

Plumbers and Drainers Licensing Board



INFORMATION SHEET – number 5.

DYING TO DO THE GARDENING?

If you live in the Darwin region you will have heard of melioidosis or, to give it its more familiar name, 'Nightcliff Gardeners Disease'. This is caused by bacteria in soil, which come to the surface in wet conditions and can be breathed in or enter the body through cuts in the skin. People who regularly work in the mud and dirt are particularly at risk.

Just last year an English plumber, recently arrived in Darwin, contracted melioidosis and after 6 weeks in Darwin Hospital, although he was fit and healthy and only in his early fifties, he died from the disease. So if you are digging trenches, laying drains or doing any other work that involves mud – please make sure you wear protective clothing – gardening gloves and enclosed footwear at the very least.

ALICE SPRINGS

Board members, Registrar, Building Advisory Services technical staff, CDU staff and several manufacturers' representatives travelled to Alice Springs in March to meet the local plumbing community. The event was a great success, with more than 60 plumbers turning up to see what was happening, meet the Board and have a beer and a burger. It was great to put faces to names and get to know the people who work in Alice Springs.

A big 'Thank You' goes to Peter Rintel who organised the event, Ray Simpson who manned the barbecue and the manufacturers who provided the food and drinks for the night.

The Board intends to make this a regular event in Alice Springs so make sure you keep your contact details up to date. Similar events could be organised in Darwin and/or Katherine if there is sufficient interest.



Board Chairman Graeme Wigg introduces himself to Alice Springs plumbers

FINISHING YOUR APPRENTICESHIP

Once your apprentice completes his course, you should encourage him to register as a Journeyman in the NT immediately so that, after working for two years, he will be eligible to apply for his Advanced Tradesman's licence. If he decides to go travelling around Australia, it will be easier for him to get a registration card somewhere else if he is already registered here.

UPGRADING TO ADVANCED TRADESMAN LICENCE

In other parts of Australia, apprentices complete a Certificate III course in Plumbing and Draining to qualify for registration as a Journeyman. If they want to upgrade to a full licence they need to complete about a dozen additional Certificate IV study units over the next one or two years. It is very likely that this system will be introduced in the Northern Territory to bring the NT into line with other states/territories.

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OVERSEAS QUALIFICATIONS

Several applications have been lodged recently by plumbers who have qualified overseas.

A plumber who applies to emigrate to Australia from the UK, India, Sri Lanka, the Philippines or South Africa must have his qualifications assessed by Vetassess as part of the migration process, before he leaves home. On arrival in the NT he can apply for a provisional registration which allows him to work for 12 months while completing any additional study required to qualify for a Journeyman registration.

Someone who arrives in the NT and has not been assessed before departure (eg on a working holiday, Australian citizen educated overseas) can work as an unskilled worker in the NT, but will need to have his qualifications assessed before he can get a Journeyman registration. Assessments will be done by Charles Darwin University using the same assessment criteria as Vetassess.

WORK EXPERIENCE

When applying to renew your registration or licence, you will need to give the Board some information about the work you have done since the card was last issued or renewed. Unless you are self-employed you will need a letter from your employer endorsing the information provided about work carried out. If you are self-employed, your statement will be enough.

CHANGING ADDRESS

If you don't tell the Board when you move, your renewal notice won't find you and your licence will expire. Tell the Registrar by ringing, emailing or via the website.

APPLICATION FOR AND INSTALLATION OF ON-SITE WASTEWATER SYSTEMS

You may not know that the NT Health Department has specific legislative requirements for anyone wanting to install an on-site wastewater system – inside or outside a building control area. An information sheet from the Department of Health is provided with this newsletter.

Please visit the Plumbers & Drainers Licensing Board website at www.nt.gov.au/plumberslicensing, go to the LINKS page and follow the links to :

- Health - guidelines, Code of Practice and forms;
- Building Advisory Services – building control areas, fact sheets and building notes;
- Building Practitioners Board - register of certifying plumbers.

If you need assistance, call the Plumbers & Drainers Licensing Board Registrar on 8999 8972

PDLB WEBSITE – www.nt.gov.au/plumberslicensing

The Plumbers & Drainers Licensing Board website contains licensing information, application forms, Board members' names, links to other interesting sites, FAQ's etc, as well as news items such as dates for Backflow Prevention and Green Plumbing courses. You can also find previous information sheets.

Check out the site and if you have any suggestions, hit the feedback button and let the Registrar know.