



# The Building Commission is now targeting drainage plumbing diagrams

## Obligation

On 14 December 2016, the Plumbers Licensing and Plumbing Standards Regulations 2000 were amended providing for the Plumbers Licensing Board (the Board) to administer drainage plumbing diagrams in Western Australia. These amendments extended the arrangement that existed from 1 July 2016 through which the Board administered drainage plumbing diagrams on behalf of the Water Corporation.

Licensed plumbing contractors (LPCs) are required to submit drainage plumbing diagrams with the relevant certificate of compliance when performing drainage plumbing work that involves the installation, alteration or extension of drainage plumbing. This requirement is for all drainage plumbing work performed, regardless of the sewerage services provider operating in the area or if the drainage plumbing connects to an apparatus for the treatment of sewage, such as a septic tank. As a 'cut and seal' of a main drain requires some alteration to drainage plumbing, it is defined as major plumbing work and a certificate of compliance and a drainage plumbing diagram must also be submitted when a 'cut and seal' is performed.

The definition of minor plumbing work as it applies to drainage plumbing has been amended. Minor plumbing work now includes the maintenance, repair or replacement of existing drainage plumbing. This means that any like for like replacement of drainage plumbing is considered minor plumbing work, regardless of the length of pipework being replaced. Conversely, any alteration to drainage plumbing is now considered major work, regardless of the length of pipework being altered. The change to the definition of minor plumbing work aligns with the need to submit a certificate of compliance where a drainage plumbing diagram would be required.

LPCs must ensure drainage plumbing work undertaken is in line with the obligations as above prior to indicating drainage plumbing under 'Type of work' on a notice of intention. This means if drainage plumbing work is ticked on a notice of intention and certificate of compliance, a drainage plumbing diagram will be required to be submitted with the certificate of compliance.

For further information on how this may affect you, including information on other legislation amendments relevant to drainage plumbing diagrams and guidelines for correctly drawn drainage plumbing diagrams, please visit [www.commerce.wa.gov.au/dpd](http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/dpd).

## Content and quality of drainage plumbing diagrams

LPCs are reminded that the prime purpose of drainage plumbing diagrams is to identify the configuration of the drainage system and show where required components are located inside or outside the building. All drainage plumbing work is below the finished surface level and drainage plumbing diagrams are a vital tool when future building, construction, renovation, excavation, repairs and/or maintenance work is carried out.

Inspection openings, raised inspection openings and the inspection shaft at the main sewer connection point need to be located with ease. Therefore, it is not acceptable to submit generic house plans or consultant's drawings that often do not have the required or sufficient information shown.

The drainage plumbing diagram guidelines, available from [www.commerce.wa.gov.au/dpd](http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/dpd), provides information on the minimum requirements that apply to a drainage plumbing diagram. These minimum requirements relate to the plumbing features to be included on a drainage plumbing diagram, the use of abbreviations for these features, datum points, orientation and mandatory information fields, such as property address and certificate of compliance number.

Drainage plumbing diagrams must also be legible, complete, accurate and, where possible, in proportion.

A drainage plumbing diagram template, also available at [www.commerce.wa.gov.au/dpd](http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/dpd) has been developed as a tool to assist licensed plumbing contractors to complete drainage plumbing diagrams in accordance with the minimum requirements.

## **Targeted drainage plumbing diagrams program 2017**

The Building Commission, on behalf of the Board, is currently targeting the obligation of LPCs to provide to the Board drainage plumbing diagrams at the same time the certificate of compliance is submitted.

From 14 December 2016 to 14 March 2017, the Board received 4,717 major plumbing work certificates of compliance for drainage plumbing work with 4,084 drainage diagrams. Therefore, outstanding is 663 drainage diagrams, which equates to 8.66% non-compliance.

LPCs are urged to submit all outstanding diagrams to this office by 22 May 2017. After this date enforcement action will be considered and may be taken. Additionally, after 22 May 2017, a failure to submit a drainage plumbing diagram with a certificate of compliance, is likely to result in the issuance of an infringement notice or the commencement of disciplinary action.

## **Enforcement Options**

The offence may incur a modified penalty (infringement notice) of \$500 and maximum penalty (Magistrates Court) of \$5,000.

Non-compliance can also be dealt with by the Board or the Board can make an allegation about a disciplinary matter to the State Administrative Tribunal. Fines up to \$5,000 may apply and in serious cases may result in cancellation of a LPCs plumbing licence.

### **Disclaimer**

The information contained in this bulletin is provided as general information only and should not be relied upon as legal advice or as an accurate statement of the relevant legislation provisions. If you are uncertain as to your legal obligations you should obtain independent legal advice.

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