

Building Standard – Newsletter 2

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Technical Handbook Revisions for October 2015

A number of changes have now been made to sections 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 of the domestic and Non-domestic Technical Handbooks. These changes came into force on 1 October 2015 and are applicable to application made from that date. The 2015 Changes Summary document identifies the key changes:

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Built-Environment/Building/Building-standards/techbooks/techhandbooks/th2015changes-summary>.

A series of dissemination events were held in September 2015 – the slides are available here:

October 2015 Changes Dissemination

Video: Energy Domestic - www.youtube.com/watch?v=dm1QjkrirBM.

Video: Fire, Safety, Environment, and Fire - www.youtube.com/watch?v=agj4-CNBDXU.

Power Point Presentation - www.gov.scot/Topics/Built-environment/Building/Building-standards/techbooks/techhandbooks/oct15changesslides.

Air-tightness testing

The British Institute of Non-destructive testing closed its air-tightness testing scheme as of 31 December 2014. A new registration scheme, operated by The Air Tightness Testing and Measuring Association (ATTMA) is now in operation. Following successful registration with ATTMA, Orkney based testers will be in a position to offer accredited air-tightness testing of both dwellings and simple non-domestic buildings with a volume less than 4,000m³.

Building Warrant Fee Information

Analysis of the local Building Standards Customer Satisfaction Survey undertaken February 2014 identified a number of concerns from our customers relating to “confusing cost structures”, the level of fees, and the method of calculating fees” relating to building warrant applications.

The following fee information, effective from 1 April 2015 onwards has therefore been developed in an attempt to introduce transparency and consistency to the fee process.

www.orkney.gov.uk/Files/Planning/Building-Standards/BS-Forms-and-Info/Fees_Regulations_Information_2015.pdf.

Did You Know?

If you provide a Certificate of Design along with your application form, the fee is reduced by 10% for each Part certified. Please ensure you submit the correct fee!

If your warrant application is not approved within 9 months, we can refuse it.

Use Robust Details for a separating wall and you won't need to carry out a sound test!

If you provide an e-mail address, we will e-mail any correspondence to speed up the process.

Standard 2.13 Fire and Rescue Service Water Supply

The formation of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) has led to revised procedures for verifiers where consultation is necessary in relation to fire and rescue service water supply.

In respect to single domestic property developments which are detached dwellings with a storey area not more than 200 m² and are in a remote location, SFRS have agreed that the use of water carried on fire appliances will meet the above requirement.

All other properties whether domestic or commercial in excess of 200 m² and in the absence of an existing water supply will require consultation with SFRS to establish

what water supply, if any, should be provided in order to carry out statutory duties under the Fire (Scotland) Act 2005, (as amended).

eBuilding Standards

In August 2016 it is anticipated that we will be introducing eBuildingStandards.scot, a new online service. The eBuilding Standards portal will enable the electronic submission of applications for building warrants and other related forms, such as completion certificates, to the local authority. When you register on the new ePlanning portal from January, your new login details will automatically give you access to eBuilding Standards when it is launched in the Summer.

For those who are familiar with the ePlanning portal, the eBuilding Standards portal will have a similar look and feel. For anyone new to eBuilding Standards, the portal is easy to navigate with help and guidance at every stage of the way.

Further information can also be found at:

<https://eplanning.scotland.gov.uk/WAM/edevelopment.htm>.

Dangerous Buildings and Charging Orders

When a local authority undertakes work in relation to compliance or enforcement, or in relation to defective or dangerous building, it may recover any expenses reasonably incurred and normal methods of debt recovery apply. The 2003 Act was amended on 24 January 2015 by the Building (Recovery of Expenses) (Scotland) Act 2014 to improve these cost recovery powers and further help local authorities recover their expenses.

The charging order provisions in sections 46A to 46H of the 2003 Act cover work and expenses recoverable by a local authority in relation to a notice served under sections 25-30, or urgent action undertaken on a dangerous building under 29(3), from 24 January 2015. The charging order provisions supplement normal methods of debt recovery and allow the local authority to make a charging order and register it in the appropriate land register.

Combustion Appliances

Our inspectors have raised concern recently about the high occurrence of poor practice relating to the installation of combustion appliances, in particular log-wood burning room heaters, their relationship to combustible materials and the removal of products of combustion. Where the installation is subject to building warrant approval any divergence will usually be identified with remedial works undertaken prior to completion certificate acceptance.

Installations covered by Schedule 3, however are not subject to building warrant approval and it's here that a number of the most serious incidents have occurred, with the fire and rescue service having to be called on more than one occasion.

Standards 3.17 – 3.24 cover the technical requirements relating to combustion appliances and it's essential that this guidance is followed in conjunction with the

manufacturer's installation literature when installing any combustion appliance. If in doubt please don't hesitate to contact the building standards office for advice.

CCNP's – Drainage Inspection

Quarterly monitoring of the results from Key Performance Outcome 2 – Compliance During Construction, has identified a common weakness where Construction Compliance and Notification Plans have not been 'fully achieved'.

Failure to notify the Verifier of 'drainage infrastructure ready for inspection' accounted for 70% of CCNP's which were not fully achieved during Quarter 2 – 2015/2016.

In an attempt to address this recurring issue we will introduce measures to prevent acceptance of Completion Certificate submissions where the CCNP has not been fully achieved due to lack of a satisfactory drainage inspection.

Disruptive inspection will require exposing pre-selected areas of the drainage system to ensure adequate fall, bedding, cover and surround. Private wastewater treatment plant, foul or surface water soakaways will be included in the process.

Don't risk a delay in gaining a Completion Certificate acceptance, ensure you follow the Construction Compliance and Notification Plan issued with the building warrant approval and always notify us when each of the key construction areas are ready for inspection.

Design Coordination

Information provided by multiple designers as part of a building warrant application must be coordinated before the warrant can be approved. The responsibility for design coordination rests with the agent (or the applicant, where an agent is not appointed). Poor design coordination can result in long delays to the warrant approval.

The key to design coordination is managing third-party information, i.e. information provided by anyone other than the agent. In the case of a new-build house, for example, third-party information will often include: a) engineer's details and calculations for the building superstructure, b) roof truss manufacturer's details and calculations, c) percolation test results and d) SAP calculations.

In order to ensure the design is properly coordinated, we recommend that all third party information be forwarded to the agent for review and inclusion in one complete, coherent package when responding to a request for additional information. In our experience, sending third-party information direct to building standards in a piecemeal fashion is more likely to delay warrant approval than expedite it.

In addition, we recommend including a brief covering letter when replying to a request for additional information. The covering letter should link every query to a specific piece of additional information (e.g. "Query no 3: refer to updated structural layout STR-02 rev B"). It should not contain statements along the lines of "information to follow", "to be confirmed", "by others", etc. – which are, if anything, an indication that the design has not been coordinated.

Festive Period Arrangements

The council offices will close at 4pm on Thursday 24 December 2015 and re-open again at 09:00 on Tuesday 5 January 2016.

The Building Standards team wishes you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.