



MASTER  
PLUMBERS  
NSW

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF  
THE MASTER PLUMBERS  
ASSOCIATION OF NSW

# THE MASTER PLUMBER

**SUMMER 2023**

**CELEBRATE** Annual Dinner – Pictorial review and awards

**EFFICIENCY** Fire prevention software lightens your load

**APPOINTMENTS** Rod Jackson retires; we wish him well!



## IT'S ALL HAPPENING IN 2024

**INCLUDING... OUR MEMBERS  
CONFERENCE IN FIJI**



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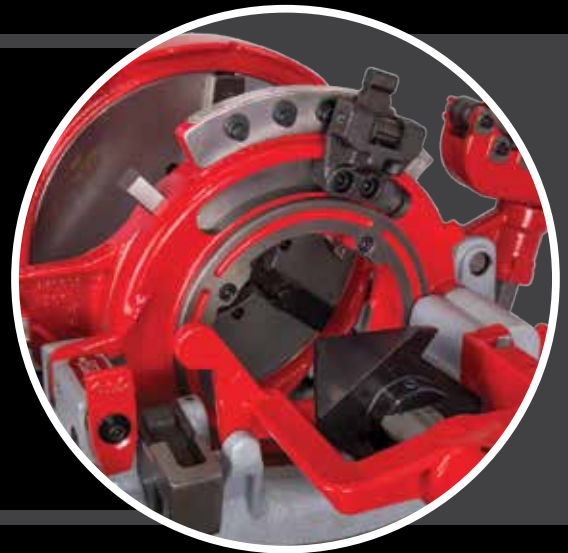


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**12**  
COVER STORY

It's all happening in 2024!

We have been working hard to arrange a massive line-up of events and activities for members in 2024.

Activities and events are important, particularly for plumbers who work in regional locations or in small businesses. Networking with peers, swapping stories about work-related experiences – or just catching up with likeminded professionals and friends – all help to promote healthy participation in our industry.

And what a line-up we have in store! Golf days, Women in Industry events, social get-togethers, sports-themed functions – and our Members Conference in FIJI!

**TO BOOK YOUR ADVERTISING CONTACT**

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In this issue's Business Banter column, we turn a spotlight on debt. Our friends at TradesFormation analyse good and bad debt.





## EDITORIAL

# From the CEO's desk

I am pleased to provide you with an update on the progress and initiatives of the Master Plumbers Association of NSW (MPA NSW). Over the past few months, we have diligently worked to advance our organisation and provide greater value to our members.

**WEBSITE & CRM LAUNCH:** One of our most significant achievements has been the successful launch of our new website and Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system. This modern digital platform will be a hub for members to access resources and stay updated on industry news. Our CRM will enhance our ability to provide tailored services and support to each member, improving communication and engagement.

**INDUSTRY DINNER:** We recently hosted a highly successful industry dinner to honour award winners within our association. (See our article on page 15.)

**ADVOCACY EFFORTS:** We remain committed to advocating for our industry's interests. We are actively campaigning against Local Government Areas (LGAs) in NSW, which are attempting to ban gas for new builds. Banning Gas in NSW is not a viable option, and we will continue to fight hard against radical proposals; our goal is to ensure that our members' voices are heard and that the interests of the plumbing profession are protected.

**MEMBER EVENTS:** In line with our commitment to building a strong community of plumbers, we are organising various member events. (See our Cover Story on page 12.)

**FUTURE PLANS:** Looking ahead to 2024, we have a diverse range of events and membership benefits in the pipeline. These will include seminars, workshops, and networking opportunities designed to foster professional growth and personal connections within our association. We are also exploring partnerships with industry suppliers to offer exclusive discounts and benefits to our members.

**MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS:** You would have received your membership renewal for 2024; we are now offering additional member benefits, online access to Australian Standards, templated contacts, up-to-date Safety management tools, and many other extras moving forward.

In conclusion, the MPA NSW is committed to advancing our industry and supporting our members. Our new website and CRM, successful industry dinner, advocacy efforts, and upcoming member events are just a few examples of our dedication to your success and well-being. We thank you for your continued support and involvement in our association. On behalf of the MPA NSW Team and Committee, I would like to take this opportunity to wish our Members, Corporate Partners and Association Supporters a safe and happy Festive Season.

**Nathaniel (Nat) Smith**



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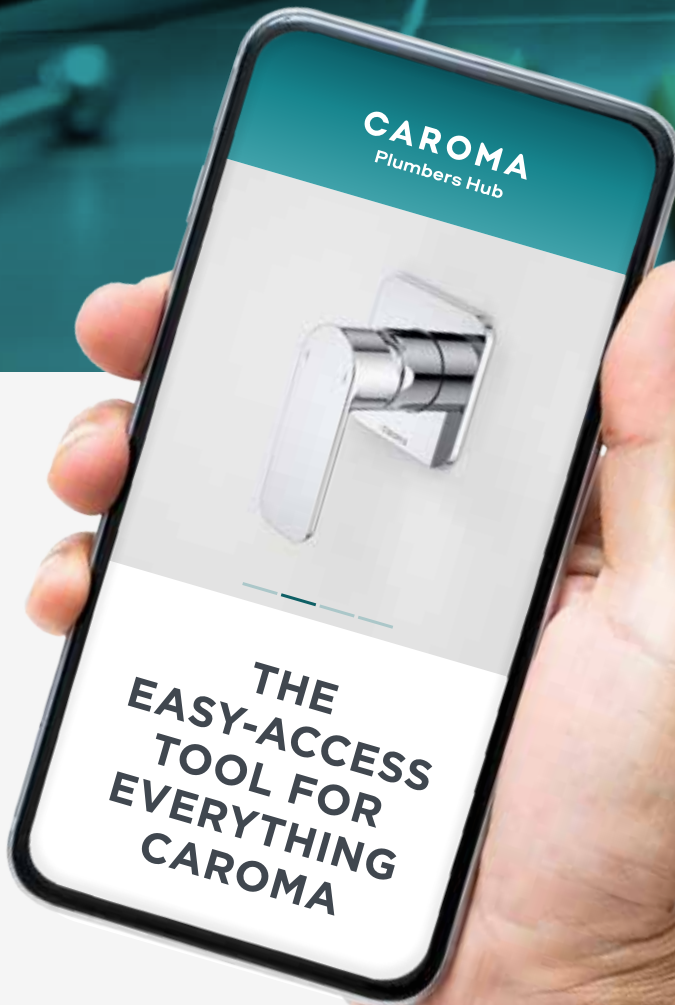
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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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# 2023 is over – let's focus on how we can improve in 2024

### FOCUS ON PROFITABILITY

Profitability is not just about the balance sheets; it's about the foundation of our businesses and the livelihoods they support. By implementing well-thought-out strategies, we empower ourselves to spend more time on the job at hand, which in turn, minimises complaints and relieves the strain on NSW Fair Trading interactions. A proactive approach ensures that we focus on quality, build positive customer relationships, and reduce the need for reactive interventions.

We've all witnessed the unfortunate collapses of larger building and plumbing companies. This highlights the stark reality of our responsibilities as business owners – to ensure consistent profitability. Our companies are the backbone of our industry, and profitability is what enables us to fulfil obligations to our employees, suppliers, and legal commitments.

### LONG-TERM VISION BEATS SHORT-TERM GAIN

The race to undercut one another might seem tempting, but let's remember that such a strategy only brings short-term relief. In the long run, it undermines the very fabric of our industry. It chips away at the value we offer to clients and ultimately erodes our own ability to maintain healthy businesses. Let's be driven by a long-term vision that preserves the integrity and sustainability of our industry.



Together, we can elevate the entire plumbing profession and ensure that each of us thrives.

Simply put, if you make a strong, healthy profit for your business, you can serve your customers and your staff better.

### REMEMBER WHO WE REALLY ARE!

In our pursuit of strategies to ensure the profitability and sustainability of our plumbing businesses, we mustn't lose sight of what truly defines us as plumbers. We are not just service providers; we are guardians of health, protectors of our communities, and craftsmen who maintain the very foundation of our nation's well-being.

The level of workmanship that our community has come to expect from us is not merely a standard; it's a promise that we uphold every time we step onto a job site. As plumbers, we play an essential role in safeguarding public health. Our

work ensures the clean delivery of water and the efficient removal of waste, which are fundamental to the health of our families, friends, and neighbours.

While it's true that our industry has seen remarkable technological advancements, such as sewer cameras and press tools, that streamline our processes, these innovations should never compromise the quality of our workmanship. The ease with which we can complete tasks today should be viewed as an opportunity to elevate our standards, not an excuse for shortcuts.

We must recognise that maintaining the high level of craftsmanship that defines us is a shared responsibility. Registered training organisations play a critical role in shaping the skills of our apprentices, but it doesn't end there. Every plumbing company that benefits from the services of these apprentices carries a responsibility

to nurture their growth, ensuring they are trained to represent our industry with distinction and pride.

Our trade is more than just a job; it's a legacy we pass down to the next generation. Let's commit ourselves to mentorship, to instilling values of excellence, and to passing on the knowledge that has been entrusted to us. Let's set an example that showcases not just the technical prowess of our trade, but also the deep sense of pride that comes from being a guardian of health and an upholder of the highest standards.

Our work is more than pipes and fixtures; it's about the safety and well-being of the communities we serve. Let's embrace our role as stewards of health and quality, standing united to ensure that

our craft is upheld with honour, distinction, and the unwavering pride it truly deserves.

Remember that operating/owning your own business is a chance of fortune or a chance of failure – don't be slaves to your business, don't let it rob you of your health, or rob you of youth and family time, don't let it destroy you.

So, to end the year, I'd like to thank you all for supporting your industry by being a member of the MPA NSW, enabling us to represent you in State and Federal issues. Finally, I wish you all a joyful Christmas break, and have a safe holiday, returning all refreshed to meet the challenges of 2024. **TMP**

**Greg McElroy**  
**President**

Together, we can  
elevate the entire  
plumbing profession...



Greg McElroy has been a member of the Master Plumbers Association NSW for some 40 years. He was active on the Executive Committee from early 2000 until 2009, serving as President for several of those years. He is now serving on the Executive Committee again in 2023, with a special focus on business training and knowledge.

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# NEWS

## LEAD-FREE PLUMBING PRODUCTS: BE PREPARED



IAPMO OCEANIA is officially JASANZ accredited to certify plumbing products to the **NCC 2022 Lead-Free WaterMark** regulations.

Contact your certification engineer or [info@iapmooceania.org](mailto:info@iapmooceania.org) to commence the assessment of your lead free WaterMark application.

Amid a global push to eliminate lead from drinking water, the Australian Building Codes Board (ABCB) has decided to limit the allowable lead content in certain plumbing products. **GRAHAM CLARK** and **GLENN TATE** from IAPMO Oceania explain.

The 2022 National Construction Code (NCC) Vol 3, Plumbing Code of Australia (PCA) introduces a new 0.25% limit for the allowable level of lead in plumbing products used for drinking water. From 1 May 2026, copper alloy plumbing products containing more than 0.25% lead, on a weighted average basis, will no longer be authorised for installation in a plumbing system used to convey drinking water. This is a move which has the strong support of IAPMO and leading stakeholders in the Australian Plumbing Industry.

### TRANSITION PERIOD

The new lead free requirements are mandatory from May 2026. During the transition period, commenced May 2023, products may be WaterMark Lead Free

(WMLF)-certified and supplied to the market with the WMLF trademark. This means products certified to the non-lead-free requirements will remain authorised for installation during the transition period.

There is an ever-growing catalogue of scientific research and data which demonstrates a causal link between lead in drinking water and irreversible detrimental impacts on human neurological and cognitive development. Lead is a cumulative toxicant, and no blood lead level is considered safe. Once lead enters the blood, it is distributed to organs such as the brain, kidneys, liver, and bones. The health impacts of lead are most profound in pregnant women and children under four. At blood lead levels once considered safe, lead is now known to be associated with irreversible health consequences including cognitive impairment, behavioural changes, anaemia, hypertension, renal impairment, immunotoxicity and toxicity to reproductive organs.

The most common source of lead in drinking water is lead leaching from plumbing products, either within the premises or upstream of the meter. The use of lead (Pb) in the manufacture of plumbing products has been common practice for generations. Lead is mostly found in copper alloys and can be present in fittings, valves, taps, mixers, appliances, water heaters and dispensers.

### COMPLIANCE WITH NCC

All plumbing products that contain copper alloy and are intended for use in contact with drinking water that are listed in the ABCB WaterMark Schedule of Products that are identified as 'Lead-Free Applies', must be WaterMark certified as being 'Lead Free' when assessed in accordance with NSF/ANSI/CAN 372 *Drinking Water System Components – Lead Content*.

IAPMO, as an accredited WaterMark Conformity Assessment Body (WMCAB), will review technical information such as: drawings, bills of materials (BOMs), material composition, wetted surface areas and test reports to verify compliance with the lead free standard. This is in addition to previous WaterMark certification requirements such as dezincification resistance, AS/NZS4020 and the performance requirements outlined in the product standard. As per the WaterMark Scheme Rules, all lead free testing must be undertaken by an accredited laboratory.

Whilst Clause (a) of A5G4 indicates that compliance can be verified by an accredited NSF/ANSI/CAN 372 test report, this ONLY applies to plumbing products listed on the WaterMark Schedule of Excluded Products (WMSEP) that are identified as requiring NSF/ANSI/CAN 372 as 'Evidence of Suitability'. These are products that do not require WaterMark certification but are still connected to a drinking water



supply, for example refrigerators with water/ice dispensing, built-in domestic coffee machines, and domestic steam ovens.

In addition to the initial lead free assessments, ongoing surveillance of the manufacturing locations has been mandated. Factory inspections review the manufacturer's processes, for example inwards goods QA checks, design control, lead free specific processes, and batch release testing programs that are being undertaken.

The certification and surveillance procedures ensure that practitioners can have confidence that the products that carry the Lead-Free

WaterMark have been assessed and monitored appropriately.

### **IAPMO**

From 1 May 2026 only lead-free versions of identified products will be authorised for use in plumbing systems used to convey drinking water. From this date consumers, plumbing practitioners and regulators will need to look for the Lead Free WaterMark to ensure the product being purchased or installed is authorised for use.

This is where IAPMO's unrivalled global experience in lead product testing and certification really comes to the fore. IAPMO R&T, North America's premier plumbing

product certification body, has been assessing and granting lead free certification for more than a decade. IAPMO Oceania is well placed to draw on that international experience and offer expert WaterMark Lead Free certification.

Eliminating lead from plumbing products is vital, achievable, and urgent, with action required now if we are to meet the 2026 deadline. **TMP**

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## ASSOCIATION UPDATES

MPA NSW only functions because of its dedicated staff and partners; below we farewell Rod Jackson upon his retirement, and welcome new member Tanya McLeod to the team.

# Goodbye and hello



(Above and right) Rod Jackson at the recent Annual Dinner.

### ROD JACKSON ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT

After years of dedicated service and a diverse career in the plumbing and vocational education industries, Rod Jackson is bidding farewell to his role as the Field Officer for Master Plumbers Apprentices Limited (MPAL). His journey has been one marked by unwavering commitment, exemplary leadership, and significant contributions to the field.

Rod's educational journey laid a strong foundation for his subsequent success. In 2007, he earned his Bachelor of Education in Adult Education from the University of Technology, equipping him with the skills to impart knowledge effectively. Further, his practical expertise was honed through certifications such as the Diploma of Hydraulic Services Design and Certificate IV in Plumbing and Services from TAFE NSW.

Throughout his career, Rod has achieved remarkable milestones. He led the installation of the metal roof for Hornsby College's eco-centre, showcasing his ability to manage students and deliver successful projects. Additionally, his development of a Recognised Prior Learning package enabled former students to return to their studies, highlighting his commitment to empowering others in the industry.

Rod's technical expertise extended to his role as a technical editor for national course notes on Backflow Prevention and developing course materials for Certificate IV in Water and Gas. He also played a pivotal role in modernising teaching methods by incorporating computer technologies into various courses and coordinating the installation of data projectors in classrooms.

His impact didn't stop at education; Rod's legacy includes designing and coordinating gas training bays, exemplifying his practical contributions to the plumbing field. Before entering the educational sector, Rod's experience as a Plumber, Supervisor, and Estimator at A. W. Edwards Pty Ltd, and later as a Company Director



at Reedslyn Pty Ltd, enriched his industry knowledge and leadership skills.

As Rod embarks on the next chapter of his life, his remarkable career is indelible in the plumbing and vocational education fields. Still, we may call him occasionally for assistance in putting together training packages for Master Plumbers Association Training (MPAT).

His dedication, leadership, and commitment to excellence will be remembered and cherished by our Association and the industry as a whole. We wish him a well-deserved retirement, filled with the same passion and enthusiasm that defined his professional journey.

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Tanya McLeod.

### TANYA JOINS THE TEAM

*From Tanya McLeod*

I would like to thank my predecessor Rod Jackson for his previous contributions and the legacy remaining from his time in the role of Field Officer at Master Plumbers Apprentices Limited. I wish Rod the very best in retirement.

I am humbled by the warm welcome I have received in this supportive and collaborative environment from both my direct colleagues and the plumbing community alike. Having worked within customer service and the construction industry, I take pride in the quality of work that I produce and understand the required commitment to not only my role as the Field Officer, but the thorough, and selective recruitment process of Master Plumbers Apprentices Limited. I will continue to assist our individual apprentices in various ways and support them as they pursue their paths to becoming skilled, knowledgeable, competent, and qualified tradespeople.

We are currently processing first year apprentice applications for 2024, and I would like to invite you to engage in shaping the future of the plumbing industry as a Host Employer to our enthusiastic apprentices at Master Plumbers Apprentices Limited. You can send your enquiries to me at [Tanya@MPAL.com.au](mailto:Tanya@MPAL.com.au)



## MEMBERS' CHARITY GOLF DAY

We would like to thank all Members and Corporate Partners attending this golf day at Stonecutters Ridge Golf Course on 18 October, which was one of the first MPA NSW events in quite a while... with plenty more to come.

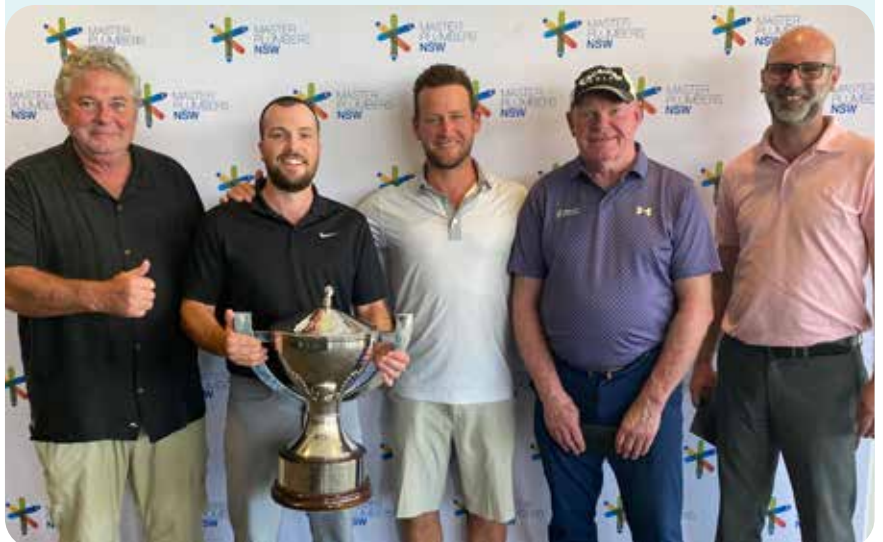
We were blessed with perfect golfing conditions, resulting in an enjoyable day for all.

Golf was followed by lunch and the ever-so-important presentation to the "President's Cup" winning group: Ben Gerometta, Troy Carter, Luke Tabone, and Rod Jackson. (See photo below.) Congratulations team and to all the other recipients of prizes throughout the day.

Our partner charity for the day was Mentoring Men ... supporting men suffering from challenges such as loneliness, anxiety, and depression, and due to the support of our Members and Sponsors we were able to make a great contribution to this worthwhile cause.

We would like to acknowledge our supporting Corporate Partners for this event:

- Major Event Sponsor – Rinnai;
- Golf Cart Drink Sponsor – Reclaim Energy – Apricus;
- Golf Hole Sponsors – Jemena, Caroma, Elson, Geberit, Reece and Rheem.







## COVER STORY: MAJOR EVENTS 2024

# 2024: AN EVENTFUL YEAR AHEAD

The Master Plumbers Association of NSW understands the importance of connecting and networking within the industry, which is why we've planned so many great events for 2024...

**E**vents provide the perfect opportunity to make those important connections; discuss industry issues and gain valuable insights into trade issues and trends; and learn about the latest in product technology and management skills, as well as how to develop and best advance your business.

Our more recent events for 2023 proved very successful, with support from both our Members and Corporate Partners:

- Annual Industry Dinner, Oatlands House – 6 September
- Charity Sydney Golf Day, Stonecutters Ridge – 18 October
- Bong Bong Picnic Raceday, Bowral – 24 November.

If you were at these events, we hope you had an enjoyable time... if you couldn't make it, we hope to see you at the next one!

**HERE'S A SNEAK PEEK AT OUR EVENTS PLANNED FOR 2024...**



### TRADE AND ROAD SHOWS

Trade shows offer you the opportunity to meet face to face with the industry's leading manufacturers to discuss product innovations and technologies. We have trade show events planned for both metropolitan and regional areas.



### FAMILY DAYS OUT

From theme parks to the zoo, we will have something to keep the whole family entertained.



### WOMEN IN THE INDUSTRY EVENTS

Our ladies will not be left out ... whether working on the tools, looking after the business, or simply supporting their partner, women play a vital role in our industry. From wine tastings to high teas, these events should not be missed.



### SPORTS-THEMED FUNCTIONS

The MPA NSW v MPA QLD State of Origin golf challenge is on. Nothing like a little healthy state-v-state rivalry.



### GOLF DAYS

Always a popular inclusion on an event calendar, we have several golf days planned for 2024. Not only a chance for you to enjoy a day on the course, but an opportunity to reward your team as well.



### SOCIAL FESTIVE EVENTS

Everyone loves a celebration during the Festive Season... our event will offer you the opportunity to bring your whole team along and reward them for their hard work throughout the year.



### WORLD PLUMBING DAY

Pencil in 11 March 2024 and join us in celebrating this very important date – you will not want to miss this one.

**CONTINUED NEXT PAGE...**

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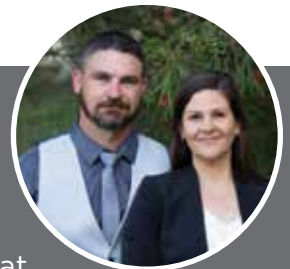


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**Peita Royal**  
Director of Plumbaround

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## MEMBERS CONFERENCE 2024

We are holding the Association's inaugural overseas Members Conference, scheduled for 14–19 October 2024, in the idyllic Shangri-La Resort in Fiji (pictured).

Delegates attending will have the opportunity to spend quality time in a relaxed environment with like-minded business owners. You will also have the option to attend daily business sessions with presenters ranging from product manufacturers and plumbing merchants to industry body representatives addressing industry-related topics.

The conference is structured as a family event – partners and children are more than welcome, and we have daily tour options and activities for everyone to enjoy. We will also have an exclusive hospitality desk available daily for any tour bookings and arrangements.

The Members conference package costs \$1,999 per person (based on twin share) – children's prices available on request.

Flights may be booked through our nominated travel organiser Nationwide Travel, or you can organise your flights independently.

Package costs may be paid by quarterly invoices.

The Conference is structured as a tax-deductible event – check your personal eligibility with your accountant.

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- Airport transfers
- Daily breakfast
- Hotel portage
- Welcome cocktail function
- Gala dinner



**For further information and to register, phone the MPA NSW team on 02 8789 7000 or email [info@masterplumbers.com.au](mailto:info@masterplumbers.com.au)**





## FEATURE: Annual Dinner

# 2023 Annual Industry Dinner

We would like to thank all members, corporate partners, and guests who attended our 2023 Annual Industry Dinner held at Oatlands House on Wednesday 6 September. Here we revisit some of the highlights!

**T**he beautiful venue, great food and above all, a wonderful group of people, set the stage for another successful MPA NSW Event. We were very fortunate to have the Minister for Fair Trading, The Hon. Anoulack Chanthivong attend the event, provide an industry-related address to the audience, and take part in the awards presentations.

We would like to acknowledge and congratulate all award winners for 2023, including:

- **115th Gold Medal Winner – Tomislav (Tomi) Protuder**
- Gold Medal Runner Up – Matthew Campbell
- Host Employer Award – JS&B Plumbing Services (see this issue's Member Profile on page 22.)
- Excellence in Workplace Health & Safety Award – JetBlack Plumbers
- Runner Up – Plumblogic
- Cadetship in Plumbing Engineering Award – Adin Van Zyl
- Best Gas Apprentice Award – Connie Neale
- Quiet Achiever Award – Bradden Hill
- Encouragement Award – John Graham.

We also acknowledge our long-term members in appreciation of their commitment, loyalty and support of the Association.

### Thank you to our attending Sponsors of the evening:

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Caroma	MGA Insurance	Energy	Orbitallife
SYNC	Plumbers	Apricus	Milwaukee
Toyota	Co-op	Toyota	ProVisual
Greenbank	Rinnai	Benchmark Group	Verto
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The MPA NSW Gold Medal Winner, Tomislav (Tomi) Protuder, accepting his award with President Greg McElroy.



Accepting the MPA NSW Gold Medal Runner Up award, is Matthew Campbell with President Greg McElroy.



Minister The Hon. Anoulack Chanthivong MP and CEO Nathaniel Smith.



Welcome to Country – Teresa Roberts.



20 Year Membership Award: Accepting this award is Peter Honey from Priority Plus Plumbing with President Greg McElroy.



Accepting the MPA NSW Cadetship in Plumbing Engineering Award award is Adin Van Zyl with Sponsor David Collins from Training Services NSW.



The Excellence in Workplace Health & Safety – Runner Up Award went to Plumblogic Pty Ltd. Accepting this award is Dane Hutchens and Tammy Hogan, with Sponsor John Hutchings from ProVisual Publishing, and Minister The Hon. Anoulack Chanthivong MP.



20 Year Membership Award: Accepting this award is David Dighton from Thornleigh Plumbing Services with President Greg McElroy.



The MPA Training Quiet Achiever Award winner: Bradden Hill. Accepting this award on behalf of Bradden is MPA Training Field Officer Rod Jackson and Sponsor Tristan Luther from NSW Fair Trading.



40 Year Membership Award: Accepting this award is Alan Boldizar from Reliance Worldwide Corporation with President Greg McElroy.





20 Year Membership Award: Accepting this award is Brett Sussmilch from Sunrise Plumbing with President Greg McElroy.



The MPA Training Best Gas Award went to Connie Neale. Accepting this award on behalf of Connie is MPA Training Trainer Paul Jarman with Sponsor Stephen Angel from Jemena.



Accepting the MPA Training Encouragement Award is John Graham, with Tim James Member for Willoughby, Shadow Minister for Fair Trading, Work Health and Safety and Building.



Accepting his 30 Year Membership Award is Jack McLeod with President Greg McElroy and MC Jean Kittson.



President Greg McElroy and Apprentice Tempny Halbert.



Ashley Lowther receives his Contribution to Industry – Life Member Award from President Greg McElroy.



20 Year Membership Award: Accepting this award is David Conroy from The Lone Drainer & Pronto, with President Greg McElroy and MC Jean Kittson.



The Excellence in Workplace Health & Safety Award went to JetBlack Plumbers. Accepting this award is Laurel Manning, with Sponsor John Hutchings from ProVisual Publishing, and Minister The Hon. Anoulack Chanthivong MP.



20 Year Membership Award: Accepting this award is Frances Ngo from Geberit with President Greg McElroy.



Jason Stone from JS&B Plumbing Services accepting the MPAL Host Employer Award with Minister The Hon. Anoulack Chanthivong MP.





## FEATURE: Fire Safety

# Fire safety: Making compliance easier

Plumbers are often under immense pressure, navigating the intricacies of running a business while simultaneously pursuing tenders, securing projects, and ensuring strict compliance with fire safety and quality assurance standards. **PETER HONEY**, Director of Priority Plus Plumbing, and Executive Committee Member of MPA NSW, reflects on the role of technology in tackling these challenges head-on.

**O**ver the past 5-10 years, I've witnessed the plumbing and construction industry grapple with a slew of significant challenges. Among these, the fast pace at which legislation and rules are evolving. Adapting to these constant changes has been an ongoing and daunting challenge.

A prime example of these stringent standards is the Australian Standard AS4072.1, which governs fire penetrations. Compliance with AS4072.1 is not a mere formality; it's a matter of public safety. Documentation of fire collars and zoning within buildings has recently become even more stringent, putting the focus on selecting the correct products and meticulously documenting the register of all collars used on site. This heightened focus on compliance has resulted in builders demanding that plumbers undertake comprehensive record-keeping to guarantee the highest standards of safety and compliance on their builds.

### RECORD KEEPING BURDENS

Complying with AS4072.1 entails meticulous documentation, encompassing every detail from material selection to installation methods. Given our busy schedules, maintaining this extensive record keeping can quickly become overwhelming, with potential lapses in compliance carrying severe consequences, including legal liabilities and reputational damage.

In the past, when facing the challenges of documentation related to fire collars and building zoning, our toolkit was very limited. The extent of our solution was primarily reliant on Excel spreadsheets. However, as the demands for accuracy and compliance intensified, it became evident that we needed a more robust and efficient approach to meet these requirements.

This realisation led us to explore advanced solutions like Firedoc, which some builders were already using and recommending. Adopting this product has since

revolutionised our ability to manage documentation, streamline compliance, and enhance the precision of our record-keeping.

### TECHNOLOGY CAN HELP

From my perspective, the advantages of integrating technology into our plumbing operations are evident. Firstly, it significantly accelerates our processes. We can now easily record the product used selecting from a pre-loaded list of our profiles, assign it to a specific location on a plan, and capture photographic evidence and issue a sticker for future inspections. This automation not only saves time but also enhances the accuracy of our record-keeping. It's all about working faster and smarter.

While the industry acknowledges the benefits of digital solutions in streamlining documentation processes, the adoption of technology has been somewhat staggered. This reluctance to embrace digital tools can result in



missed opportunities for efficiency gains and growth. Integrated software solutions like Firedoc help us reduce the likelihood of errors, ensuring compliance.

The repercussions of these compliance and technology adoption challenges on businesses in the industry are substantial. Non-compliance can tarnish reputations and lead to the loss of safety-conscious clients. Moreover, the absence of technology-driven efficiency can place businesses at a disadvantage against competitors who swiftly adapt to evolving industry norms.

### **CENTRALISED DOCUMENTATION**

Looking forward: technology is poised to play a pivotal role in our industry. One notable aspect is the centralisation of documents for all trades involved in a project. This trend is unstoppable, and we must fully embrace it. Technology will be the driving force behind efficiently collating and managing these documents, enhancing collaboration, and ensuring compliance across the board.

In my experience, Firedoc has emerged as a game-changing solution, particularly for compliance with standards like AS4072.1. This platform simplifies the labour-intensive task of documentation, ensuring the accurate recording

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## **Looking forward: technology is poised to play a pivotal role in our industry.**

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and ready accessibility of every detail, from material selection to installation procedures. Firedoc serves as a digital safety net, minimising the risk of oversights or inaccuracies that could lead to costly consequences.

Firedoc's record-keeping features have significantly improved operational efficiency. The platform empowers professionals like me to allocate our time and resources more efficiently, reducing the administrative burden of paperwork. This newfound efficiency not only enables us to meet deadlines, but also opens opportunities to take on additional projects, thereby enhancing revenue potential.

As I consider the future of our industry, one thing is abundantly clear: there's no turning back. Recognising that compliance is not just a regulatory formality, but also a cornerstone of our profession, plumbers like me must embrace technology as a means to enhance our operations and achieve compliance more effectively. The plumbing industry

is in a state of rapid transformation, and embracing these changes is imperative. Failure to adapt may result in significant financial repercussions down the line. It's essential for all professionals to stay ahead of the curve, continuously learning and evolving to meet the industry's evolving demands.

Firedoc is a fire penetration register app created by Ctrldoc, an Australian technology company run by industry experts who develop software for the construction and fire industries. **TMP**

**Visit [Ctrldoc.com](https://ctrldoc.com) to find out more.**



Peter Honey is the Director of Priority Plus Plumbing, which he has owned and operated since 1996. Peter also has a massive passion for business and the plumbing trade in general. Specialising in commercial projects and commercial and domestic maintenance, he is committed to coaching and helping fellow plumbers on their business journey. Visit [priorityplusplumbing.com.au](https://priorityplusplumbing.com.au)



## **SYDNEY WATER:** Water conservation

# Water conservation needs a group effort

Weather forecasters are predicting a hot, dry summer for Greater Sydney, and Sydney Water is calling on everyone to do their bit.

**O**ur most recent drought from mid-2017 to early February 2020 was one of the worst droughts on record. This period saw dams drop faster than ever before, reducing overall storage by over 50% in 2.5 years. This period highlighted our vulnerability to severe drought and the need to start preparing for future droughts.

The NSW Government has released the Greater Sydney Water Strategy and the Greater Sydney Drought Response Plan to address water planning in the immediate, mid- and long-term, and give guidance for what to do if we find ourselves in drought again. You can find both documents by searching online.

Sydney Water is keen to do what it can to hold off the impacts of drought on our water supply for as long as possible. We'll also be encouraging all community members to save water throughout summer. We're particularly calling on industries that work with our community to promote and assist customers with water-saving opportunities, and we think plumbers are a natural fit!

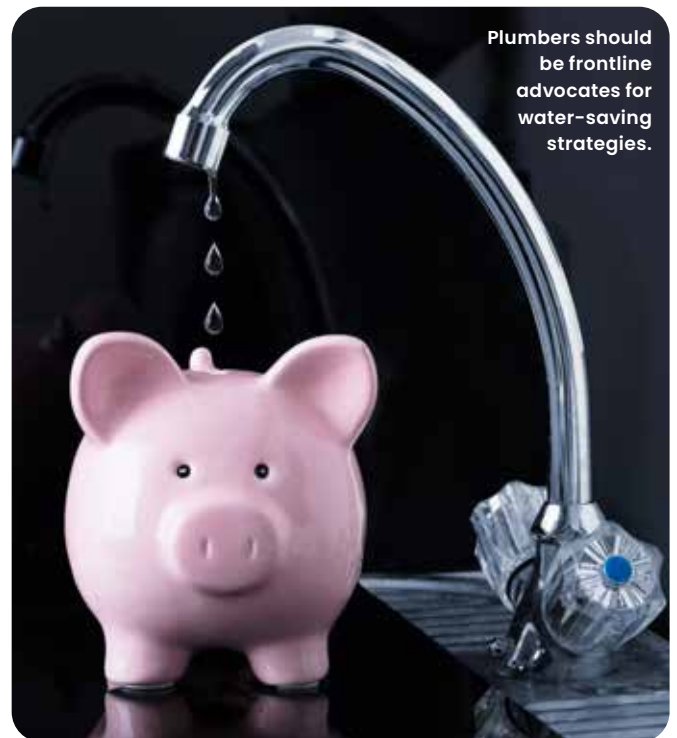
### **USEFUL TIPS**

We all know fixing leaking taps can save water, but could you recommend more water-efficient options when they need replacing? Could you mention the Water Efficiency Labelling and Standards (WELS) scheme so that customers know it helps compare their appliances and fixtures? If they need convincing, replacing a shower that flows at 15L/min with a 5-star shower at 6L/min will save an average of \$380 a year on their water bill! You could

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**Sydney Water is keen to do what it can to hold off the impacts of drought on our water supply...**

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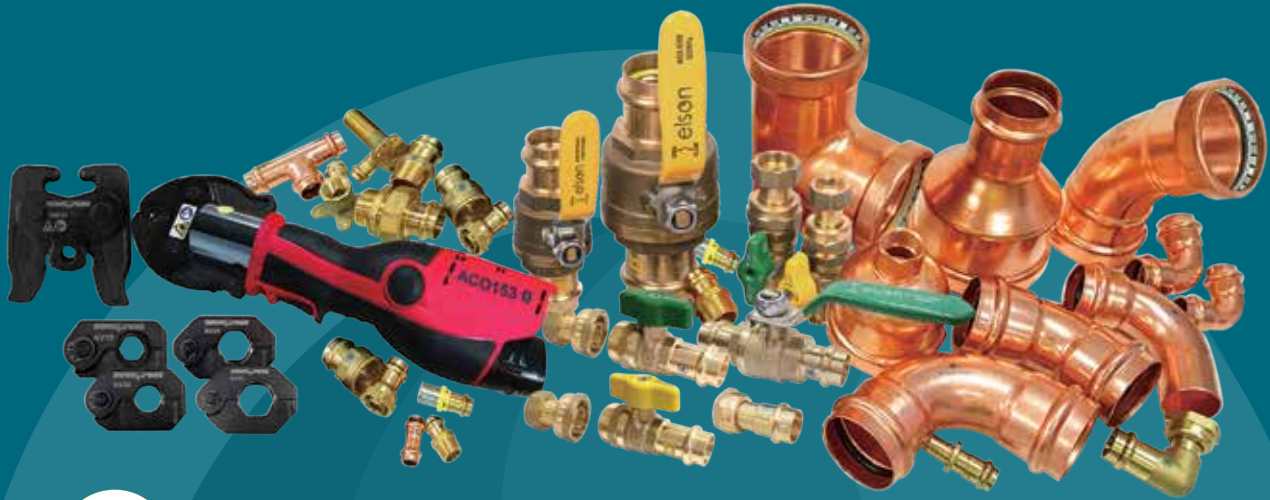
Plumbers should be frontline advocates for water-saving strategies.

also remind them that only running their dishwasher or washing machine when it's full saves them water and electricity. Or that their concrete path or driveway gets just as clean with a broom rather than their hose – and makes it easier for you to find their leaks if everything isn't already wet.

So that's our challenge to you. Next time you're chatting to a client, can you make some suggestions about water efficiency? Just pointing them to our website for tips and tricks would be helpful. Can you help Greater Sydney stay out of drought just that little bit longer? **TMP**

For more information visit [sydneywater.com.au](http://sydneywater.com.au)





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## FEATURE: Member Profile

# Giving back to the industry

Recently named 'Host of the Year' in your Association's training organisation MPAL (Master Plumbers Apprentices Limited), Jason Stone from JS&B Plumbing Services has hosted some 225 apprentices since 2011... Below Jason reveals some personal insights into the plumbing profession.

**Q How did your career in plumbing begin?** Apprentice with Ross Howard Plumbing.

**Q Were you destined to work in the plumbing industry from an early age?** My father was a plumber, so I was connected to the plumbing trade since I left school.

**Q Have you worked in any industries apart from plumbing?** No, only plumbing.

**Q Have you had many mentors throughout your career?** My father is one, and Ross, Greg and Rob Howard for their approach to good workmanship, attention to detail, ethics, and customer relations.

**Q You are known as a great supporter of apprentice training. Why is training so important to you?** It's important to bring on the next generations of plumbers with solid trade experience and knowledge. I feel proud when apprentices receive accolades and complete their training to a high standard.

**Q Would you describe yourself as a 'people person'?** I feel this is key to strong relationships with honesty and integrity both ways.

**Q What have been the most significant changes in the industry throughout your career?** Changes in technology in tools in the plumbing industry, and changes in various materials for pipeline supplies HDPE/MDPE systems.

**Q What has been your most challenging assignment or project?** The scale and time constraints of working in hospitals.

**Q What has been your greatest achievement?** The success of our family business and long-term employees reflecting the workplace environment, and working relationships with long-term clients is testament to work quality.

**Q How important has your family been to your career?** Starting the business with family was easy, and a natural direction with my father and brother in the industry.



Jason Stone from JS&B Plumbing in Kingsgrove has helped more than 200 apprentices to enter the plumbing profession.

**“It's important to bring on the next generations of plumbers...”**

This has continued to be a support with my own wife and daughters now working in the business and supporting the company.

**Q Will technology ever fix all plumbing problems?** Human involvement will always be essential to install, test and commission, yet advancements are complementary to this application.

**Q Have you noticed any changes to the way society regards plumbers?** Over 50 years, people's perceptions appear to have changed, holding plumbers in higher esteem due to the importance of their work.

**Q Is plumbing the best career in the world?** It has its moments... but I enjoy the different aspects and challenges it brings.

**Q What will you be doing in five years' time? And then?** Continuing to provide plumbing to the Sydney Metro Area, and hopefully some more overseas holidays here and there. **TMP**

Editor's Note: See *Apprentice Stories* on page 30, which profiles JS&B's apprentice Bradden Hill.



## LICENSING

Licensing requirements for building work are about to be reformed in NSW. Our friends at **KEYSTONE LAWYERS** explain.

# New proposed building licensing regime in NSW

Currently in NSW, builders who propose to do residential building work valued at more than \$5,000 need a building license before they are legally permitted to conduct those residential building works.

These licensing requirements are currently captured within the Home Building Act 1989 (NSW) ('HBA'), which broadly outlines licensing requirements for builders who will conduct 'residential' or 'specialist' building works.

However, this is soon set to change as the NSW Government proposes to implement new legislation in NSW to reform the licensing regime currently captured within the HBA.

The new licensing regime under the proposed Building Bill 2022 ('the Bill') will eliminate 'contractor licenses' in NSW. Instead, an individual who intends to 'carry out' regulated building work will be required to be licensed under the Bill, regardless of whether the work they conduct is residential or commercial.

### WHAT WORK WILL NEED A LICENCE?

Under the Bill, a person carrying out 'regulated work' will need to be licensed. Generally, 'regulated work' will require a person to be licensed, or require a person to carry out works under the supervision of a licensed individual under the following types of works:



### The Bill will only provide for 'provisional' and 'full' licenses.

- Specialist work
- Engineering work
- Building work.

It is to be noted that civil construction works are not captured under the Bill, and, as such, a licence for these types of works will not be required under the Bill. This aligns with how the law currently treats civil construction works, meaning no changes will be made. The NSW Government has noted that if evidence supports a change, there is potential for civil construction works to be captured in future reforms.

### PROPOSED LICENSING FRAMEWORK

The Bill reduces the types of licences currently available under the HBA. The Bill will only provide for 'provisional' and 'full' licenses.

The NSW Government also proposes under the Bill to reduce the current threshold value for when a builder is required to hold a licence from \$5,000 to \$3,000. The NSW Government proposes to change this to capture more building work and provide consumers with better protection. This change will limit the work that can be done without a licence to works under \$3,000.

Furthermore, it is intended that the regulations to the Bill will specify certain types of work where a licence is mandatory regardless of the value. These include specialist work such as air-conditioning, draining, electrical, gas fitting, plumbing, mechanical services, medical gas, refrigeration, waterproofing, as well as pre-purchase building and pest inspections.

### CONCLUSION

The proposed framework for the new licensing regime that will be implemented under the Bill is still subject to change. The NSW Government is seeking continued input from stakeholders to further refine the proposed licensing regime and help develop the supporting Regulations to the Bill.

Should you wish to know specifically how the proposed Bill will apply to your trade, we at Keystone will be able to provide you with advice specific to your circumstances. **TMP**

**Visit [keystonelawyers.com.au](https://www.keystonelawyers.com.au) for more information.**





## TRAINING

Asbestos and (more recently) silicosis awareness within the trades is a major focus of SafeWork NSW for PCBUs – and it’s also an important responsibility for plumbing businesses.

**ROD JACKSON** comments.

# Asbestos and silicosis awareness

**L**ook at the SafeWork NSW website: What type of workers need asbestos awareness training? Answer:

- Building and construction workers.
- Plumbers, electricians, carpenters and joiners, plasterers, gasfitters, painters and decorators, demolishers, and floor finishers.
- Workers who enter ceiling spacers.

Asbestos materials and materials containing asbestos in the plumbing industry are numerous. Some examples are old water mains, roofing sheets, roof gutters, box gutters and downpipes, insulation rope lagging on hot water and steam pipes, and external applied boiler insulation coverings.

Australia phased out the use of asbestos from the 1980s, and banned its use, sale, or importation in 2003. Before it was banned, asbestos was used in over 3,000 products including construction materials. Many homes and buildings built or renovated before 1990 still contain asbestos.

Plumbers might unknowingly encounter these material fibers during their usual work activities, and it is important to be informed and have the required awareness education.

### SHORT VIDEOS

SafeWork NSW provides “Asbestos Safety for Tradies” through a series of short video presentations in several languages. Videos can be accessed through the following link: [www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLbiniu1pEg1LypI9V2lsCDXxgDmto5gx](http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLbiniu1pEg1LypI9V2lsCDXxgDmto5gx)

### Initially, you may not notice any symptoms...

Further detailed educational information on asbestos can be found on the Australian Government Asbestos Safety and Eradication Agency website, covering these topics:

- Asbestos in the home
- Asbestos in the workplace
- Asbestos in the environment
- Asbestos Safety Information

See [www.asbestossafety.gov.au/research-publications/publications](http://www.asbestossafety.gov.au/research-publications/publications)

### WHAT IS SILICOSIS?

Silicosis is a type of pulmonary fibrosis – a lung disease caused by breathing in tiny bits of silica: a common mineral found in sand, quartz, and many other types of rock. Silica dust is created when cutting, grinding, or polishing certain types of stone, rock, sand, and clay. Silicosis mainly affects workers exposed to silica dust in jobs associated with construction and mining. It can be found in all forms of stone and masonry materials and the dust produced from dry cutting these materials. Methods used to eliminate exposure to the dust include the use of water to wet cut, dust extraction fans, and/or dust capture and collection tools.

The level of exposure and the length of time a person is exposed will affect the type of silicosis which

may develop. Initially, you may not notice any symptoms, as the disease progresses over time and the symptoms develop slowly. The three types of silicosis are recognised as acute, accelerated, and chronic.

Further educational reading on construction-specific silica resources, as well as a 60-second video presentation by Dr Karl, is available on the SafeWork NSW website using the following link:

[www.safework.nsw.gov.au/hazards-a-z/hazardous-chemical/priority-chemicals/crystalline-silica](http://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/hazards-a-z/hazardous-chemical/priority-chemicals/crystalline-silica)

### CERT III

The current training package qualification for CPC32420 Certificate III in Plumbing, which Plumbing apprentices complete during their apprenticeship, contains both asbestos and silicosis awareness in the knowledge evidence. In addition, this knowledge evidence is contained in the current White Card unit of competence CPCWHS1001 *Prepare to Work Safely in The Construction Industry*, which is a qualification completed by all workers entering the construction industry. **TMP**



Rod Jackson is the Compliance Administrator for MPA Training. A plumber by trade, Rod is very well known to the plumbing industry, having had oversight of the training of generations of plumbing apprentices throughout his lengthy career with TAFE NSW prior to commencing with MPA NSW. Email [info@masterplumbers.com.au](mailto:info@masterplumbers.com.au)



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Max Flow 735 L/Min | Max Head 32m

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## WOMEN IN PLUMBING

# Are you ready for some coaching?

**L**ife was bustling for James and Georgia, the dynamic duo behind a successful NSW plumbing business. With seven years in the industry, their reputation was solid, but their pockets were not as heavy as they'd hoped. Business was booming, but profits were stagnant. Worse still, they couldn't even take a holiday without being tied to their phones – they were like a pair of headless chooks running around.

Stress was their shadow, and flexibility was a long-lost friend. Their family life? Just as stressful. This wasn't what they signed up for. It was clear that something had to change, and it was time to turn their plumbing empire into a well-oiled money-making machine.

Enter Trades Business Coach, Tamika Johnston. With dozens of transformed businesses under her belt, Tamika embarked on a journey with James and Georgia that would change not just their business but their entire lives.

### THE TRANSFORMATION

Fast forward seven months, and their business is nothing short of unrecognisable. Georgia, now well on her way to "calm", has reclaimed precious time back.

Ever felt like your plumbing business is going down the drain? An independent business coach can help! Below, we speak to Trades Business Coach **TAMIKA JOHNSTON** about common issues and problem-solving tips...



### It's about doing the right things.

The knots of stress that once furrowed her brow have eased, making way for more "me" time, for her, the gym! Her most significant task, though, was caring for their two energetic young children, and she finally had the headspace to be the mum she wanted and needed to be.

But it wasn't just about family; their business had undergone a miraculous transformation. It was no longer the frustrating, chaotic endeavour that had them pulling their hair out. Profits are now measurable, and they now have clarity on how to actually make a profit.

### TRICKS UP HER SLEEVE

Tamika had a few tricks up her sleeve that she shared with James and Georgia. The most significant was all about setting boundaries. You see, they had a knack for saying yes to everything, no matter how unreasonable the request. With Tamika's guidance, they learned to say no to the right things with confidence. The results? Well, they were nothing short of astonishing. Did they put in the effort? Absolutely. Was it insurmountable? Definitely not.

With Tamika's support, they realised that the strategies weren't rocket science. In fact, they were remarkably straightforward. Sometimes, all you need is a fresh perspective and someone to show you the way. This is precisely what Tamika did for James and Georgia.





If nothing changes, then, well, nothing changes.

In the end, Josh and Georgia's story is an inspiring testament to the power of transformation. Their plumbing business is now a well-oiled machine, churning out profits and personal freedom in abundance. Their journey, though not without effort, has been a revelation. It was about finding the right strategies, setting boundaries and regaining the optimism and confidence that once fuelled their entrepreneurial dreams.

In a few short months, Tamika will leave Josh and Georgia knowing they are a happier and more harmonious couple than they were seven months ago when she met them. The optimism for Josh and Georgia's business shines through as well as the positivity that Tamika had instilled in them. They have turned their plumbing business from a source of stress into a machine to fuel the lifestyle THEY want as well as prosperity. All it took was a little guidance and a whole lot of determination.

### REGISTER NOW

So, if you're feeling stuck in your business or struggling to find the work-life balance you crave, take a page out of Josh and Georgia's book. Reach out to a business coach like Tamika and start your own transformational journey. After all, as Josh and Georgia would tell you, the only thing better than a plumbing problem with an easy fix is a life problem with a clear solution.

As a member of MPA NSW – you will have FREE access to the 2024 Business Coaching with Tamika starting 23 February 2024.

Register your interest with [membership@masterplumbers.com.au](mailto:membership@masterplumbers.com.au) **TMP**

James and Georgia now have a noticeably different demeanour, one that includes optimism and confidence. The weight of the world has lifted from their shoulders, and it was replaced with a newfound enthusiasm for their business. James now reminisces about the time they thought they'd never catch a break.

"It's amazing how things can change when you have the right guidance," adds Georgia. "It's not just about the business; it's about our entire life. We're enjoying the ride now, not just enduring it."

### 'AHA' MOMENT

The 'aha' moment came when they realised that they couldn't do it all. Their plumbing business was without guidance or clarity; however, Tamika helped them steer

it with a clear course in mind. They learned that success isn't about all of the 'things'. It's about doing the right things.

Their journey with Tamika involved a mix of hands-on strategies, personal development, and a bit of good-natured humour to keep the spirits high. They fondly recount the moments when they realised that laughter was not just the best medicine, but also the key to resilience.

So, how do you follow in Josh and Georgia's footsteps? The answer is simple: book a free business audit with Tamika today – check out the MPA NSW New Members offers page on the website or contact Julie Woods, your Membership Manager, on 8789 7000.

Don't wait another 12 months to continue on the same path.



## BUSINESS BANTER

In the world of small plumbing businesses, financial choices can have an extensive impact on your journey as a business owner. **ADRIAN FADANI** and **MONICA GALEA**, from TradesFormation, offer some expert advice.

# Mastering your business finances: A proven strategy for debt management

**F**inancial decisions often determine whether your business thrives and grows or faces significant challenges that could block its success. One of the most critical financial decisions is whether to take on debt. As a business owner, it is critical to understand the difference between debt that will help you grow your business, and debt that will cause your business to crumble. In this article, we will explore the differences between these two types of debt and provide you with the knowledge to make smart financial decisions.

### UNDERSTANDING THE DEBT DIVIDE: GOOD VS BAD

First things first, let's get crystal clear on the difference between good debt and bad debt. Good debt is your business' best friend. It's an investment in your future, a way to increase your revenue, and, importantly, a path to quick and easy repayment. Think of it as purchasing new equipment or vehicles that will grow your business and, in turn, lead to more sales and more profits.

On the flip side, bad debt is the villain of the financial world. It's borrowing without a roadmap to revenue growth. Maybe it's used for non-productive purposes, or perhaps there is no clear plan on

**Good debt is your business' best friend. It's an investment in your future, a way to increase your revenue.**

how to pay it back. In any case, it's a slippery slope that can lead to financial chaos.

### THE ART OF DEBT PLANNING

Now, let's get into the essentials of debt planning. You've identified that your debt is the good kind, the kind that fuels growth. But what's next? Here's a step-by-step plan to ensure your business thrives:

**1. Do Your Homework:** Resist the temptation to jump into the first debt option that crosses your path. Take your time, explore all your options. Traditional bank loans, private financing, or specialised plumbing lenders – all are on the table. Compare interest rates, the length of the loan, and the repayment amounts, and watch out for those sneaky additional fees (like late fees). Remember, what worked for your buddy's business may not be the best fit for yours. Do your research and make an informed choice.

**2. Plan for the Future:** Before you commit to debt, ensure your business can handle the load. Evaluate your cash flow to see if you can make repayments without sinking into more debt. Prepare for the worst-case scenario: What if the revenue boost you expect doesn't happen? Can you still handle the repayments without breaking a sweat?

- Evaluate your business' current financial health.
- Consider how the debt fits into your long-term financial strategy.
- Create a detailed budget that includes the debt repayment.
- Set up an emergency fund to cover unexpected expenses.
- Have a worst-case scenario plan that covers potential risks.

**3. Assess the Need for Debt:** The million-dollar question – does every business need debt, or can you thrive by reinvesting your hard-earned funds? While growth without debt is possible, it can be a slow journey. Debt, when used strategically, can turbocharge your expansion by allowing you to seize opportunities you might otherwise miss. However, this isn't a one-size-fits-all solution. The key is to approach debt with a clear strategy and a full understanding of how it will



Debt, when used strategically, can turbocharge your expansion...

benefit your business. And don't forget, you can also contribute funds to your business by extending a personal loan.

### THE ROADMAP TO DEBT SUCCESS

Now, let's dig deeper into the specifics of creating a roadmap for successful debt management. Consider this roadmap as your trusted guide through the financial journey of your business.

- 1. Set Clear Objectives:** Define specific, measurable, and achievable goals for your business. How much do you aim to increase revenue by taking on this debt? What is the timeline for achieving this growth? Setting clear objectives will help you measure the success of your debt-financed plans.
- 2. Create a Debt Repayment Plan:** A solid plan for repaying the debt is crucial. Break down the repayment schedule, including interest, into manageable chunks. Ensure that your cash flow estimates align with these repayments, allowing for both your regular expenses and debt obligations.
- 3. Review and Adjust:** Your debt management strategy should be flexible. Regularly review your

progress and financial health. If things aren't going as planned, be ready to adjust your strategy. This might involve revising your repayment plan or exploring new revenue-generating opportunities.

### 4. Build a Strong Financial Foundation:

Debt is a tool, but it's most effective when your financial foundation is strong. Focus on building up cash reserves and improving your business operations for efficiency. The stronger your financial base, the better you can overcome unexpected challenges.

### IN CONCLUSION: YOUR PATH TO FINANCIAL FREEDOM

Deciding to take on debt is no small matter. Good debt can be a game-changer, driving your business to new heights, while bad debt can spell trouble. The answer? Think deeply about what your business truly needs, explore your options, and plan a clear roadmap for how that debt will fuel your growth. Above all, never stop learning and researching. Stay ahead of the curve and make informed decisions to give your business the best shot at success. After all, financial freedom is within your grasp. **TMP**



Adrian Fadini, founder of TradesFormation, and Australia's leading Sales and Business Coach for maintenance tradesmen, transitioned from running a successful plumbing business to empowering trade business owners. His training expertise and dedication have elevated many from mere survival to achieving million-dollar business milestones. For more information visit [tradesformation.com.au](http://tradesformation.com.au)  
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Monica Galea is the resident Financial Business Coach and Management Accountant at TradesFormation. Kickstarting her career in her brother's electrical business, Monica has since transformed the profitability of over 50 maintenance trade companies, turning potential into sustainable success. E: [monica@tradesformation.com.au](mailto:monica@tradesformation.com.au)  
M (02) 7251 6925.





## APPRENTICE STORIES

Apprentice **BRADDEN HILL** from JS&B Plumbing says it's important to realise that skills take time to develop.

# Know the value of patience

**Q What level have you reached with your apprenticeship? Where are you doing your apprenticeship?** I have reached third year and I'm with JS&B Plumbing.

**Q Did you feel prepared for the first day of your apprenticeship?** I felt prepared enough but since it was my first time on the job, I didn't know what to expect. With help from my co-workers and a few weeks under my belt I felt fine.

**Q Has it been hard to balance training and work obligations?** Since my training and work go hand in hand it has been easy. The cadetship required me to complete TAFE training in bulk.

**Q Have travel requirements during your apprenticeship posed any issues?** Since most places I go to are at least 30 minutes away, it was somewhat difficult at the beginning, but I got used to it as time went by. Tolls are still a problem since I have to pay for them myself.

**Q Have you learned everything you expected to during your apprenticeship? Or has it been more of an introduction to real 'on the job' instruction later?**  
I have learnt everything I expected to in relation to my TAFE training – and then some.

**Q You must have had some great training mentors along the way – what makes a 'good instructor'?** The most important thing is patience and understanding. Understanding that I am a beginner and don't know everything, and patient enough to give me time to learn everything. A good instructor doesn't hold your hand but doesn't throw you at a job site expecting it to be done to a standard that they are familiar with.



Third-year apprentice Braden Hill.

**Q What advice would you give to a new apprentice about to start day one?** Ask questions and understand that failure is inevitable. Learn from those mistakes and try with the advice and help from your co-workers to build yourself to become better.

**Q Looking back, what have been the main highlights?** Working in a team and being able to lean on someone if you are unsure about how to continue.

**Q Where are you working now? Main fields of expertise?** I am working in hospitals and schools with common areas being water, drainage.

**Q When you're not working or studying, what are your favourite hobbies or pastimes?**  
I like to read, play video games, go on hikes and general outdoor activities. **TMP**

Ask questions and understand that failure is inevitable.

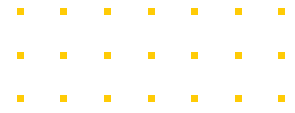
Editor's Note: Also, see our Member Profile column on page 22, which showcases Jason Stone from JS&B

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At a glance...



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## REGIONAL RAMBLINGS



I have been in business since 1968 (still going, now run by my son Brad), so now you know I am old. BUT I would like to give some information to regional plumbers about the benefits of joining the Master Plumbers Association – and I am not a scammer or getting paid!

I know – and I hear it often enough – that most businesses in the building trades, depending on size, have to employ a person to look after all the rules and regulations to make sure their business follows the rules, because the plumber is busy doing what he/she is trained for, i.e., Plumbing, Draining, Roofing and Gasfitting, and not wasting time on paperwork tasks.

For 45 years I have been a member of the Master Plumbers Association and used them to keep on top of matters like paying the correct wages, ensuring all staff get the correct interpretation of any rules in the Australian Standards, helping to get advice about a legal problem, and to make the most of the Members Benefits from all the companies and associations that offer benefits or discounts to members (see the Member Benefits itemised on page 31).

### MASTER BUILDERS TOO

I also joined the Master Builders Association (over 26 years ago, though we don't do any construction work). But, with information coming from the Master Builders and the Master Plumbers, we're always being

It's not always easy for regional plumbers to keep updated about issues and regulations, writes our regional expert **PETER RICHARDSON**. Which is why membership of MPA NSW is so important...

## Staying one step ahead of the rules

### ...we're always being updated about construction industry rules...

updated about construction industry rules, regulations, and changes in the industry – and ensuring the business doesn't encounter any problems for non-compliance.

Because builders have to get CPD, they have formal training sessions of different classifications (Waterproofing, Working at Heights, First Aid, Inspection reports, etc), so a plumber might want to use these classifications as models when expanding his or her business – you get information about training programs, where and when, via email.

### NEW CEO

MPA NSW has a relatively new CEO, Nathaniel Smith, who started off as a plumber. As you can see from Nathaniel's own words below, he has experience in plumbing, marketing and politics.

"I started my plumbing apprenticeship in 1997 and ran my own business as a licenced plumber for several years. I then took up an opportunity in 2010 to work in a PR and Marketing and Government relations firm, where I acquired a Master of Arts in Organisational Communications at Charles Sturt University (CSU); also, during that

time, I was elected as a Councillor to Kogarah City Council from 2012–16. In 2016, I then worked for a Federal Senator/Minister. Following that, I was appointed a Senior Advisor to the NSW State Planning Minister before being elected as the State Member for Wollondilly in 2019.

During that time, I served on several Parliamentary committees and then was promoted to Government Whip in the Perrottet Government. I have worked and served at the Federal, State and Local Government levels.

As your new CEO of MPA NSW, I use my experiences to embolden the Association's advocacy efforts, maintain our high standards for education and certification, and continue to promote innovative solutions to make our industry more efficient and effective."

So, have a think about what I said and join the Master Plumbers Association of NSW and maybe Master Builders as well and have a successful time in business. **TMP**



Peter Richardson, from Sidney & Richardson in Ballina, NSW, is a lifelong plumbing professional with an intimate knowledge of regional affairs. Contact Peter at [admin@sidneyrichardson.com.au](mailto:admin@sidneyrichardson.com.au)



## SPONSORED CONTENT

# Why choose Rinnai hot water systems

Reliable and efficient hot water solutions



**W**ith a legacy of innovation and a commitment to delivering quality, Rinnai offers a range of compelling reasons why you should choose our hot water systems. When it comes to hot water systems, Rinnai consistently stands out as a symbol of quality, innovation, and efficiency. Rinnai's reputation in the industry is built on a foundation of decades of excellence, pioneering technology, and an unwavering commitment to delivering reliable, energy-efficient solutions for homes and businesses.

So, why is Rinnai hot water considered so good? The answer lies in a combination of factors that set this brand apart in the world of water heating. Rinnai's hot water systems offer a harmonious blend of efficiency, reliability, and environmental consciousness, making them a popular choice for discerning consumers seeking not just comfort, but also sustainable solutions.

### **ENDLESS HOT WATER, CONTINUOUS FLOW**

In the early 90s Rinnai forever changed the way Australians enjoyed hot water, with the launch of Australia's first fully electronic

gas Continuous Flow hot water systems. This revolutionary leap provided total confidence and comfort by supplying homeowners with endless hot water. That's Rinnai Infinity.

### **ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY**

Rinnai is dedicated to environmental sustainability. Our water heaters are designed to emit fewer greenhouse gases than traditional tank-style water heaters. By choosing Rinnai, you're not only saving money but also reducing your carbon footprint. We are constantly revolutionising new products which lean on natural resources, for a sustainable way to provide Australian homes with hot water.

### **QUALITY & DURABILITY**

Rinnai is synonymous with quality. Our hot water systems are built to last, providing you with a durable and reliable source of hot water for years to come. You can trust Rinnai to deliver consistent performance and peace of mind.

### **SAFETY FEATURE**

Your safety is paramount, and Rinnai's hot water systems are equipped with advanced safety features, including temperature

controls, flame failure detection, and overheat protection. You can feel confident in the safety of your hot water supply.

### **INDUSTRY-LEADING WARRANTY**

Rinnai stands by the quality and performance of our hot water systems with industry-leading warranties, which demonstrates our confidence in the longevity and reliability of our products.

### **TRUSTED BRAND**

For decades, Rinnai has been a leading brand in hot water solutions. Thousands of homeowners and businesses rely on Rinnai for their hot water needs – make the smart choice for your home by investing in a Rinnai hot water system. Enjoy energy efficiency, endless hot water, and the peace of mind that comes with choosing a trusted and innovative brand.

When choosing a Rinnai hot water system, it's important to assess your customer's specific hot water needs and budget to determine which model and capacity are the best fit for their home. **TMP**

**Visit [rinnai.com.au](http://rinnai.com.au) to find out more.**





## REGULATION & SAFETY

**JOHNNY AUDITORE**, State Inspector, shares his thoughts about staying safe on the job.

# SAFETY MATTERS: PROTECT YOURSELF AND YOUR MATES ON THE JOB

**S**afeWork NSW is reminding all plumbers and tradespeople about the importance of staying safe at work.

There are a number of safety issues plumbers and contractors can face on the job, exposing them to harm and potential hazards to get the job done. Monitoring and supervising young and vulnerable workers is imperative. Make sure they are shown the ropes – share resources like our pocket guide to construction safety or hold a toolbox before the work starts. Don't just leave them to their own devices, this is where accidents happen!

As a SafeWork Inspector, part of our role outside of issuing notices and penalties is to also help industry understand what they need to do to comply through education and awareness. So, below we have put together advice from recent campaigns to help you protect yourself and your co-workers on site. We have also included useful links so you can go straight to our website to get more information.

Older workers have a responsibility to educate younger people about vital safety procedures. (Photo source: SafeWork image library.)



Silica dust has been linked to silicosis and other deadly pulmonary diseases.

## Silica dust is deadly

Bricks, stone and blocks contain deadly silica, but you can stay safe by:

- using and providing workers with respirators that meet Australian Standards;
- using pre-cut bricks/blocks and ready mixed concrete where possible;
- using wet saws, block splitters and/or on-tool dust extraction to minimise dust;
- mixing dry cement in a well-ventilated area;
- cleaning up using water and/or dust vacuums; and
- undertaking air monitoring as required.

Learn more about how to protect yourself and your workers around silica at: [safework.nsw.gov.au/your-industry/construction/safety-topics/silica](https://safework.nsw.gov.au/your-industry/construction/safety-topics/silica).



Even falls from low heights can be fatal.

## Don't let your next step be your last

Falls from as little as two metres can be fatal. Protect yourself and your workmates by:

- using scaffolding and temporary work platforms that have been erected by a competent person; and
- talking to the site supervisor if you don't have the proper safety equipment or if the scaffold is missing components.

For scaffolds over four metres, you must hold a scaffolding high-risk work licence to erect, alter or dismantle it – this includes mobile scaffolding.

Never remove components from a scaffold if you don't hold a scaffolding high-risk work licence.

Learn more about how to work safely at heights at: [safework.nsw.gov.au/your-industry/work-safely-at-heights-in-construction](https://safework.nsw.gov.au/your-industry/work-safely-at-heights-in-construction).



## Move it, don't lose it

Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSDs) can result from gradual wear and tear or sudden injury to parts of the body. MSDs can have long-term, costly impacts for businesses and workers, but you can prevent them using simple measures.

Plumbers often experience MSDs due to working in awkward or cramped positions, repetitive movements and working with hands raised. You can avoid MSDs by:

- using pulleys or trolleys to lift/move materials where possible;
- reducing unnecessary materials handling; and
- implementing work/rest/task rotation cycles to limit repetitive movements.

Learn more about how to avoid MSDs at: [safework.nsw.gov.au/resource-library/musculoskeletal-disorders](https://safework.nsw.gov.au/resource-library/musculoskeletal-disorders).



## Plan ahead to reduce risks

Use our building and construction resources at [safework.nsw.gov.au/your-industry/construction](https://safework.nsw.gov.au/your-industry/construction) to help you:

- hold toolbox talks;
- train workers in safe work procedures; and
- supervise labourers and young or inexperienced workers.

Prepare safe work method statements (SWMS) for silica exposure and working at heights – and make sure they are followed using our resources at: [safework.nsw.gov.au/your-industry/construction/construction/general-requirements-accordians/prepare-safe-work-method-statement](https://safework.nsw.gov.au/your-industry/construction/construction/general-requirements-accordians/prepare-safe-work-method-statement).

For further information on how to stay safe on site, visit our website and download our Pocket Guide to Construction Safety at [safework.nsw.gov.au/your-industry/construction](https://safework.nsw.gov.au/your-industry/construction).



Never ignore recurrent strains or pains.



# NEW PRODUCT

Our New Product guru **BILL ARMSTRONG** has come across plenty of fascinating new products in recent months, but he says the FC Sheeting Puddle Flange Recess DISC by Innovative Tools Australia is a standout...

## PRECISION CUTTING OF FLANGE RECESSES

**In the world of precision tools,** innovation takes centre stage when it comes to streamlining tasks and achieving remarkable results.

Innovative Tools Australia achieves these goals in spades with the FC Sheeting Puddle Flange Recess Disc, which is a ground-breaking, patented solution designed to transform the way professionals approach recessing PVC puddle flanges for FC sheeting flooring.

With the ability to complete this task in under a minute, it sets a new standard in the market, making precision work faster and more efficient than ever before.

### AT A GLANCE – ADVANTAGES

**COMPREHENSIVE KIT:** The FC Sheeting Puddle Flange Recess DISC includes a 230mm Diamond Grinding Disc, a 150mm Diamond Tip Holesaw (pre-attached), and a 280mm Custom Dust Shroud. This all-in-one kit equips professionals with everything they need to tackle their tasks efficiently.

**TURBO PRECISION:** Thanks to its innovative design, this tool offers swift and efficient cutting, making your job more productive and stress-free. Say goodbye to time-consuming recessing methods.

**EXCEPTIONAL PERFORMANCE AND DURABILITY:** The patented segmented diamond tip design ensures that this tool delivers outstanding results consistently. Its built-in turbo precision takes your work to a whole new level.

**EFFORTLESS AND EFFICIENT CUTTING EXPERIENCE:** With the FC Sheeting Puddle Flange Recess DISC, the complex task of recessing PVC puddle flanges becomes remarkably straightforward and efficient.

**For more information and purchases, contact The Waterproofing Shop on (02) 8021 3517 or visit [thewaterproofingshop.com.au](http://thewaterproofingshop.com.au)**



Precision recess cutting can be completed in less than a minute.



Bill Armstrong has been a member of the Association for over 25 years. He has served on the Executive Committee for the last 21 years. He is a Past President (2003–2005), Guardian (2007–Present) and Life Member (since 2015). Bill has always assisted new and current members. Bill has owned B&J Armstrong Plumbing since 1993. Email [admin@armstrongplumbing.net.au](mailto:admin@armstrongplumbing.net.au) or visit [www.armstrongplumbing.net.au](http://www.armstrongplumbing.net.au)



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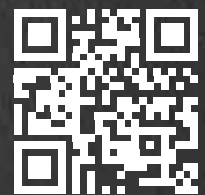
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