



AUTUMN 2025

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12 COVER STORY
MANDATORY CPD
 It's time to step up

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) will soon become mandatory for all licensed plumbers in NSW, following years of 'voluntary' instructional programs.

Based on a points system, CPD compliance will require plumbers to complete ongoing training and development programs in order to maintain their licence.

MPA NSW supports mandatory CPD compliance, which will entrench our trade as a rigorously monitored industry, and reward the year-to-year training that most of us do already.

TO BOOK YOUR ADVERTISING CONTACT

Contact Julie Woods,
 MPA NSW Membership,
 Marketing & Events Manager, at
julie@masterplumbers.com.au
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Established in 2023, the new MPA NSW training centre boasts a workshop with state-of-the-art facilities.





EDITORIAL

From the CEO's desk

As we welcome the vibrant autumn season, I'm excited to share updates on key initiatives to strengthen our Association and deliver outstanding value to our members. The year 2025 heralds significant changes for our industry with the introduction of the Building Bill in the NSW Parliament. This legislation will reintroduce Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and other essential requirements for licensed plumbers. You can find more details in my feature article on page 12.

LAUNCH: MASTER PLUMBERS NSW MEMBER SERVICES (INSURANCE)

We are excited to announce the launch of Master Plumbers NSW Member Insurance Services (Insurance), a pioneering partnership with MGA Insurance Brokers. This service provides our members with tailored insurance solutions specifically designed for the plumbing industry. Members will benefit from competitive premiums, comprehensive coverage, and expert advice to effectively manage risks and protect their businesses.

INTRODUCING THE \$20K MPA GUARANTEE

To continue providing our members with a competitive advantage, we are proud to introduce the \$20k MPA Guarantee. This initiative aims to boost consumer confidence and distinguish our members from non-member competitors. The guarantee offers up to \$20,000 in insurance on MPA members' workmanship for 12 months, assuring customers of the high standards and professionalism associated with the Master Plumbers Association of NSW. Customers can access this Guarantee and details of MPA NSW Members through the Find-A-Plumber section of the MPA NSW website, further enhancing their trust in our members' services.

NEW TEMPLATE CONTRACTS

Recognising the complexities and legalities of managing a plumbing business, we have collaborated with our legal partners to create new template contracts. These templates simplify the process of engaging with clients, subcontractors, and employees, providing clarity and legal protection. Available through our online members portal, these contracts cover various aspects of contractual agreements, streamlining your business operations.

UPDATED SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Safety continues to be a top priority for our Association and members. We have introduced an updated safety management system that is accessible via our online portal. This system includes the latest compliance requirements, best practices, and tools to help you maintain a safe working environment. Designed to be user-friendly and comprehensive, it ensures your business meets and exceeds safety standards. The system will be reviewed and updated annually to meet evolving safety requirements.

We believe these initiatives are crucial in enhancing the value of your membership, supporting your business growth, and ensuring the ongoing success of our Association. As always, we are here to help you and look forward to your continued feedback and engagement. **TMP**

Nathaniel (Nat) Smith
CEO

THE MASTER PLUMBER

A publication of Master Plumbers Association of NSW
masterplumbers.com.au
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PRINTING

IVE Group
www.ivegroup.com.au

PUBLISHED BY

Master Plumbers Association of NSW
PO Box 42
Lidcombe NSW 1825, Australia

ISSN: 2653-8172 (Print)

Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed in this publication may not necessarily reflect those of Master Plumbers Association of NSW. No responsibility is accepted by the publisher for any losses arising from the use of material contained in this publication. Copyright 2025 Master Plumbers Association of NSW. Private or public reproduction of material contained in this publication is permitted providing appropriate attribution is noted.

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AUSTRALIA'S NO. 1



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Adaptation is vital

I trust you all had an enjoyable and safe Christmas and holiday break. A new year always brings fresh opportunities, but it also comes with its own set of challenges, and this year will be no exception.

As we move into the new year, we are reminded that no two business journeys are the same. Many of us will experience changes within our teams – some staff may move on, while others will be onboarded to drive the next phase of growth. Change is a constant, and how we adapt is what truly matters.

The economic landscape, particularly in Australia, continues to evolve. The Reserve Bank of Australia's high interest rates, intended to manage inflation, have made it more difficult to service debt, putting pressure on cash flow and profitability. Additionally, demand in industries like plumbing has been inconsistent, with customers becoming more cautious in their spending amid economic uncertainty.

But, as the old saying goes, "It's not what happens to you that is

important; it's how you react." The way we respond to challenges will determine the course of our businesses in the year ahead.

ASSESS & RE-EVALUATE

For business owners, this is a crucial time to assess and re-evaluate your business plans to ensure they are aligned with both current realities and future goals. One strategy I always advocate for is adaptability. What worked last year may not work the same way this year. We must remain nimble, adjusting our approach to meet the needs of our teams, customers, and the marketplace.

I often use the example of a lunch buffet to illustrate how some business owners manage their enterprises. Imagine you walk into a buffet with a variety of food options. You pile your plate high with staff, equipment, marketing ideas, and services, only to find yourself complaining about what's on your plate. This is similar to business owners who overload their operations with resources and strategies, only to complain when things don't go as planned.

The analogy is simple but powerful: just like at the buffet, it's important to choose the right ingredients for your business and ensure they complement one another. An abundance of resources is not enough; it's about making the right selections, using them efficiently, and aligning them with the vision and goals of your business.

As we move deeper into 2025, I encourage you to step back and reassess what's on your business plate. Are you overloading your operation with unnecessary resources? Are you focusing on the right strategies to drive growth, or are you spreading yourself too thin? It's important to streamline operations and concentrate on what will deliver the most value.

Adaptability is needed in this ever-changing economic climate; businesses must be flexible in responding to customer needs and market trends. This means being ready to adjust service offerings, pricing structures, and marketing approaches as demand fluctuates.

THINK OF THE TEAM

Another area to focus on is the well-being and productivity of our teams. Many businesses are experiencing turnover, with staff either moving on or new employees coming in. Fostering a positive workplace culture is more important than ever. Investing in training, development, and employee engagement is essential to ensure that both new and existing team members are motivated, aligned with company values, and committed to achieving your goals.

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While the Australian economic landscape presents challenges, it also creates opportunities for businesses to innovate and find creative solutions. The businesses that will thrive in 2025 are those that can adapt, streamline operations, and focus on delivering exceptional value to customers. By staying strategic and committed to continuous improvement, we can turn challenges into stepping stones toward success.

In closing, I would like to thank our CEO Nathaniel Smith and the entire management team of the Association for their incredible focus and energy. Their dedication to

re-establishing the Association as a 'go to' for information and support for any business in the plumbing industry is deeply appreciated. I look forward to working with the Master Plumbers Association Board and management team (assuming I am re-elected in the February 2025 election) and all of the Master Plumbers Members as we move forward into another year of opportunities and success.

Here's to a year of renewed energy, smart strategies, and continued success! **TMP**

Greg McElroy
President, Master Plumbers Association, NSW

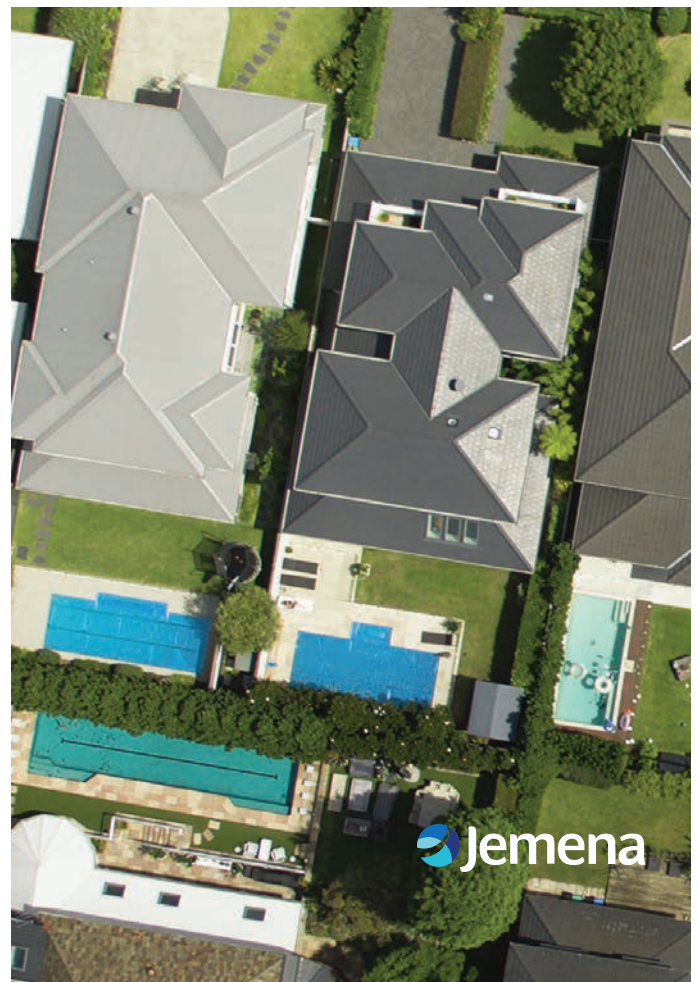


Greg McElroy has been a member of the Master Plumbers Association NSW for some 40 years. He was active on the Executive Committee from early 2000 until 2009, serving as President for several of those years. He is now serving on the Executive Committee again in 2024-25, with a special focus on business training and knowledge.

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MPA NSW

NEW MEMBERS & PARTNERS

MPA NSW is continually growing and strengthening itself, thanks to a steady influx of new members and partners each month.

It is a great pleasure to see so many new members and partners joining MPA NSW on a regular basis – proof that our expanding services and advocacy work are of practical value to plumbing businesses and allied entities of all shapes and sizes. Below are the latest companies to join the Association; we welcome each and every one...

NEW MEMBERS

- ★ Narooma Plumbing and Gas Services
- ★ Level Group Australia Pty Ltd
- ★ J.M. Cleary Pty Ltd
- ★ LJS Plumbing Services Pty Ltd
- ★ Jedplumb Pty Ltd
- ★ Alex Martin Plumbing and Septic Services
- ★ Gilbert Plumbing and Gas
- ★ Mainline Plumbing Solutions
- ★ Transform Water
- ★ Wollongong Facilities Plumbing
- ★ Complete Coast Plumbing Pty Ltd
- ★ Mainline Plumbing & Civil Pty Ltd
- ★ Camden Valley Plumbing Pty Ltd
- ★ Braidwood & Districts Plumbing
- ★ Watertight Group Pty Limited
- ★ North Shore Plumbing
- ★ Ready Plumbing
- ★ FXD Plumbing Solutions Pty Ltd
- ★ Jaypee Plumbing Pty Ltd
- ★ TJM Plumbing Pty Ltd
- ★ Flat Planet Pty Ltd
- ★ East Point Plumbing Service Pty Ltd
- ★ Durrant Plumbing
- ★ Nick Anderson Plumbing
- ★ Mitsubishi Motors
- ★ Service Masters Australia
- ★ VACD Investments PTY LTD
- ★ Plumbers Life
- ★ H and R Plumbing Solutions Pty Ltd
- ★ Sherman Tanks Plumbing
- ★ PVS Plumbing Pty Ltd
- ★ Network Plumbing, Electrical & Air Conditioning
- ★ Central Plumbing

NEW CORPORATE PARTNERS

Since our last issue, the following Corporate Partners have joined the MPA NSW community – welcome onboard and thank you for your support.


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ASSOCIATION UPDATES



As we launch the first 2025 issue of *The Master Plumber*, we reflect on 2024 and the achievements we've made together... and look forward to a packed year ahead!

2024: the year in review

MEMBER ENQUIRIES

A key benefit of your membership is our unwavering support for all business and industry-related queries. Leveraging our extensive qualifications, experience, and teamwork, we provide a robust support network for our members. In 2024, we addressed 21,384 enquiries and industry-related issues, ensuring members received assistance at every step.

MEMBER BENEFITS

Enhancing membership value remains a top priority. In 2024, we rolled out various new member discounts across multiple services, including telecommunications, debt collection, accountancy, legal advisory, employment services, WHS services, additional vehicle fleet discounts, fuel discounts, and more.

ADVOCACY

Our commitment to representing our members' views and policies is steadfast. In 2024 we actively participated in forums and discussions shaping the plumbing sector. Key advocacy topics included gas bans, inferior heat pumps, ute restrictions, and the shortage of skilled tradies.

EVENTS

MPA NSW events provide excellent opportunities for members to network with peers and industry leaders. The 2024 events, including golf days, the Master Your Industry conference in Fiji, the Annual Industry Awards lunch, and the World Plumbing Day BBQ, were highly successful and well attended. Thank you to all members who participated and contributed to our thriving plumbing community.

Throughout 2024, MPA NSW's CEO Nat Smith oversaw a resurgence of advocacy work on behalf of members.



Events like last year's annual lunch and awards ceremony help cement friendships while promoting networking and learning opportunities.



Participants at last year's annual conference in Fiji heard from a first-class lineup of speakers.

Recognising business excellence is one of your Association's core duties. Above left: MC Vince Sorrenti at last year's annual lunch and awards ceremony. Below: Deserving members are all smiles with their award.





Above: Your Association's annual conference in Fiji in 2024 was a highlight of the year. Below: The most important tool in the plumber's toolbox is... the putter. Watch out for more exciting Golf Days in 2025.



2025: AN EXCITING YEAR AHEAD

We are thrilled about what 2025 has in store! This year, we are launching new initiatives to enhance your membership experience and offer more opportunities to connect at our engaging events. Here's a sneak peek at what's coming up:

Golf Days – Sydney and Regional:

Network while enjoying a round of golf in both Sydney and regional locations.

World Plumbing Day Celebrations:

Join us in honouring the vital contributions of the plumbing industry.

Trade Show Exhibition and Dinner with Plumbers Co-op:

Discover the latest industry innovations and network over a fantastic dinner.

Women in Trades Events:

Empowering women in trades; these events offer learning and connection opportunities.

Annual Industry Awards Event:

Celebrate industry excellence and recognise outstanding contributions.

Master Your Industry Overseas Conference:

Expand your industry knowledge while enjoying an exciting overseas adventure.

Melbourne Cup Harbour Cruise:

Experience the thrill of the Melbourne Cup while cruising the stunning Sydney Harbour.

Stay tuned for more exciting details to come!



**Vale
Bob
Stone**

In Memory of a remarkable MPA NSW Member, host trainer and friend

The Master Plumbers Association of NSW (MPA NSW) is deeply saddened by the passing of Bob Stone from JS & B Plumbing Services, a dedicated plumber and beloved industry figure. Bob was a devoted professional, an exceptional host trainer, and an all-round incredible person whose impact on the plumbing community will be felt for years to come.

As a loyal member of MPA NSW, Bob's presence will be profoundly missed by everyone who had the honour of working alongside him.

Our heartfelt condolences go out to the Stone family during this difficult time. Let us honour Bob's legacy by carrying forward the values he shared.

Thank you, Bob, for your unwavering dedication, kindness, and contributions. You will forever be remembered.

GET READY!

Get ready for the next Members' Conference, scheduled for September 2025.

This time, we're heading to one of the most breathtaking destinations on the planet, Queenstown, New Zealand. This wonderland is the ultimate mix of adventure, stunning views, and inspiring ideas – the perfect place to gather, connect, and start your next chapter.

**You won't want to miss this!
Stay tuned for more details.**





COVER STORY: Mandatory CPD

Mandatory CPD

It's time to step up

As the Building Bill 2024 is being debated by the NSW Parliament, the plumbing industry braces for a series of transformative changes, including the reintroduction of mandatory Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programs, writes **NATHANIEL SMITH**.

Major regulatory changes are about to affect our industry, including the reintroduction of compulsory Continuing Professional Development (CPD) points, the introduction of Competency assessments, and the proposed co-regulation model, all of which promise to reshape the professional landscape for licensed plumbers across the state.

CPD reforms are likely to be the most keenly felt of the above reforms. The proposed legislation mandates that some licensed trades, including plumbers, must complete CPD training annually to maintain their licenses. This marks the return of a structured CPD framework, aiming to uplift industry standards and ensure that all professionals remain updated with the latest practices and regulations. This has been mandatory in Tasmania for several years and is about to become compulsory in Victoria.

THE RETURN OF CPD POINTS: WHAT IT MEANS FOR YOU

Under the Building Bill 2024, licensed plumbers will need to earn a minimum number of points each year (12 points are expected), with a substantial portion of these points required to be obtained through face-to-face training. Specifically, if plumbers must complete 6 points via in-person sessions, this would translate to approximately 24,000 to 36,000 hours of face-to-face training annually in Sydney alone. Webinars and online learning with an assessment will most likely compensate for the additional points required to hit the total for a 12-month

period. The Master Plumbers Association of NSW (MPA NSW) will also run CPD Block Training in regional centres so that regional plumbing licence holders can complete their face-to-face training requirements yearly without coming to Sydney.

This shift underscores the government's commitment to hands-on learning and practical skill enhancement, reflecting the industry's demand for high-quality workmanship and safety standards. The Master Plumbers Association of NSW (MPA NSW) has advocated for a balanced approach that ensures both accessibility and rigour in CPD training and is not too onerous on plumbing licence holders and our members.

MPA NSW: FROM ADVOCACY TO IMPLEMENTATION

MPA NSW has played a pivotal role in the consultation process, providing detailed submissions on how the Building Bill 2024 should be implemented. MPA NSW's proposed model emphasises industry partnership, bringing together key players such as manufacturers, professional services, and retailers to co-develop and deliver the CPD courses.

This collaborative approach leverages the expertise of industry leaders and ensures that the training content remains relevant and comprehensive. MPA NSW's upgraded training and events facility will serve as a hub for these CPD sessions, equipped to handle the influx of licensed plumbers and members seeking to fulfil their annual requirements. MPA NSW will also deliver block training to service regional NSW in key areas.



“ THIS MARKS THE RETURN OF A STRUCTURED CPD FRAMEWORK.

Building Act, advocating for balanced measures that deter malpractice without penalising well-intentioned professionals.

ROLE OF NON-PROFIT ASSOCIATIONS IN CPD DELIVERY

One key recommendation from MPA NSW is to recognise non-profit industry associations as primary providers of CPD training. With their deep industry knowledge and commitment to quality, these associations are uniquely positioned to deliver effective and affordable training.

Face-to-face training, in particular, offers interactive learning, practical demonstrations, and networking opportunities, which are essential for skill retention and professional growth. MPA NSW emphasises that this training mode ensures high standards are consistently applied across the industry.

IMPLEMENTATION: A PHASED APPROACH

If the Building Bill 2024 is passed by the NSW Parliament, the CPD rollout will most likely follow a four-phase timeline:

- **Course Development & Facility Upgrades:** Ensuring that the infrastructure and content are ready for the influx of trainees.
- **Voluntary CPD Pilot:** This would be a six-month period in which plumbers can voluntarily participate in CPD training at no cost, allowing for feedback and adjustments.
- **Voluntary CPD:** This would run until the NSW Building Commission sets a commencement date for Compulsory CPD.
- **Mandatory CPD Introduction:** Full implementation of the compulsory CPD scheme.

This phased approach aims to smooth the transition and allow plumbers and industry stakeholders ample time to adapt to the new requirements.

ADDRESSING INDUSTRY CONCERNS: MPA ADVOCACY

MPA NSW has also voiced concerns regarding other aspects of the proposed legislation, mainly introducing specialist licenses for ‘Mechanical Services—Plumbing’ and water-based fire safety. They argue that this could lead to unnecessary regulatory burdens and consumer confusion, urging the government to reconsider this approach to avoid fragmenting the licensing system.

Furthermore, MPA NSW has highlighted potential issues with the increased penalties under the Home

NEW ERA FOR LICENSED PLUMBERS

The Building Bill 2024 heralds a new era for licensed plumbers in NSW, bringing with it the return of compulsory CPD points and a renewed focus on continuing professional development. MPA NSW’s proactive involvement and advocacy will hopefully shape a framework that balances industry needs with regulatory requirements, ensuring the transition is as smooth and beneficial as possible.

As the industry adapts to these changes, licensed plumbers can look forward to enhanced learning opportunities, greater professional accountability, and a more substantial, unified industry standard. MPA NSW remains committed to supporting its members through this transition, providing the resources, training, and advocacy needed to thrive in this evolving landscape. **TMP**



Nathaniel (Nat) Smith is the CEO of MPA NSW. Prior to joining the Association in 2023, he had a successful career as a qualified plumber and subsequently as a politician (State Member for Wollondilly). He has strong advocacy experience at all levels of government. Contact Nat at nathaniel@masterplumbers.com.au



FEATURE: Wet wipes

The art of wiping

Part 1

Wiping one's rear, also known as 'sanitary wiping', is a universal practice shared by all persons of all ages, across all continents and all time periods.

JOHN CHAUMONT discusses the evolution of wipes in this first part of a two-part feature.

In our early years, the task of wiping is outsourced to loving parents and carers. Many of us have the experience of older friends, relatives reminding us that "I changed your nappies when you were little". Soon we reach an age where this task can be mastered individually, and practiced throughout most of our life, only to come full circle and have the task outsourced once again in our later years. Although a vital act of hygiene that we all share in common, this private task is rarely talked about.

SANITARY WIPING: THE EARLY (ROUGH) YEARS

In ancient times, sanitary wiping was not a thing of comfort. Performed with what seems like any old item or object that could be found lying around, imagination (and possibly desperation) led to everyday items being used to perform the task. The following items were used for sanitary wiping across various ancient cultures, some more pleasant sounding than others: scented

wool, coconut husks, mussel shells, moss, snow, corn cobs, stones, communal 'tersorium'— sponges attached to a stick (stored in a tub of vinegar or sour wine for disinfection), abrasive ceramic discs called 'pessoi', flat pieces of wood (splinters!), or a good old hand with a splash of water. In some of these cultures, a dispute might result in the striking of those considered lower caste than themselves with the left (wiping) hand, and those of equal stature or social standing with the right.¹

TOILET PAPER: THE ORIGINAL LUXURY

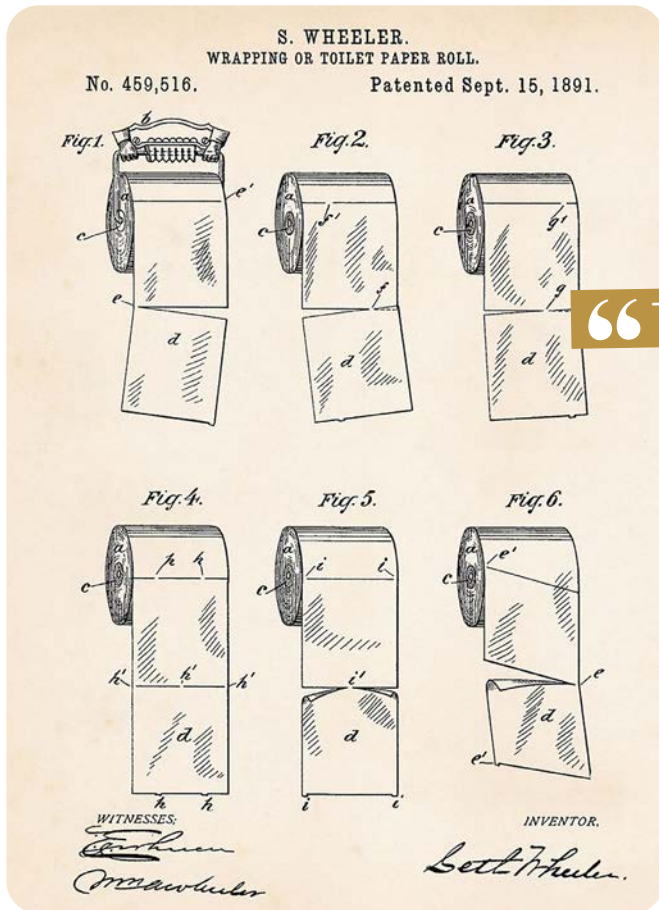
The earliest records of toilet paper use are from the 6th Century in China (years 501–600). A later version was made in 1391 for Chinese royalty, made of individual sheets of perfumed paper. By the 14th century, the Chinese were mass manufacturing their paper in the province of Zhejiang.²

It wasn't until 1857, however, that the idea for toilet paper as we know it today was born. Chicago native Joseph Gayetty invented 'medicated paper' in packages of flat sheets, with his name printed on each one.³ This was not very successful, as many found similar free alternatives to use in their home.

Toilet paper finally caught on globally circa 1890 when American manufacturer Scott Paper Company modified Gayetty's idea by selling toilet paper in rolls.



A communal
Tersorium, used as
early as 79 AD



Left: Original patent for improved manufacture of toilet paper, S. Wheeler, 1872

Bottom: Original advert for Gayetty's Toilet Paper, circa 1857

“TOILET PAPER FINALLY CAUGHT ON GLOBALLY CIRCA 1890...”

WHAT ARE WET WIPES?

According to the US FDA, “cleansing wipes are made of materials such as polyester, polypropylene, cotton, wood pulp, or rayon fibres formed into sheets. They may be packaged individually, or in small or bulk packaging. They are moistened with water and other ingredients, such as cleansing and moisturizing agents that help them work. They may contain other ingredients, such as preservatives to prevent the growth of bacteria and moulds.”⁶

WHY ARE WET WIPES SO GOOD?

In a case of ‘once you wipe wet, you’ll never regret’, many have found the wet wipe life changing. The advantages can be articulated as follows: “wet wipes provide better hydration for the skin, and hydrated residues are easily removed from surfaces compared to dry toilet papers. Lubrication, reducing abrasiveness, and providing soothing lotion for the skin are prominent properties of wet wipes. The use of flushable wipes in daily life shows an increase because of their ease of use, efficiency, and consumers’ environmental perception, as well as hygiene.”⁷

Simply put, there is no denying the superiority of wet wipes over toilet paper for sanitary wiping.

WET WIPE MARKET SHARE

The global market for wet tissue and wipes is exploding. Market value is estimated at US\$20.5 billion in 2023, projected to reach US\$28.5 billion by 2030.⁸

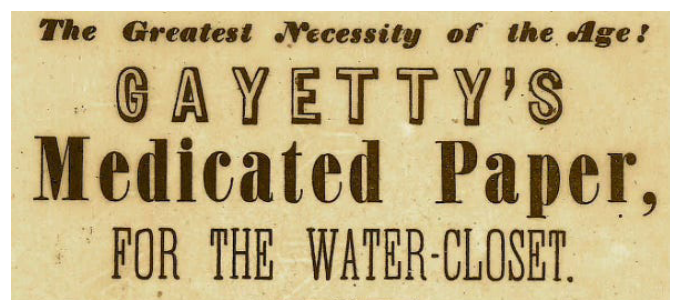
Despite the surge in popularity in the last decade of wet wipe usage, toilet paper is still the most globally popular sanitary wipe by far.

Today, toilet paper is a huge industry, with a global market value of approximately US\$107.40bn in 2023⁴ and the average American using roughly 26kg every year.⁵ The proper use and implementation of toilet paper has been the subject of fierce debate over the years. Debates such as whether to scrunch or to fold, and whether toilet rolls holders should be placed to roll over (forward), or under (backward). These debates remain largely unsolved, and hotly contested to this day. For the record: two early patents show that toilet paper was originally intended to be folded, and toilet paper rolls originally intended to roll forward as per original patents by Seth Wheeler in the late 1800s.

These revelations are highly unlikely to bring an end to the debate.

NEW KID ON THE BLOCK: WET WIPES

Today, toilet paper is being increasingly replaced by the ‘flushable’ wet wipe. The wet wipe, first invented as the ‘Wet-Nap’ in 1957 by Arthur Julius, was later sold in 1960 to Colonel Harland Sanders for use at his Kentucky Fried Chicken Restaurants. In the 1980s, major brands such as Kimberly-Clark and Proctor & Gamble began producing products that became widely used as baby wipes. While no one really knows the exact date, wet wipe sanitary usage for adults increased dramatically in the 2010s. Use exploded, though, after the 2020 COVID pandemic (likely due to toilet paper shortages, and the highly publicised, related brawls that took place at the local supermarket).





Left: A dried section of a "fatberg".

WET WIPES CAUSE FATBERGS

The largest fatberg ever found was the infamous 'Whitechapel Fatberg' of 2017, spanning 250m and weighing 130 tonnes. This fatberg consisted of congealed fat, nappies, oils, and wet wipes – which may be the secret ingredient contributing to fatberg structural integrity.

The Whitechapel Fatberg terrorised the sewer main, as well as the unfortunate engineers tasked with its removal. After battling for nine weeks to remove it, waste network manager Alex Saunders said the "beast is finally defeated".

To mark this historic battle, Thames Water displayed the fatberg in the London Museum, presumably alongside other displays of famous English victories in battle.¹⁰

THE PROBLEM WITH WET WIPES

The way in which wet wipes are disposed of is wreaking havoc on the environment, our waterways, public sewer infrastructure and the greater community.

Tireless campaigns from sewer network operators has led to increased public awareness of the problems associated with wet wipe disposal; however, there is still confusion at best (and wilful ignorance at worst) regarding the proper use and disposal of sanitary wet wipes.

A major source of confusion among the public is due to many wet wipe products being labelled 'flushable', leading to lawsuits between consumer groups and manufacturers (more on this later).

WET WIPES & SEWER INFRASTRUCTURE

Wet wipes cause HUGE problems for public sewer infrastructure. A 2022 report by UK Water Industry Research group (UKWIR)⁹ estimated that "wet wipes are the most significant problem item for public sewers in terms of:

- The number flushed (2.1–2.9 billion per annum)
- Contribution to blockages (94% of blockages attributed)
- Prevalence at wastewater treatment works (89% of total mass and 65% of total number).

Note that women's sanitary products are considered by UKWIR as the "next most problematic item", accounting for only 2% of blockages in the same study.⁹ The report estimates blockage costs attributable to wet wipes at £88 million annually.

Further financial costs include the collection and disposal of an estimated 11 billion (82,5000 tonnes) of wet wipes received every year at wastewater treatment plants, costing approximately £10.1 million.⁹

WET WIPES & BIODEGRADABILITY

Most wet wipes consist of materials such as polyester, polypropylene, cotton, wood pulp, or rayon fibres formed into sheets, making biodegradability an issue.

Although some are labelled as 'biodegradable', various studies show that many wipes do not break down as they claim. While it's true they will eventually break down, so does almost everything. When manufacturers conduct product testing to validate the biodegradable label, the lab-controlled conditions (oxygen exposure levels, UV exposure, pH levels, temperature) in which they break down are not likely to be replicated in sewer mains, landfill, and natural waterways. This is why so many of these 'biodegradable' wipes can exist for a long time.

The Rivers Trust (UK) says the following on wet wipes: 'Plastic-free alternatives are not the simple solution to this problem. They are still designed not to break down easily, and, therefore, will still cause blockages in the sewerage system and result in sewage spills into rivers.'¹¹

WET WIPES & OUR WATERWAYS

Wet wipes are frequently found by those spending time on the UK's beaches. During public cleanup efforts between 2015 and 2020, data recording showed an average of 20 wet wipes found per 100m of beach surveyed across the UK¹¹. There are countless stories from these collection efforts, such as the 27,000 that were found on a 200m stretch of the banks of the Thames River in London.¹² Take the 'Thames Great Wet Wipe Reef', a mound of wet wipes, twigs, and mud (a natural fatberg) measuring up to 50m wide, 17m long and more

“THE WHITECHAPEL FATBERG TERRORISED THE SEWER MAIN.

than 1m high.¹³ Mounds like these are literally reshaping waterways and foreshores.¹⁴ You can even read a scientific paper on The effects of wet wipe pollution on the Asian clam, *Corbicula fluminea* (Mollusca: Bivalvia) in the River Thames, London, which claims association between high densities of wet wipes and low numbers of Asian clams, and that synthetic fibres ingested by these clams originate from disposed wet wipes. **TMP**



John Chaumont is a licensed plumber and former hydraulic consultant, currently involved in industry research and training.

Editor's Note: Watch out for Part II of this feature in the Winter 2025 issue of *The Master Plumber*.

FOOTNOTES

1. See <https://www.toiletpaperhistory.net/toilet-paper-history/used-before-toilet-paper/>
2. See <https://www.history.com/news/toilet-paper-hygiene-ancient-rome-china>
3. See <https://www.toiletpaperhistory.net/toilet-paper-history/history-of-toilet-paper/>
4. See <https://www.statista.com/study/48850/toilet-paper-market-data-and-analysis/>
5. See <https://time.com/6259819/pfas-found-in-toilet-paper/>
6. See <https://www.fda.gov/cosmetics/cosmetic-products/disposable-wipes>
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9. See <https://ukwir.org/plastics-received-by-the-water-industry-and-how-best-to-tackle-them-through-source-control>
10. See <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-london-41860764>
11. See <https://www.which.co.uk/news/article/wet-wipes-plastic-ban-how-sustainable-are-plastic-free-wipes-aYjmr4Q3Qn3u>
12. See <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-london-58742161>
13. See <https://www.thames21.org.uk/2019/04/23-thousand-wet-wipes-discovered-stretch-thames-river-bank/>
14. See <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-london-58742161>

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FEATURE: Trade Show

The plumbing event of the year

The Plumbers Co-op, together with the Master Plumbers Association of NSW (MPA NSW), will unite for the ultimate industry expo in celebration of the Co-op's 70th anniversary.

In a collaboration that has a deep history, the Plumbers Co-op and MPA NSW are joining forces to deliver the single biggest plumbing event in Australia in 2025.

As the Plumbers Co-op celebrates its monumental 70th anniversary, this Trade Show will showcase the best of the past,

present, and future of plumbing innovation.

For decades, the Plumbers Co-op Trade Show has stood as a cornerstone event for industry professionals. This year's expo not only commemorates the Co-op's 70 years of service, but it also highlights the success of its unique, member-owned structure – where members

benefit directly from shared profits, exclusive rebates, and competitive pricing on the industry's best products.

Established by visionary members of the Master Plumbers committee in 1955, the Co-op was founded to revolutionise supply chains, pricing fairness, and access to essential resources. Today, it remains the only cooperative of its kind in the industry, returning profits to plumbers rather than large corporations.

A TRUE CELEBRATION

The 2025 Plumbers Co-op x Master Plumbers NSW Trade Show Expo is more than an event – it's a celebration of shared ownership, professional development, and the collaboration that defines our community. This is where plumbers, suppliers, and innovators will converge to connect, discover cutting-edge products, and explore ideas that will shape the next generation of the trade.

The upcoming Plumbers Co-op and MPA NSW Trade Show will be the centrepiece of the Co-op's 70th anniversary celebrations and is expected to set new attendance records.





As a valued member of MPA NSW, you're invited to attend this landmark event, with two complimentary tickets granting you access to the exhibition and an exclusive after-dinner function. Don't miss this opportunity to network with leaders, experience live demonstrations, and celebrate the journey of an organisation built by plumbers, for plumbers.

WATCH OUT FOR YOUR INVITATION

This milestone event is proof that when plumbers come together, they create something greater than the sum of its parts: a community dedicated to securing a better professional, financial, and innovative future for everyone involved.

Keep an eye out for your invitation, which will be arriving soon – your industry, your supply, your profit awaits at the 2025 Plumbers Co-op x Master Plumbers NSW Trade Show Expo! **TMP**

LET'S BREAK RECORDS

Expect a high-pressure, high-energy event with record-breaking attendance from both exhibitors and members. From the latest tools and products to industry-changing technologies, the Expo will be the main valve for plumbing innovation, driving advancements that matter

to those working on the front lines. Members of the Co-op will enjoy the chance to see firsthand how the organisation's ongoing innovations, including its new e-commerce platform and tailored member support, are designed to make their businesses more profitable and efficient.



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TRAINING

In late 2023, the Master Plumbers Association of NSW (MPA NSW) made a pivotal move to our new training facility at Seven Hills. Since then, the transformation of the workshop has been nothing short of remarkable, writes **MARK BROWN**.

Seven Hills workshop

A two-year journey

MPA NSW's 1,400 m² workshop space, once a blank slate of concrete, has evolved into a state-of-the-art training hub.

One of our first projects was sealing and painting the workshop floor with a heavy-duty premium epoxy coating. This decision proved invaluable, offering an incredibly durable and visually appealing finish – a significant upgrade from the original concrete floor.

Once the epoxy had cured, we received delivery of all our stored resources. To give a sense of scale, the volume of equipment and materials was so immense that navigating the workshop with a forklift became a challenge. Despite the overwhelming task, we quickly organised the space to accommodate practical classes, ensuring a safe and efficient environment for our students.

A FULL OVERHAUL

Simultaneously, we took the opportunity to overhaul our practical delivery. With 58 subjects to cover in 864 hours over three years, it was vital to align our training exercises with the national training package. Each student completes individual, purpose-built exercises designed to meet the qualification standards while minimising material waste and respecting time constraints. These exercises were trialled and validated by our trainer assistant, who is also a qualified plumber, allowing us to refine and perfect them before implementation.

“...WE TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY TO OVERHAUL OUR PRACTICAL DELIVERY.

Organising our stock and equipment has been a monumental task, but we've made significant progress. To streamline operations, we adopted the 5S methodology: Sort, Set in Order, Shine, Standardize, and Sustain. This system has provided a strong foundation for our daily and long-term goals.

The improvements we've made to the workshop are numerous and impactful. Highlights include:

- Custom-built test rigs for thermostatic mixing valves and backflow prevention
- Individual workstations for up to 15 students per class
- Upgraded workbenches and additional bathroom facilities for students
- Mobile shadow boards to eliminate hidden tools
- Roofing frames for the fabrication and installation of roof flashing, roof drainage, and roof components
- A pitched roofing platform for safe work at height
- A 15m x 10m drainage sandpit holding approximately 370 tons of sand
- Thirteen pallet racking bays labelled for easy access to resources across 58 subjects
- Water mains tapping rigs and domestic irrigation control rigs.

FUTURE WORKS

Looking ahead, we have two major projects on the horizon. The first involves installing an LPG and natural gas system for individual workstations. Due to the high cost of connecting to the street's natural gas service, we've opted for a compressed natural gas cylinder: a cost-effective solution at just 5% of the expense.

The second project is the construction of mobile student workstations, designed to be nimbler than our current larger setups. These new workstations reflect our philosophy of maximum mobility, ensuring that we continue to adapt to the needs of our students while maintaining an efficient and flexible training environment.

The progress we've achieved over the last two years has been a collective effort, driven by the dedication of our team and a commitment to excellence. These developments ensure our students receive practical, hands-on training in a safe and professional environment, preparing them for a successful career in plumbing. **TMP**



MPA NSW's Mark Brown is Training Facilities Manager.

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FEATURE: Member Profile

Michael O'Brien

After more than 30 years in the trade, Michael O'Brien from O'Brien Plumbing Services has seen plenty of change throughout his career.

Q How and when did your career in plumbing begin?

I started my apprenticeship in 1990, working for AE&L Baker Plumbers, a family business.

Q Were you destined to work in the plumbing industry from an early age? I would say when I was around 14 years old, I was thinking about carpentry until an uncle talked me into plumbing – I did work experience, and it changed my mind.

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

Q Have you had many mentors throughout your career? I have had one: a mate of mine who is a few years older. He has pointed me in the right direction to overcome some work challenges.

Q Would you describe yourself as a 'people person'? Kind of! I love to have a chat with most people.

Q What have been the most significant changes in the industry throughout your career? The labour side of plumbing works/installation has become so much easier due to the tools available these days.

Q What has been your most challenging assignment or project? It's hard to narrow it down to one assignment. As a commercial maintenance plumbing company, we have had a lot of challenges over the years.

Q What has been your greatest achievement? Keeping the business going through the hard time.

Q How important has your family been to your career? Very important, as has been the sacrifices to get where we are today.

Q Will technology ever fix all plumbing problems? I wouldn't say it will totally fix the problems, but it will make installation and repairs a lot easier.

Q Have you noticed any changes to the way society regards plumbers? In some cases, mainly in relation to the quality of workmanship.

Q Is plumbing the best career in the world? I wouldn't say the best career in the world; it does have its challenges, but I'm happy with the choice I made.

Q What will you be doing in five years' time? And then? Still running the plumbing business and enjoying life. **TMP**



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At Level, we believe that if you understand your numbers, you understand your business better. And ultimately you have a better chance of winning.

Understanding your financials – revenue, cost of goods, expenses, profits, and cash flow – is crucial for keeping your business running efficiently and ensuring long-term success. As a business owner you should be able to take stock of your P&L (profit & loss) and Balance Sheet any time to determine if you are winning the game or not.

TRACK YOUR REVENUE

Your revenue is the lifeblood of your business. Break down where the revenue is coming from: Is your revenue coming from residential repairs, commercial work, emergency services, or other? Does this mix of revenue align with your goals and your team strengths? If not, it probably should unless you're thinking about investing in more training or swapping out

As a plumbing business owner, you are probably a gun at fixing leaks, installing pipes and leading a team, but how often do you stop to think about the numbers behind your business? **SEAN LONGMAN** from Level Group Australia offers some valuable advice.



team members. What revenue do you need to generate each day or month to cover your costs? What revenue streams generally obtain stronger profit margins? By knowing where the revenue is coming from, you can focus on the most profitable areas and maximise your earnings.

UNDERSTAND YOUR COSTS

Like plumbing systems, your costs are unique to each job. You have fixed expenses (rent, insurance, fuel, admin wages) and variable costs (materials, field labour, subcontractors). Keeping a close eye on both ensures you're not losing money while working hard to generate it. Understanding your expenses allows you to make adjustments as needed and maintain profitability.

KNOW YOUR GROSS PROFIT MARGINS

Gross profit margins are an essential indicator of your business's health and ability to control production

costs (labour and material). Gross profit is simply profit before fixed expenses. For example, if you generate \$10,000 in revenue and your direct costs are \$6,000, that results in a 40% gross profit margin. The higher your gross profit margin, the stronger your business is. By managing margins effectively, you ensure that every project is financially sustainable and supports growth.

CASH FLOW IS KING

Cash flow is vital to keeping your operations fluid. Insufficient cash flow can leave you struggling to meet expenses, while excessive cash sitting idle can be a missed opportunity for growth. Tracking and managing cash flow (and cash reserves for contingencies), including invoicing quickly, chasing outstanding invoices for payment, and managing creditors ensures that you have enough liquidity to cover bills and reinvest in your business.

JOB COSTING & PRICING

Accurate job costing is key to sustainable pricing. Knowing your materials, labour, and overhead costs allows you to price each job appropriately. Whether it's residential, commercial, or emergency work, correct pricing is the difference between turning a profit and losing business due to incorrect estimates. A good old-fashioned spreadsheet can do this, but these days you'd be crazy not to consider using specialised job management software – there are plenty out there so find out which one works best for you and book some demos!

FINANCIAL REPORTS & PLANNING

Financial reports, such as P&L statements and balance sheets, provide a clear snapshot of your business's performance, helping you make informed decisions about hiring, expanding services, or investing in new tools, technology and upgrading your fleet. Effective

financial planning ensures that you can navigate both opportunities and challenges with confidence. Seek help from an external advisor to ensure you're making decisions based on sound data.

CONCLUSION: KNOW YOUR NUMBERS, KEEP YOUR BUSINESS FLOWING

As a skilled plumber, your technical expertise keeps you in demand, but understanding your financial numbers is what will keep your business thriving. By tracking and analysing your revenue, costs, profit margins, and cash flow, you are positioning your plumbing business for sustained growth and success. Level Group has the tools and expertise to help you track and analyse your performance, from accounting and job management software to the recent launch of integrated Business Intelligence dashboards. Taking the time to understand your numbers today – your business will thank you tomorrow. **TMP**

“ YOUR REVENUE IS THE LIFEBLOOD OF YOUR BUSINESS.



Sean Longman is the Head of Membership at Level Group Australia (visit levelau.com.au).

Sean has spent over a decade in the plumbing and electrical industry working with independent business owners to improve their performance. Before joining Level Sean was the General Manager of a plumbing business across multiple locations. In this role he focused on all aspects of business improvement and growth, including sales, streamlining operational systems, and building capability within teams.

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REGIONAL RAMBLINGS

Clear communication, along with the thoughtful and courteous consideration of others, are key requirements for the completion of any complex task, including plumbing. Have we lost some of our traditional values? **Peter Richardson** comments.

Don't forget traditional values

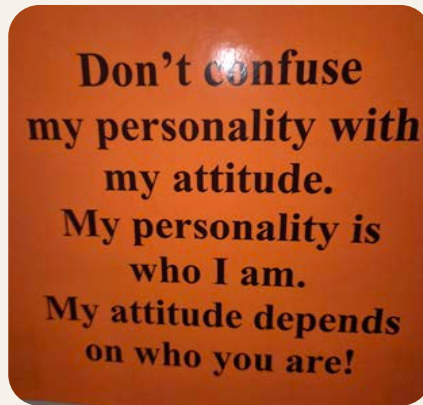
Hi everybody. Hope you had a Merry Christmas and New Year.

Here's to another 12 months ahead. Being plumbers, we know the toilets and drainage don't stop blocking, the pipes don't stop breaking, and the DIYers still stuff up jobs, which often become an emergency to be fixed – and plumbers don't work from home.

A story: Real Estate rings us up about a job at a Shopping Centre, with a tenant who has blocked toilets late afternoon on a Thursday. So we attend to the blockage with a jetter 10am Friday. Car park full, no room for parking, jetter needs to arrange for a 7am job so he can park to get to blockage. Plumber 20 kms away arranged with an office girl to meet on site at 7am Monday. Plumber came in early to load jetter and get to the job by 7am to clear the blockage, so on Monday the plumber arrives on site and there is no one there to let him in. Wasted two hours. The plumber came back, and we rang the customer AGAIN so the owner could arrange access on site at 7am Tuesday. They said sorry, the girl did not tell anyone about the Monday 7am booking. So, on Tuesday we are on site 7am with the jetter and two plumbers – the blockage was cleared and recorded: all done and finished by 9am.

Communication is key! It took three visits to get one job done. This happens more than you believe.

The above job didn't involve the entire shopping centre sewer system being blocked; it was only a medical-type business, and their toilet was blocked by people putting



pads, bandages, and other stuff down the toilet (we have been there before).

UNNECESSARY EMERGENCIES

Talking to plumbers, electricians, air conditioning businesspeople, and a lot of other people from other business vocations, it's clear there are people working in these vocations who don't do their job, don't know how to do their job, and simply don't care – and then the job becomes an emergency for other fixers of the problem.

If you have read the above, I could go on for another 10 pages about these people, BUT read the following: The above people are in a minority, but they are the people who waste your time and effort, and they are definitely out there.

The other people in the majority – and I say again majority – are decent, polite and respectful when we deal with them. It's a pleasure to get work done, and everybody is happy. Can we go back 25–30 years and reduce the minority and increase the majority, i.e., to bring

Australian values back? Modern technology is great (when it works), and we have to work out how to keep out the scammers and get rid of them.

NO SHOWS

A lot of businesses are having staff problems. Sometimes there are simply not enough staff; at other times, staff just ring up and say they won't be in today, so the boss or another employee has got to cover them to prevent the customer from being put out.

I was talking to a bus foreman who was in charge of 33 school buses which pick up kids, take them to school, and then do another run in the afternoon.

Drivers ring in and say they won't be in today! When I was younger (many years ago) I was told there are only two reasons you can't come to work: one – you're in hospital; or two – you're in jail.

See the attached photo. And believe me, there are more than that on the wall in my office. So, Boys and Girls, have another good 12 months. **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



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REGULATION & SAFETY

Safety on worksites can never be taken for granted. SafeWork NSW and Building Commission NSW are experts at developing effective workplace methods and systems to enhance safety – below are some of their latest tips.



DO IT BY THE BOOK

Don't put yourself or your workers' lives at risk when coming

back from a well-deserved break. Slow down and don't cut corners when it comes to safety. A new publication – 'The pocket-size guide to construction safety'¹ – has some useful information on common health and safety issues on construction sites, including working at heights, falling objects, moving plant and electricity. Here are some tips to stay safe:

- Plan for safety – Complete a Safe Work Method Statement² (SWMS). Ensure they are site-specific.
- Make sure workers know how to work safely at height.
- Supervise and instruct young or new workers – See SafeWork NSW's checklist for training young workers.³
- Consult workers and raise safety awareness – Use SafeWork NSW's resources and toolbox talks.⁴
- Take regular breaks and monitor workloads – Make sure workloads and schedules are realistic and that you have enough workers to get the job done.
- Don't walk past unsafe work practices; speak to your supervisor or report it anonymously on the Speak Up Save Lives app.⁵

FOOTNOTES

1. See https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/___data/assets/pdf_file/0004/386446/pocketguide-to-construction-safety.pdf
2. See https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/___data/assets/pdf_file/0003/107886/SW08268-0818-427125.pdf
3. See https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/___data/assets/pdf_file/0004/477580/Checklist-for-training-young-workers.pdf
4. See <https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/your-industry/construction>
5. See <https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/advice-and-resources/speak-up-app>

For more information got to:
www.safework.nsw.gov.au



SAFETY AROUND BRICKLAYING WORK

Exposure to silica dust is deadly. Use an approved mask and wet cut. Scaffs can collapse or be a falls hazard when tampered with. Don't remove components. Find out more at safework.nsw.gov.au/your-industry/construction

The main safety risks for brickies and their labourers, as well as other tradespeople on site, are silica exposure, falls from heights and musculoskeletal injuries.

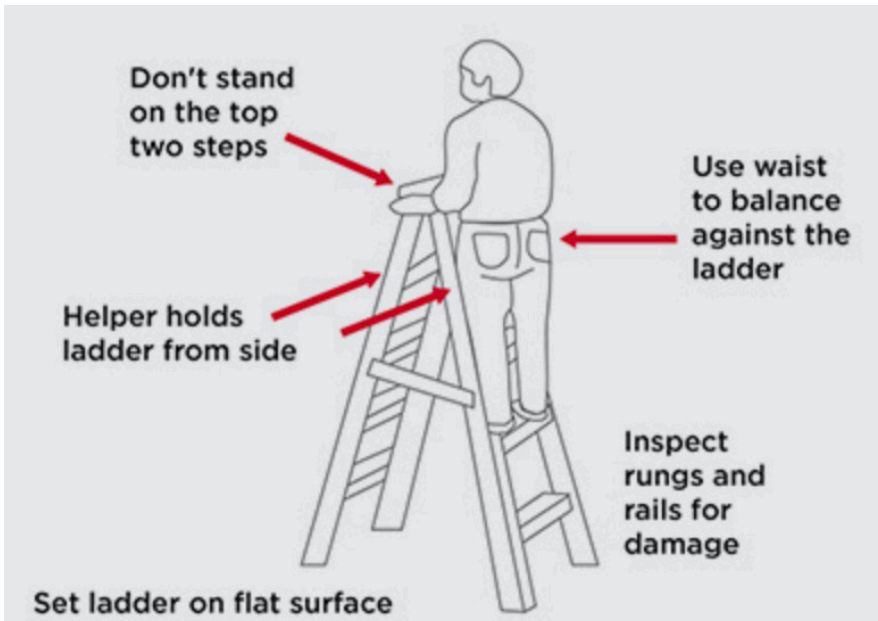
SafeWork NSW is reminding brickies and other tradies on worksites of the importance of remaining safe when laying bricks at height and working with materials containing silica.

Everyone knows that bricks, stone and blocks contain deadly silica.

Here are some tips:

- Use pre-cut bricks/blocks and ready-mixed concrete where possible.
- Use wet saws, block splitters and/or on-tool dust extraction to minimise dust.
- Mix dry cement in a well-ventilated area.
- Use and provide workers with re-usable or disposable respirators that comply with Australian Standards.
- Clean up using water and/or dust vacuums.
- Undertake air monitoring as required.

Learn more on silica safety on the SafeWork NSW website: www.safework.nsw.gov.au/hazards-a-z/hazardous-chemical/priority-chemicals/crystalline-silica



DON'T LET YOUR NEXT STEP BE YOUR LAST

Most serious and fatal falls are from a height of less than 4 metres – including falls from scaffolds that have components missing.

Heed the following tips:

- Use scaffold and temporary work platforms that have been erected by a competent person.
- If a scaffold is over 4 metres, you need a scaffolding high

risk work licence to erect, alter or dismantle it – this includes mobile scaffs.

- Never remove components from a scaffold if you don't hold a scaffolding high risk work licence.
- Talk to the site supervisor if you don't have the proper safety equipment to stay safe at heights, or if the scaffold is missing components.

Learn more about working safely at height on the SafeWork NSW website: www.safework.nsw.gov.au/your-industry/construction/work-safely-at-heights-in-construction

MOVE IT, DON'T LOSE IT

Musculoskeletal injuries are often caused by working in awkward or cramped positions, making repetitive movements, or using heavy equipment (particularly with hands raised).

Minimise the risks of injury by taking note of the following advice:

- Use pulleys/trolleys to lift/move materials where possible.
- Reduce unnecessary materials handling.
- Implement work/rest/task rotation cycles to limit repetitive movements.
- Use height-adjustable mortar boards to reduce bending.
- Use tools suited to your individual size and strength.

Learn more about MSD safety online: www.safework.nsw.gov.au/resource-library/musculoskeletal-disorders



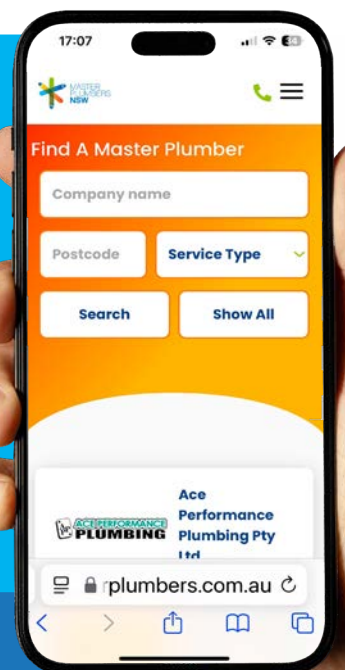
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APPRENTICE STORIES

JORDAN EMERY, a second-year apprentice employed by Brown and Moodie and instructed through Master Plumbers Training, says his number one piece of advice to other apprentices is: put away your mobile phone!

Aiming for a career in mechanical plumbing

Q Where did you do your apprenticeship? I started my apprenticeship with a small hydraulic plumbing company called MRT Plumbing.

Q Did you feel prepared for the first day of your apprenticeship? Yes, I had peers and family in the business who helped me understand what I was getting into.

Q Was it hard to balance training and work obligations? Not one bit, I believe the training program is very good and important for young apprentices.

Q Did travel requirements during your apprenticeship pose any issues? No, Sydney has a good public transport system when parking your own vehicle is unavailable.

Nothing beats a good training session!



“IT WAS DIFFERENT FROM WHAT I EXPECTED.”



Jordan Emery is a second-year apprentice with Master Plumbers Training.

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? It was different from what I expected, but it's been a very good experience.

Q You must have had some great training mentors along the way – what makes a 'good instructor'? The ability to listen and communicate properly, while having the skills to demonstrate jobs properly.

Q What advice would you give to a new apprentice about to start day one? To not go on your phone, that's the number one, be on time and try to get an understanding of what plumbing actually is.

Q Looking back, what have been the main highlights? My training at MPA has been very enjoyable and being on my current job site with my tradesmen at Lane Cove.

Q Where are you working now? Main fields of expertise? Currently I'm working in a data centre at Lane Cove. The main expertise has been welding alongside installing fan wall units.

Q What kind of working life will you be leading in five years' time? By then I hope to be a fully qualified tradesman as a mechanical plumber.

Q When you're not working or studying, what are your favourite hobbies or pastimes? I enjoy going to the gym and playing basketball. **TMP**

FROM TRANSITION FUEL TO A FUEL IN TRANSITION

Millions of Australians love using gas in their homes and businesses every day, with thousands of manufacturers relying on it for round-the-clock operations. When we look at the big picture of the energy landscape, it's easy to see that gas isn't just a transition fuel, it's in transition itself.

Renewable gases, like biomethane and renewable hydrogen, are being demonstrated and developed around the country and already being used successfully overseas, in places like Europe, UK and USA. Multiple energy solutions complementing each other, helping to achieve lower emissions efficiently and effectively.

The energy transition is a task too big, too important, to put all our eggs in one basket.

If we look at the big picture we can find big opportunities, more options, more solutions, more ways to support the energy transition.

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 **Jemena**



SYDNEY WATER: Cross-contamination

Tips to avoid cross-contamination – recycled water services

Recycled water for non-drinking applications is a great way of conserving precious mains water reserves – but cross-contamination remains a genuine risk, **SYDNEY WATER** advises.



With ever-growing populations and increased urban density, our need for water often outpaces the traditional water cycle.

A popular solution is to shrink that cycle by introducing recycled water systems in urban and industrial settings. Using recycled water for non-drinking purposes makes our drinking water supply go further.

Where we have dual connections, though, the risk of cross-connection increases. That's shrinking the water cycle a bit too far!

Sydney Water already has a network of over 800 kilometres of recycled water pipes, including nine recycled water reservoirs and 12 recycled water pumping stations, and that will keep increasing. Our water resource recovery facilities treat wastewater to a high level, adhering to the strict standards in the Australian Guidelines for Water Recycling.

We ensure recycled water is safe and suitable for its intended uses, and that's where plumbers come in. As a licensed plumber, you must be fully aware of the correct installation requirements for properties connected to our

AKASISON SIPHONIC DRAINAGE SYSTEM

The Akasison siphonic system offers maximum freedom for plumbers in designing and installing roof drainage systems. Ideal for industrial warehouses, aged care facilities, large commercial buildings and hospitals, Akasison efficiently drains large roof areas with minimal impact on building design. The system's pipework flows full without air at a higher velocity than conventional systems, allowing for smaller pipes and reducing installation costs.

Akasison's roof drainage system efficiently manages stormwater with fewer outlets and downpipes than traditional systems. Unlike gravity-based systems, Akasison's pipes are completely filled, creating a siphon effect that rapidly draws rainwater from the roof. This simplifies design and reduces construction costs. Specially designed roof outlets connect to a horizontal collector pipe, ensuring full and fast water flow. During intense rainstorms, these outlets prevent air entry by becoming submerged, quickly generating water plugs that flow through the downpipe. This creates a vacuum effect that efficiently siphons water off the roof, reducing outlet numbers and significantly reducing pipe sizes.

The Akasison siphonic roof drainage system is a turnkey solution for your next roof drainage project. The Akasison roof drainage system is supplied not only with the outlets and pipework but also the Akasison brackets and pipe rails coupled with full 3D construction drawings indicating pipe lengths & bracket + rail locations which means there is no guesswork when installing the Akasison Roof Drainage System. Akasison is backed by Vinidex – Australia's market leader in plastic piping solutions providing peace of mind to specifiers and installers alike.



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network. We rely on you to make sure private plumbing supplies the right water for the right purpose, so we've put together some reminders and best-practice tips for you.

USES OF RECYCLED WATER

Recycled water can be used to:

- water gardens, golf courses and parks
- flush toilets
- wash cars
- fight fires
- do laundry.

It can also be used for some industrial purposes and to supplement river flow.

COMMON MISTAKES LEADING TO CROSS-CONTAMINATION

Lack of backflow prevention

Proper backflow prevention devices are crucial to stopping the flow of recycled water into drinking water systems. Inadequate or absent backflow devices are often the result of poor plumbing design or an oversight during installation.

Incorrect pipe connections

In some cases, plumbing systems are not properly separated. The

“ RECYCLED WATER CAN BE USED TO WATER GARDENS, GOLF COURSES AND PARKS.

pipes are installed twisting together underground. Compounding this issue, the pipes are often not correctly identified. This can lead to confusion and direct cross-connected pipework as a result.

Failure to clearly mark pipework

Failing to clearly label and distinguish recycled water lines, especially at meter connections, can lead to confusion and inadvertent cross-connections. Purple pipes aren't just for style.

Mismatched or misplaced meters

Using the wrong meter for a drinking water or recycled water system can lead to confusion, inaccurate readings and potential backflow contamination.

TEMPORARY RECYCLED METER BYPASS

Unlike a drinking water service, you cannot install a bridging piece to provide recycled water before the meter is installed. If the property is being occupied before the meter

is installed, you must install a temporary recycled meter bypass. This will run drinking water through the recycled water pipes within a property until a meter is installed. For more information and specifications, please visit sydneywater.com.au/meterinstallguide

Incorrect plumbing practices between drinking and recycled water meters pose a significant risk to water safety, public health and regulatory compliance.

Recycled water, although treated for non-potable uses like irrigation and industrial processes, is not treated to the same levels as drinking water, which are set out by the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines.

Your attention to detail helps us to shrink the water cycle and provide a solution for our rapidly growing region without shrinking it so far that cross-connection or contamination happens. **TMP**

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NEW PRODUCTS

In this issue, plumbing expert **BILL ARMSTRONG** is delighted to recommend two very practical new products.



TWIN GIRO INDIVIDUAL ISOLATION STOP

The **DUAL ISOLATION VITAQ VALVE** presents two lead-free, quarter-turn, angle stop valves in one, installed upstream of a terminal fitting to shut off water supply in a quick and safe way, isolating individually the device to service or replace. Features include:

- TWIN system: patented two independent services in one valve
- GIRO system: patented loose nut system connection, for easy installation
- Reinforced VITAQ barb cone washer
- One single handle for full control of 4 different positions (open/close)
- Each position fits with a 'click'
- Operation works in both senses (clockwise/ counterclockwise)
- VITAQ system: more life, less lime scale at higher temperatures:
 - Increase your installation life span
 - Smoother open/close operation
 - Eliminate lime scale from building up over time.

See the Arco website at valvulasarco.es

WONDERCAP TOTAL SOLUTIONS KITS

THE WONDERCAP PRODUCT RANGE provides you with total protection of the waste pipe from the initial stages of construction to completion; preventing concrete and other waste materials from going down the waste pipe causing blockages. The Wondercap Kits feature a foam ring that also prevents concrete from settling in between the base and puddle flange during the concrete pour and is then removed once the concrete is set. The Retro Kits are optimally used for post-concrete poured constructions or timber floors. They are ideal for renovations and repairs. The Balcony Outlet Kit is specially designed for covered balcony drainage systems and helps relieve balconies and subfloors of any water retention that may occur.

Easy to install. Easy to waterproof. Easy to bed. Easy to tile.

Call 1300 308 205 or wondercap.com.au



Bill Armstrong has been a member of the Association for over 25 years. He has served on the MAP NSW 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 or visit www.armstrongplumbing.net.au

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