembling and reassembling plans.

Manually stamping a large number of pages is also a thing of the past. However with this in mind, it is going to be important for architects and designers to leave a small space in the same part on every page for us to put our stamps so they don't conceal any notes when plans are submitted. In the top right is a good position, but that can be at your discretion.

The other point we have noticed which is becoming important is to merge the specifications into the three parts: master specifications, product specifications and site specific specifications. It is time consuming for us if we receive separate files for each product used.

Please remember, this is a big change for submitting and processing a building consent, and it is a work in progress. If you have any problems or suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

BUILDING STATISTICS

Consents lodged for last quarter:
November – 91
December – 37
January – 37
Total value – $24,157,355
Total 2013 consents – 816 $108,825,783

COMPLIANCE FOCUS

A Code Compliance Certificate (CCC) is the final sign off from us that all the work has been completed for a building consent.

At the time of the final inspection all documentation needs to be ready to be collected by a building inspector. This includes gas and electrical certificates, PS1 and PS3 certificates and any necessary compliance schedules.

All work should be complete on the building, including things such as formed vehicle crossings and driveways and landscaping completed to meet minimum floor levels. When these aren't addressed for the final inspection it may need to be checked again, and this will incur a cost. Also if development contributions are payable we will not issue the CCC.

For commercial buildings, the public cannot use the building until a CCC is issued, unless a Certificate of Public Use is obtained from us. A Certificate of Public Use is only issued for a short period of time and all safety features of the building must be operational before we are satisfied the building is safe for the community. An application for this can be found on our website at **www.taupo.govt.nz**.

EXEMPT BUILDING WORK

Schedule 1 as we knew it was replaced by a new version on 28 November 2013, with some of the previous items removed or split into separate sections to simplify the interpretation.

The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MoBIE) intends to release a new guidance document sometime in February, which will help with interpretation of what can be done without obtaining building consents.

Those familiar with Schedule 1 will notice it has changed from using alphabetical sub-sections to using numerical sub-sections for exclusions, and it has been separated it into parts. They are Part 1 (General), Part 2 (Sanitary plumbing and drainlaying carried out by person authorised under Plumbers, Gasfitters, and Drainlayers Act 2006) and Part 3 (Building work for which design is carried out or reviewed by chartered professional engineer).

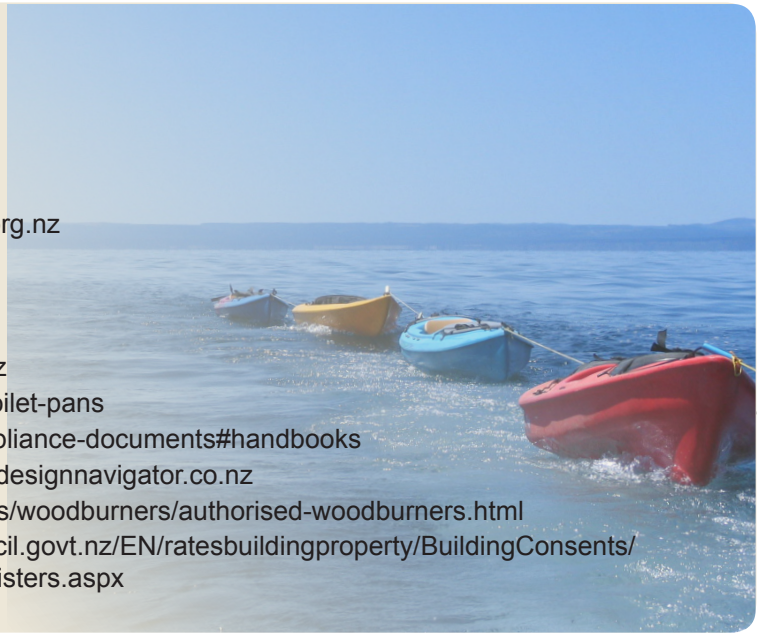
We recommend that you refer to the Department of Building and Housing website for a copy of the latest version of the New Zealand Building Act 2004 **www.dbh.govt.nz**. Schedule 1 forms part of the Building Act but it is not intended to be used to supersede any other compliance or regulatory documents.

All building work intended to be carried out under Schedule 1 must be undertaken in strict accordance with the requirements of the New Zealand Building Code, this means the work has to comply with the Building Code clauses like B1 (structure) B2 (durability) and so on, if the proposed work falls outside the requirements of these code clauses the work cannot be classified as 'exempt' and a building consent will be necessary.

We recommended you contact us for clarification before any building work is undertaken if the proposed work falls within the exempt building work criteria. Most councils will need the work to be updated on the property file for future reference for insurers or future purchasers. Here at Taupo District Council we have an application for exempt building work, which requires plans, specifications (if required) and any further documentation to allow us to consider the proposal as being exempt. At this stage the proposal will also be checked for compliance under the Taupo District Plan.

USEFUL WEBSITES

Taupō District Council – www.taupo.govt.nz
Waikato Regional Council – www.waikatoregion.govt.nz
Department of Building and Housing – www.dbh.govt.nz
Building Officials Institute of New Zealand – www.boinz.org.nz
Building Guide Publication – www.buildingguide.co.nz
New Zealand Legislation – www.legislation.govt.nz
Branz – www.branz.co.nz
Eboss, up to date product information – www.eboss.co.nz
Online Toilet Calculator - www.dbh.govt.nz/calculator-for-toilet-pans
Compliance Schedule Handbook – www.dbh.govt.nz/compliance-documents#handbooks
Design Navigator, online calculator for buildings – www.designnavigator.co.nz
Approved Woodburners – www.mfe.govt.nz/laws/standards/woodburners/authorised-woodburners.html
Auckland Council Product Register – www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/EN/ratesbuildingproperty/BuildingConsents/ResourcesBuildingProfessionals/Pages/BuildingProductRegisters.aspx



UPDATE ON ONLINE LIM SERVICE

Our new online service processes LIMs in less than four hours. The service has been well received by the public and the real estate industry.

There are several options for those using the online service, including the fastest method – the express service. This four-hour service is the first to be introduced in Australasia and can process LIMs 24/7. It can only be accessed via our website, **www.taupo.govt.nz**.

We have also introduced a more economical urgent service, which can process LIMs between three and five days.

DESIGNERS AND BUILDERS MEETING

Each of our building newsletters will be followed up with a meeting to go over some of the information presented in the newsletter in more detail.

This is an opportunity for designers and builders to ask questions and also a chance to catch up with council officers and industry colleagues.

We are in the process of confirming the location and time of the next meeting and will send the invitation out shortly.

If you are interested in hosting a Designers and Builders meeting please contact Scott Devonport, phone 07 376 0818 or email **sdevonport@taupo.govt.nz**