

SPRING 2025

WINNERS Master Plumbers NSW Annual Awards
HEAT PUMPS Government scheme fails to deliver
DYNASTY Six generations in one plumbing family

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF
THE MASTER PLUMBERS
ASSOCIATION OF NSW

THE MASTER PLUMBER



**APPRENTICE
SUPERVISION
NEEDS REFORM**



UNLOCK YOUR ASSOCIATION FLEET DISCOUNT

Industry Association Members get access to exclusive member benefits

The Association Fleet Discount unlocks discounts normally reserved for large businesses. It's part of our commitment to helping local businesses save time and money by providing reliable, safe, and comfortable vehicles. Available at all Toyota Dealerships, exclusive to select industry association members.

The Association Fleet Discount makes it easier to get behind the wheel of a hard-working Toyota fleet vehicle, with discounts across a great range of cars.

Find out how the Association Fleet Discount could benefit you.



Scan to sign up for the latest
insights from Toyota for Business

For full terms & conditions, details and eligibility requirements,
visit your Toyota Dealer or call 1800 679 247

OH WHAT A FEELING



8 COVER STORY APPRENTICE SUPERVISION NEEDS REFORM

At present, NSW plumbers must observe a regulation that requires all apprentices to be supervised only by a Licensed Contractor or a Qualified Supervisor. While well-intentioned, this legal requirement is proving unworkable in practice. Unlike other trades, plumbing is the only one that mandates both a Certificate III and a Certificate IV to obtain a contractor's licence, making the supervisory bottleneck all the more restrictive.

It's time the industry overhauled this impractical regulation, which is in dire need of reform.

TO BOOK YOUR ADVERTISING CONTACT

Derek Raney,
Master Plumbers NSW
Membership & Marketing Manager,
derek@masterplumbers.com.au
(02) 8789 7000



'Pink batts 2.0': Dodgy installers in hot water



REGULARS

- 4** From the CEO's Desk
- 6** President's Message
- 7** New Members
- 10** Association Updates
- 12** Mothers for Plumbers
- 22** Member Profile
- 24** Business Banter
- 26** Apprentice Stories
- 28** Regional Ramblings
- 30** Regulation & Safety
- 34** Sydney Water
- 37** New Products
- 38** Executive Directory

SPECIAL FEATURES

15 Annual Industry Awards

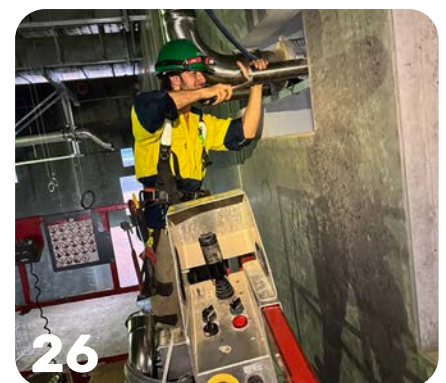
Don't miss our multi-page overview of all the major award winners in this year's Master Plumbers NSW awards.

20 Heat Pumps: Scheme shortcomings

While the government-sponsored distribution scheme of Heat Pumps is great in principle, the reality is a poorly monitored disaster.

22 Celebrating a dynasty

Spanning six generations of plumbing industry professionals, the McElroy family is arguably the state's oldest plumbing dynasty.





EDITORIAL

From the CEO's desk

As we enter Spring and say goodbye to one of the coldest Winters on record, I would like to thank all our members and industry partners for your continued support and commitment to excellence within the plumbing profession.

One of the standout moments of 2025 was the highly successful trade show and dinner we co-hosted with the Plumbers Co-op at Rosehill Racecourse in May. This year's event was particularly special as it marked the 70th anniversary of the Plumbers Co-op – an organisation proudly founded by the Master Plumbers Association of NSW 70 years ago. With over 1,000 plumbers attending the trade show and 600 to 700 joining us for the dinner, the strong turnout is a testament to the enduring strength and camaraderie of our industry.

In my feature article on page 8, I've addressed key concerns regarding apprentice supervision and the issuing and take-up of tradespersons registration. The NSW Building Commission has been taking these issues seriously, and I've been actively engaging behind the scenes with both the Building Commission and the NSW Government to ensure reforms are fair, workable, and in the public interest. Our priority is to maintain high standards across the trade while supporting the next generation of qualified plumbers.

Another critical issue making headlines is the ongoing concern surrounding Heat Pump installations. Together with The Daily Telegraph's James Willis and Dux Hot Water, Master Plumbers NSW has led the charge in highlighting the dangers of faulty installations by unqualified individuals. Our collective advocacy has resulted in two Daily Telegraph front-page stories and multiple follow-ups, as well as radio and TV interviews on 2GB and 2SM, and Sky News, calling on the NSW Government to put a freeze on the program. We have also written to the relevant NSW Government Ministers to commission a statewide audit, proposing a coalition between Master Plumbers NSW and the Building Commission to ensure public safety for the 120,000 Heat Pump installations performed over the past three to four years. Thank you to our many members who have provided regular updates, photos and commentary, which continue to strengthen our case and support meaningful change.

Looking ahead, we have two significant events to round out the year. First is the inaugural Master Plumbers NSW Melbourne Cup Harbour Cruise, which will be a fantastic networking and social opportunity. Second is our regional Golf Day and Industry Forum in Bonville, Coffs Harbour – a significant chance to engage with our members in northern NSW.

Thank you again for being part of our strong and growing community. Together, we'll continue to protect the public, promote the profession, and support our members. **TMP**

Nathaniel (Nat) Smith
CEO

THE MASTER PLUMBER

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

(02) 8789 7000

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Nathaniel Smith
Chief Executive Officer
Master Plumbers Association of NSW
nathaniel@masterplumbers.com.au

EDITORIAL SUBMISSIONS

Attn: Nathaniel Smith
nathaniel@masterplumbers.com.au

PRODUCTION EDITOR

John Power
Blue Pencil Writing Services
jpower146@bigpond.com

EDITORIAL DESIGN

Keely Goodall
keely@itsallgood.net.au

SENIOR EDITORIAL CONSULTANT

Bill Armstrong
billarmstrong452@gmail.com

ADVERTISING

Derek Raney
Membership & Marketing Manager
Master Plumbers NSW
derek@masterplumbers.com.au

CONTRIBUTORS

Bill Armstrong, Building Commission NSW, Geberit, Jace Hindmarsh, Suzanne Hindmarsh, Matthew Jones, David McElroy, Greg McElroy, NSW Fair Trading, Office NSW Building Commissioner, Peter Richardson, SafeWork NSW, Nathaniel Smith, Sydney Water.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

(02) 8789 7000

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.



Will your insurance withstand the pressure?

MGA Insurance Brokers – the trusted broker appointed by the association & specialists in Plumber's risk.

**Contact us today for an obligation free review
andrew.faber@mga.com
0400 130 199**



www.mga.com
www.mgatrades.com



STANDING BY YOU

Authorised Representative (No. 001282925) of MGA Insurance Brokers Pty Ltd (MGA)
ABN 29 008 096 277 AFSL 24460

MGA Offices Australia Wide MGA Insurance Brokers Pty Ltd ABN: 29 008 096 277 AFSL: 244601



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Would you work for you?

Are you brave enough to look in a mirror and ask that tricky question? I asked myself a few years ago, and the answer rattled around my head more than I'd care to admit.

It's easy to forget that running a plumbing business isn't just about turning wrenches and keeping the phones ringing. It's about building something that lasts. Something that attracts good people, delivers excellent service, and one day, can be sold as a valuable asset.

It's a confronting question. Strip away the pride, the stress, the excuses, and the day-to-day chaos: what's left? Would I, as a tradesperson, look at your business and think: *"Yeah, that's where I want to be, I like my job, I love the team, I'd stay even if I were offered a better deal?"*

For me, the honest answer, at least initially, was no.

THE CULTURE CHECK

Yes, yes, yes, culture is a buzzword these days, but in trades, it's often and sadly overlooked. We focus so much on jobs, quotes, and gear that we forget our people are the real engine of a plumbing business. Be honest and recognise that your staff are 100% your greatest business asset; great staff make a great business. As a business owner for over 40 years, I know that I am correct in that statement.

Years ago, I used to think culture was something that would sort itself out. Work hard, pay fair, and the rest would follow. But that's not the case. A business without a strong culture ends up being a revolving door of staff, missed opportunities, and constant stress. When I finally started



listening (that's hard for a business owner), really listening to what my team wanted, I realised they didn't just want money. They wanted respect, support, and a reason to care beyond the weekly pay cheque.

YOUR WORKING CONDITIONS

If you've been on the tools yourself, it's easy to fall into the trap of thinking: *"Well, I did it tough – so should they."*

But that mindset is a surefire way to drive good people away. Times have changed; no one has to work for you; they *choose* to.

A clean uniform, reliable equipment, clear communication, and a fair go – all those basics add up to someone feeling proud to wear your logo. Let's face it, no one wants to work at a company that operates in chaos.

Are you building a business that others want to be part of?

Here's the other half of the question: *Are you running a business that someone else would want to buy?* If not, you are leaving money on the table when building your retirement wealth.

So, back to the original question: *"Would you work for you?"*

If the answer is YES, then great – keep going, and don't forget to keep improving. But if the answer is NO, take it as a wake-up call.

If you don't know what the first step is in changing your 'Groundhog Day', call the Master Plumbers, ask for Nat Smith (Our CEO), and request a member mentor chat. Either I or another member who has travelled these paths will be happy to give you some guidance on how to create a change.

Remember, your Master Plumbers NSW is here to help you and serve your business.

Please help us to help you. Encourage other business owners to join so we can provide improved services and representation for your business. Remember, we are a NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANISATION – it is YOUR INDUSTRY, it is YOUR ASSOCIATION. Make it strong with strong membership. **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.

MASTER PLUMBERS NSW

NEW MEMBERS & PARTNERS



Master Plumbers NSW is humbled and delighted to welcome another strong influx of New Members and Corporate Partners into our organisation. We are very grateful for your support.

NEW MEMBERS

- ★ Joeys Jetting
- ★ AVP Services Pty Ltd
- ★ Hardie & Co Plumbing
- ★ RDK Plumbing
- ★ Jimmy Plumbs
- ★ Niche Plumbing
- ★ Greengroup Plumbing & Renos
- ★ NUFLOW Northwest Pipe Rehabilitation
- ★ Dial Up Pty Ltd
- ★ Sydney's Drain Men
- ★ Enjoy Plumbing
- ★ PA & RJ Beckwith
- ★ On Site Plumbing and Gas Pty Ltd
- ★ Sewertec Plumbing Services
- ★ Inverell Plumbers Pty Ltd
- ★ Platinum Plumbers Pty Ltd
- ★ Heat Pump Boys
- ★ Andrew Stone Plumbing
- ★ HIBE Plumbing & Gas
- ★ Allflow Plumbing Group
- ★ Miracle Plumbing Pty Ltd
- ★ All-flo Plumbing
- ★ Lynch Plumbing Services Pty Ltd
- ★ John Nakhoul Plumbing Services Pty Ltd
- ★ CDL Plumbing and Drainage Pty Ltd
- ★ Ballards Plumbing

NEW CORPORATE SUPPORT

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

GOLD SPONSOR:

- ★ Ampol Australia

CORPORATE MEMBERS:

- ★ Robert Bosch (Australia) Pty Ltd
- ★ Newcastle Gas



COVER STORY: Apprentice supervision

Apprentice supervision needs reform

Behind the scenes, Master Plumbers NSW has been working hard to reform existing, highly restrictive regulations governing the supervision of apprentice plumbers. Nathaniel Smith explains.

Over the past five months, the NSW plumbing industry has been rocked by a wave of compliance inspections, on-the-spot fines, and new interpretations of supervision laws, causing confusion, disruption, and frustration among plumbers, apprentices, and employers alike.

At the heart of the issue lies a regulation that requires all apprentices to be supervised *only* by a Licensed Contractor or a Qualified Supervisor. While well-intentioned, this legal requirement is proving unworkable in practice. Unlike other trades, plumbing is the only one that mandates both a Certificate III and a Certificate IV to obtain a contractor's licence, making the supervisory bottleneck all the more restrictive.

Master Plumbers NSW has spent the past several months working closely – but quietly and constructively – behind the scenes with the NSW Building Commission, NSW Government agencies, TAFE NSW, and the Plumbers Union to craft a practical solution for the industry. Our goal is simple: to maintain safety and compliance standards while ensuring the supervision system accurately reflects the reality of how plumbing work is delivered across the state, particularly in small and regional businesses.

TWO PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS: ONE CLEAR PATH FORWARD

To address this challenge, Master Plumbers NSW has proposed two practical options to the Building Commission:

- **Legislative change:** Amend the *Plumbing and Drainage Act 2011* via the upcoming Building Bill, set to be introduced later this year. This would expand

the legal definition of 'supervisor' to include qualified tradespersons holding a Certificate III and a Tradesperson Certificate.

- **Micro-Credential Training Pathway:** Introduce a mandatory online course that enables tradespersons to earn a micro-credential, certifying them as competent supervisors of apprentices, similar to a model successfully adopted in the electrical industry.

Following a series of in-depth discussions, we are encouraged by the direction the Building Commission is taking toward legislative reform. This is the most straightforward and scalable way to empower thousands of experienced tradespeople to supervise apprentices without imposing unrealistic or redundant training burdens.

Such reform would better reflect job site realities, especially in smaller businesses where registered plumbers, not always Licensed Contractors, have long played a key role in mentoring and managing apprentices. The proposed legislative change will restore balance, ease pressure on workforce pipelines, and uphold standards of safe, skilled plumbing work across NSW.

HISTORIC QUALIFICATION RECOGNITION: A MATTER OF FAIRNESS

Another primary concern for Master Plumbers NSW is the lack of recognition for historical qualifications. Plumbers who obtained their Certificate III in Plumbing (BCP30103) before 2003 are currently ineligible for tradesperson certificates or licences, despite often possessing equivalent or superior experience and knowledge.

THE PROPOSED LEGISLATIVE CHANGE WILL RESTORE BALANCE.

This issue affects a significant portion of the workforce, particularly seasoned professionals in regional and rural areas. Denying them licensing pathways is not only unfair but counterproductive in a time of acute skills shortages.

We've called on the Government to ensure that all Certificate III holders – regardless of when they completed their training – are recognised for licensing and supervision purposes, so long as their competencies align with today's standards.

IMPACT ON SMALL BUSINESS: A CAUTIONARY CASE STUDY

Our submission included a compelling case study from Mark Brown, Master Plumbers NSW Training Delivery Manager, outlining the impact of current supervision laws on a typical small plumbing business:

- A four-person team including one licensed plumber, two registered plumbers, and one apprentice.
- Under current rules, the apprentice cannot be left under the care of the two experienced registered plumbers.
- Requiring the licensed plumber to be on-site at all times drastically reduces job coverage and productivity.
- Pushing registered plumbers to complete a Certificate IV burdens them with lengthy training/RPL processes and costs.
- The result: operational inefficiencies, cost blowouts, and reduced service availability for homeowners.

A WAY FORWARD: FAIR, PRACTICAL & SAFE

We're not arguing against regulation or accountability. The plumbing trade is essential to the health and safety of our communities, and supervision must be taken seriously.

But the current enforcement regime, applied rigidly without a fit-for-purpose structure, threatens to do more harm than good, forcing businesses to choose between non-compliance and unsustainable costs.

That's why Master Plumbers NSW is working closely with government stakeholders to secure a more pragmatic, inclusive, and future-proof framework. One that:

- Respects and recognises the experience of older tradespeople



IMPORTANT NOTICE TO ALL PLUMBING BUSINESS OWNERS

The NSW Building Commission is intensifying enforcement against unqualified workers on job sites. It is now critical that every tradesperson you employ holds a current Tradesperson Certificate issued by Service NSW. Failure to comply may result in significant fines and project delays. We urge all employers to immediately verify the certification status of their teams and support any unregistered tradespeople in lodging their applications without delay. This crackdown is real and already impacting our industry – act now to protect your business and maintain compliance.

- Supports small business sustainability
- Maintains high-quality training and safety outcomes for apprentices
- Eases workforce constraints in metropolitan and regional areas alike.

FINAL THOUGHTS

We are grateful for the willingness shown by Fair Trading Minister Anoulack Chanthivong and his office, as well as Matthew Whitton's team at the Building Commission NSW, to engage with industry and listen to practical feedback. Our shared goal is to protect public safety *and* strengthen the plumbing industry for the future.

Master Plumbers NSW will continue working collaboratively to ensure these reforms are delivered with clarity and fairness. We remain committed to giving our members a strong voice, ensuring that changes to the law reflect the realities of the trade, and securing a supervision framework that works, not one that works against us. **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



ASSOCIATION UPDATES

The entire Master Plumbers NSW community mourns the loss of Rod Jackson.

VALE ROD JACKSON: A GIANT OF THE PLUMBING INDUSTRY



It is with great sadness that we mark the passing of Rod Jackson, a giant in the plumbing and vocational education sectors, whose contribution to the trade spanned decades. Rod was more than a plumber – he was a mentor, teacher, innovator, and passionate advocate for training the next generation of tradespeople.

Rod's journey began on the tools, but his commitment to education saw him become a beloved teacher at TAFE NSW, where he influenced countless apprentices and future industry leaders. He later served as a Field Officer for Master Plumbers Apprentices Limited (MPAL), a role in which he supported young apprentices through their training journey with warmth, professionalism, and unparalleled industry knowledge. Rod also served

as a current Board Member of MPAL, continuing to give back even in retirement.

MAJOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Rod's contributions were many and lasting. He oversaw major projects, including the installation of metal roofing at Hornsby College's eco-centre; helped design gas training bays; and authored national course materials on backflow prevention and water and gas services. His work in developing Recognised Prior Learning (RPL) programs enabled former students to return to study, a testament to his belief in lifelong learning and the value of second chances.

His leadership extended to the classroom, where he championed the integration of new technologies to modernise training delivery.

From data projectors to interactive content, Rod helped bring plumbing education into the digital age, always with the learner at the centre of his focus.

Rod's influence reached far beyond his technical skill. He was a mentor to many, a source of wisdom and humility, and someone whose legacy will continue through the many plumbers he trained, the colleagues he supported, and the improvements he made to vocational training.

Rod Jackson was a quiet achiever, a generous soul, and a true pillar of our industry. His legacy will live on in every apprentice he supported, every classroom he enriched, and every life he touched.

Rest in peace, Rod. You will be deeply missed and forever remembered. **TMP**



SPONSORED CONTENT: Geberit

Quieter refilling, easier installation

Meet the New Geberit Type 383 Fill Valve

Geberit has recently introduced the new Type 383 Fill Valve, which will be standard in all Sigma and Omega cisterns from 2025. Developed with feedback from the field and a long-standing commitment to noise reduction, the Type 383 offers noticeable improvements in performance, installation, and sustainability.

DESIGNED FOR QUIETER PERFORMANCE

One of the key updates is a significant reduction in refill noise. Compared to the previous model, the Type 383 is around 50% quieter. This has been achieved by reducing the amount of air drawn into the system during refill. Less air means

a more stable water jet and fewer vibrations – resulting in quieter operation, especially in multi-residential settings or buildings where bathrooms back onto bedrooms.

COMPACT & INSTALLER-FRIENDLY

The fill valve has been redesigned to be more compact, making it easier to handle and install inside the cistern. For plumbers, this means less fiddling around in tight spaces, especially in retrofit or maintenance work. It's also fully backward-compatible – it can be installed in Geberit concealed cisterns that have been in service for several decades without any special tools or modifications.



KEY FEATURES OF THE TYPE 383 FILL VALVE:

- **50% quieter operation compared to previous model**
- **Compact design for easier installation**
- **Backwards-compatible with older Geberit cisterns**
- **40% less material used; 10% recycled content**
- **Suitable for both new builds and retrofit jobs**



A STEP FORWARD IN SUSTAINABILITY

With millions of fill valves produced each year, the material savings also add up. The new design uses approximately 40% less plastic than its predecessor, contributing to reduced resource use and lower emissions. Around 10% of the material used is also recycled plastic, sourced from electronic waste – recognisable by the valve's dark grey colour. **TMP**

To find out more or get hands-on with the new Type 383, contact your local Geberit representative or visit www.geberit.com.au



SPECIAL SERIES: Mothers for plumbers

Suzanne Hindmarsh on her son's journey into the trade

In this first instalment of our new **MOTHERS FOR PLUMBERS** series, we speak with Suzanne Hindmarsh, whose son Jace is six months into his plumbing apprenticeship through the Master Plumbers Apprenticeship Program. Suzanne offers a warm and honest look into what it means to support a child into a trade career and watch them thrive.

From an early age, Jace showed signs that the traditional office path wasn't for him. "Around 15, he knew he didn't want a desk job," Suzanne says. "As part of school work experience, he spent a week with Peter Dillon, who's now with Level Plumbing Tamworth, and he absolutely loved it." That week led to another two weeks during the Christmas holidays, confirming Jace's interest in a hands-on trade career.

Just six weeks before his HSC, Jace's careers advisor sent him a link to apply for the Master Plumbers Apprenticeship Program. "We helped him update his resume, and when he landed an interview with AXIS Service Group, he was thrilled. He even followed up himself when there were scheduling issues. His eagerness and willingness to start immediately after the HSC really set him apart."

Seeing her son take that kind of initiative was a proud moment for Suzanne and her husband. "We were really excited for him. There's a clear shortage of tradespeople at the moment, and Jace has always preferred working with his hands over sitting at a computer. When we picked him up after his first day on the job, he was beaming. It was such a relief to see him enjoying himself so much."



In the early days of his apprenticeship, Suzanne and her husband provided support where it counted. "He was still on his learner plates, so we drove him to and from work. We'd check in with him every day, made sure his work clothes were clean and that he was eating and sleeping well."

Jace's motivation was never in question. "There were a few close calls with sleeping through his alarm or rushing out the door without breakfast, but beyond that he's been incredibly self-driven. He's already built a good rapport with his workmates and is always talking about the next certification he wants to earn."

Suzanne believes that some of that dedication comes from values instilled at home. "My husband and I have always had a strong work ethic. Jace has grown up seeing what it means to commit to something and give it your best. I think that's rubbed off on him in a positive way."

A GREAT FIT

For Suzanne, the trade pathway has been a great fit for her son and she sees it as a strong option for other young people. "Absolutely, trades are a great choice. University isn't for everyone. With a trade, you get paid to learn. Jace really values having money come into his account each week, but more than that, he's excited about learning practical skills every day."

One of the biggest surprises for Suzanne has been the level of mentorship and camaraderie in the plumbing industry. "Jace is constantly telling us how much support he's getting at work. His colleagues are really generous with their time and knowledge, and that's made a huge impact."

Even in a short time, Jace's growth has been striking. "He finished the HSC, and within a month he was working full time. That kind of transition is massive. He's matured so quickly. We're very proud of how seriously he's taken it."

While he's only just begun his apprenticeship, milestones are already stacking up. "When he told us he'd earned his Scissor Lift certificate just a few months in, we were really impressed. It shows his employer trusts him and sees his potential. It's encouraging to know he's on a path where his effort is recognised."

Suzanne has advice for other parents who are navigating this decision with their children. "Encourage them. Especially if they're the hands-on type. If they can complete their HSC first, I think that makes a big difference. That extra maturity helps them handle the responsibilities of work."

WORK ETHIC

She's also clear on what makes her most proud of Jace so far. "His work ethic. He's committed, reliable, and genuinely wants to build a career in this industry. That's incredibly satisfying to watch as a parent."

While Suzanne has always respected trades, having a child in the industry has made it even more personal. "All jobs are important, but it's about supporting your kids in finding what suits them best. For Jace, plumbing is the perfect match."

Her final reflection is one of gratitude. "I want to thank Master Plumbers and AXIS Service Group for giving Jace this opportunity. From a mother's perspective, the process has been excellent. Watching him grow into a responsible, dedicated young man who enjoys going to work every day has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my life."

Behind every apprentice is someone cheering them on – and in Jace's case, it's a mum who believed in his path and stood by him every step of the way. **TMP**

See this issue's Apprentice Stories on page 26, which profiles Jace's plumbing experiences in detail.



SEAMLESS INTEGRATION

WITH COOK'S CONNECT

"CREATING EFFICIENCIES FOR YOUR BUSINESS"

Aroflo is our latest software system to be integrated with Cook's Plumbing Supplies.

- ✓ Synchronise invoices automatically
- ✓ View Cook's full catalogue
- ✓ Live pricing
- ✓ No more manual loading
- ✓ Game-changing integration
- ✓ Save time by automatically importing Cook's invoices
- ✓ Reduction in mistakes
- ✓ Save \$\$\$

Seamless integration of invoices and pricing with:



WorkLife, sorted.

We can also send Excel/CSV files for manual integration for **Fergus, Tradify, SmartTrade & Servicem8**

For all enquiries, contact it@cooksplumbing.com.au

MELBOURNE CUP HARBOUR CRUISE

SYDNEY HARBOUR | 4 NOVEMBER 2025

Join us for a relaxed lunch on beautiful Sydney Harbour.

Gather your team for a relaxing afternoon away from the tools and enjoy a delicious buffet lunch, great company and music. If your team are looking for a fun filled outing, with great food and spectacular views the Melbourne Cup Cruise is just what you need.



GET YOUR
TICKETS
NOW



For any additional event information
contact Master Plumbers NSW
on (02) 8789 7000.

GOLF DAY & REGIONAL FORUM

**BONVILLE | 20 NOVEMBER 2025
COFFS HARBOUR**

We are heading to one of Australia's
favourite golf courses on the Coffs Coast.

For golfers of all skill levels, a day playing
Ambrose is the perfect way to network with
fellow plumbers in a relaxed setting.

After your day of golf, take part in our Regional Forum
– an open discussion on key industry issues and how
Master Plumbers NSW can support you. Of course, if you're not
a golfer you are welcome to join us for dinner and the forum.



GET YOUR
TICKETS
NOW





FEATURE: 2025 Annual Industry Awards

Celebrating the winners



The 2025 Master Plumbers NSW Annual Industry Awards brought together our industry's best and brightest for an afternoon of celebration, recognition and connection.

Held over lunch at Waterview in Sydney Olympic Park, the event was hosted by renowned comedian Rob Shehadie, who kept the crowd entertained with plenty of laughs and energy. It was a fantastic opportunity to come together as an industry and recognise the achievements of individuals, businesses and our longstanding members making a real impact in plumbing across NSW.

We were proud to announce the following award winners:

INNOVATION AWARD:
DUX HOT WATER

COMMERCIAL PROJECT AWARD:
ATLANTIC PLUMBING

EXCELLENCE IN WORK, HEALTH & SAFETY AWARD:
RESCUE U PLUMBING

Congratulations to all our winners and finalists. Your dedication to excellence and your contributions to the profession are truly valued.

We extend our sincere thanks to our event sponsor ACIRT, along with our supporting sponsors Toyota and Mitsubishi. Thanks for their generous support and ongoing commitment to the industry.

And finally, a big thank you to all Members, Industry Partners, Corporate Sponsors and guests who joined us and made this year's Awards lunch such a memorable occasion. We look forward to celebrating with you again in 2026.



Luke Rankin from Dux Hot Water and James Wand from Reece.



Wagga Plumbing Services celebrated 50 years of Membership.



Congratulations to Atlantic Plumbing: 30 Years of Membership, and recipient of the Commercial Project Award.



Members celebrated a positive year for Master Plumbers NSW.



An incredible milestone for McElroy Plumbing: 90 years of Membership.

President Greg McElroy takes flight!





Members enjoyed a great day of networking and friendship.



Nat Smith, CEO of Master Plumbers NSW.



Comedian Rob Shehadie was our magnificent host for the ceremony.



David McElroy.



The McElroy family – see our Member Profile on pages 22–23.



The Awards ceremony always provides an opportunity for friends to have a welcome chat.



Host Rob Shehadie in action.

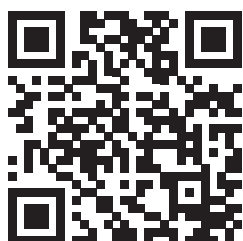


All smiles over a beer!



Visit our experience centre.

An interactive showcase of innovative and inclusive bathroom solutions for high risk and high care environments.



Scan to Book

Interactive Demos

Expert Consults

Full Room Solutions

Brought to you by



galvin





FEATURE: Heat pumps

Blowing the whistle on the heat pump fiasco

The scheme to roll out huge numbers of heat pumps into the general market has been poorly monitored and controlled, writes **NATHANIEL SMITH**.

In one of the most explosive exposés since the infamous Pink Batts debacle, potentially over 120,000 hot water Heat Pump systems have been installed across NSW under a failed ‘green energy’ scheme – many by unqualified or unlicensed installers fitting devices that do not meet the stated energy savings or service life. It was Master Plumbers NSW, in collaboration with *The Daily Telegraph* and leading local businesses tied to the industry, that helped blow the whistle on what is fast becoming a scandal.

What began as a government initiative designed to promote energy-efficient Heat Pump water systems under the Energy Savings Scheme (ESS) has descended into chaos, with tens of thousands of households now facing faulty or dangerous systems installed by operators without proper qualifications.

A SCHEME RIDDLED WITH RISK

Promoted heavily during the tenure of former NSW Energy Minister Matt Kean, the scheme provided financial incentives to replace traditional water heaters with heat pumps – many of which have since proven to be of inferior quality or incorrectly installed.

A *Daily Telegraph* investigation revealed numerous cases where systems leaked, failed within months, or posed serious safety risks due to non-compliance with electrical, refrigeration or plumbing standards. In some instances, residents were left without hot water for weeks or faced repair bills in the thousands.

This is a classic case of good intentions gone wrong. What was meant to save consumers money

and reduce emissions has created a market for cheap products being fitted by unlicensed individuals.

THE WARNING SIGNS WERE THERE

For over 12 months, Master Plumbers NSW received increasing reports from member plumbers and customers highlighting dodgy installations and operators canvassing homes, offering ‘free upgrades’. Many consumers were misled into thinking these were government-mandated replacements. In reality, it was a loosely regulated cash grab masquerading as environmental reform.

UNITING INDUSTRY AGAINST A COMMON ENEMY

Master Plumbers NSW began discussions with *The Daily Telegraph*, providing evidence, photographs, installer testimonies, and expert insights into how the scheme was being exploited. Together, the alliance of industry, media, and interested organisations presented a unified front, helping *The Daily Telegraph* craft a series of powerful articles that exposed the flaws, dangers, and long-term costs of the scheme.

One headline read: “Someone Could Die” – Hot Water Cowboys on the Loose for Years”: a chilling warning that underscored the urgency of reform.

HOLDING GOVERNMENT TO ACCOUNT

The current NSW Labor Government has distanced itself from the scheme, with Energy Minister Penny Sharpe and Fair Trading Minister Anoulack Chanthivong acknowledging the magnitude of the problem. “We will



NEWS 13

Risky hot water systems rife as bureaucrats dither on standards

06 NEWS

The Daily Telegraph | Thursday May 22, 2025

'Pink batts 2.0': Dodgy installers in hot water

We are in deep with the acronyms

10 NEWS

Hot water cowboys on loose for years

100,000 systems at risk

EXCLUSIVE

alarm during a meeting with state government agen...

clean up Kean's heat pump mess," Chanthivong told *The Daily Telegraph*, pledging tighter oversight and enforcement.

Master Plumbers NSW has since met with the Building Commission NSW to push for immediate reforms, including:

- Installation by qualified tradespersons
- Audits of previously installed systems
- A public register of approved heat pump products
- Consumer education campaigns to combat misinformation.

We support innovation and greener technology. But it must be done safely, responsibly, and with the right people doing the work. That's why trade qualifications and licensing matter.

A CALL TO ACTION

The Association is urging all plumbing businesses and consumers to report any suspected unqualified installations and to insist that all tradespersons hold valid certification from Service NSW.

This scandal isn't over. But thanks to our members, and partners in the media, we've taken the first steps toward cleaning it up. Now we need the government to follow through with serious reforms – and fast. **TMP**

EXCLUSIVE

Dodgy heaters flood market on green scheme

WE'RE IN HOT WATER

discounts, which until last year allowed some new heat pumps to be installed for free, have un-orkers who an



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: Member Profile

Six generations of plumbers... and counting

The McElroy family is arguably the state's oldest plumbing dynasty, boasting six generations of plumbers dating back to the mid-1800s. Below, David McElroy, Director McElroy Plumbing, opens a window to his family's incredible past.

Q The McElroy family has been involved in the Australian plumbing industry for over a century. How many generations of McElroy plumbers have there been?

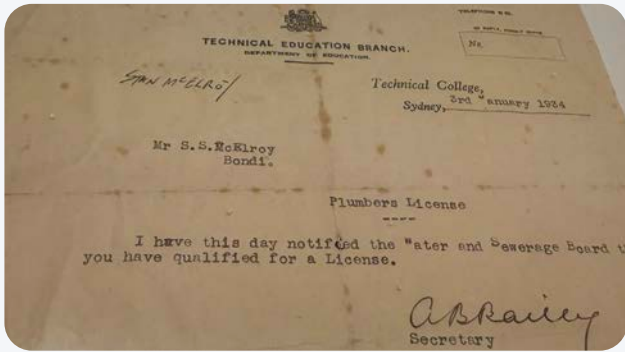
We go back six generations:

- **1st Generation:** In about 1860 Charles McElroy completed his plumbing apprenticeship and started plumbing in the Paddington/Bondi area.
- **2nd Generation:** Charles had a son: Charles Augusta. In 1918 The Metropolitan board of water supply & sewage lists C.A. McElroy of Bondi as a licensed plumber.
- **3rd Generation:** He had a son Stanley Gerald McElroy, who became a licensed plumber. Joined Master Plumbers in 1935.
- **4th Generation:** Stanley Gerald, my grandfather, had three sons, two of whom (Ralph and Murray) became licensed plumbers. Stanley started SG McElroy & Sons.
- **5th Generation:** Ralph had three sons – Greg and John became licensed plumbers. Murray, my father, had three sons: David, Peter and Justin. David and Peter are licensed plumbers. Justin also worked in the family business. David and Peter changed the company to McElroy Plumbing in approx. 2010.
- **6th Generation:** Angus McElroy, my son, is now running McElroy Plumbing.

Q Can you trace the year when your ancestor first worked in the plumbing profession? Our family arrived in Australia on the first non-convict ship in 1837. This ship comprised of skilled people. Our first settler was a copper (barrel maker). Historical records show his son Charles McElroy worked as a plumber in about 1860 in the Bondi/Paddington area.

Q When did your family first join Master Plumbers NSW? 1935.





Q What lessons have past generations of plumbers in your family passed on to newer members? Work ethic.

Q What aspects of plumbing have changed the most over the past century? Maintenance of sewers. From handheld bamboo rods pushing up sewer pipes until it stopped, then dig. Today we have state-of-the-art sewer cleaning machines, cameras, robotics and relining equipment.

Q Are there any aspects of plumbing that have stayed the same over the past century? Hard work and a bit smelly.

Q Looking back over the work of past generations, is there a plumbing project that your family is particularly proud of? We did a project for an owner in Coogee whose property had flooded and destroyed a neighbouring property's downstairs area. A seven-day council order to repair and fix the problem was issued to the owner, who employed McElroy Plumbing, so we had to get all our ducks in a line quickly.

We had an excavator lowered by crane into the rear of a block of unit's yard, approximately 8m below street level, to create a workable stormwater system with retention tank and pumps.

The project was a complete success and received praise from Randwick Council engineers.

Q How important is membership of Master Plumbers NSW? Has your family included many office bearers over the years? It's very important for our family business to be a member of Master Plumbers NSW. They have helped me negotiate a couple of challenging issues with our business. Our family has had three office bearers: Ralph (President); Greg (President – two terms); and David (Treasurer).

Q Is plumbing the best career in the world? Yes. It has put food on the table of our families for generations and, importantly and looking into the future, our skilled tradesmen will not be replaced by robots.

Q Will your family be involved in plumbing for another century? Yes. **TMP**



FOR SALE
A Newcastle Institution
NEWCASTLE GAS
02 4954 5999 | www.newcastlegas.com.au
Shed 11-5 Walker St Warners Bay NSW 2282

A unique opportunity to acquire a trusted name with over 100 years of history in Australia's 6th largest city.

Price: \$149,000 + Stock at Cost

Newcastle Gas is a thriving, manageable business with a strong reputation and a loyal customer base. Perfectly positioned for a larger plumbing company to integrate and expand. **Full training will be provided by the owner to ensure a seamless handover.**

A Legacy of Trust and Experience

100+ Year Association

The "Newcastle Gas" name is an established local brand.

Prime Location

Operating from a dedicated gas shop location for over 35 years in Warners Bay.

Third-Generation Expertise

Owned by a third-generation gas industry professional, with a combined staff experience of nearly 130 years.

Protected Identity

The registered business name "Newcastle Gas Company Pty Ltd" has been held for 25 years.

Strong Business Foundations & Growth

Impressive Growth

From an empty showroom 9 years ago to a consistently growing business.

Large Customer Database

Approximately 6,000 customers built over the last 9 years.

Key Financial Highlights

Consistent Service Revenue

Performing 500-600 heater services and conversions annually.

We specialise in high-quality gas components, supplying to both trade and the public.

To express your interest, please contact:

Neal Cotterill
Shed 11-5 Walker St Warners Bay NSW 2282
02 4954 5999 | www.newcastlegas.com.au



BUSINESS BANTER

You can't 'outwork' a broken business, writes **MATTHEW JONES**, founder of Cube Performance and the Institute of Trades Professionals. However, a change of mindset can pave the way for dramatic, positive solutions.

Change your mindset to win

Running a business is tough. Working on the tools is easy. I know how easy it is to get trapped in the cycle of working harder and harder – but never really feeling like you're ahead.

I ran my own plumbing business for seven years in the 1990s. Like most tradies, I thought staying flat-out busy was the key to success. But you can't outwork a broken business – more effort doesn't guarantee more profit; it just guarantees exhaustion.

After coaching thousands of trade businesses over two decades, one truth stands out: hard work alone doesn't create a profitable business.

I've had hundreds of tough conversations with owners – burnt out, frustrated, and even when handed a clear plan to change, they say: "But I'm too busy..."

The reality is, it's your choice. Working hard takes effort. Working smart takes effort. Choose your effort. Nothing worthwhile comes easy. If you really want change, you must make the tough calls.

The successful owners who have built a legacy all have three things in abundance: focus, discipline, and patience. If you want a business that works for you – not the other way around – it's time to start working smarter.

UNDERSTAND WHAT WINNING LOOKS LIKE

For all the time, energy, and money you invest – while taking on risk and forgoing other opportunities – you owe it to yourself to clearly define what winning really means.

Too often, plumbers assume being busy and turning over big numbers equals success. But that's just activity, not achievement.

A truly successful business delivers income, lifestyle, and long-term wealth. To make that happen, answer:

- What personal income do you need?
- How many hours per week are you willing to work while preserving family and lifestyle?
- What operating profit is needed to pay yourself, reinvest, and build wealth?
- What sales and margins are required to deliver that profit consistently?

Without clarity on these, you're flying blind: working harder without knowing if you're moving closer to the life you want.

SHIFT YOUR MINDSET: FROM TRADIE TO BUSINESS OWNER

The first step to working smarter – and winning – is shifting your mindset.

Many owners get stuck in what I have called the Tradie Mindset™, chained to the tools, believing hard work alone equals success. But more effort doesn't guarantee progress or profit.

The most successful operators adopt the Business Performance Mindset™, seeing themselves as owners first, plumber second – building a business that delivers income, lifestyle, and wealth without enslaving them.

They get clear on what winning looks like, build systems to deliver it, and focus their energy where it matters most.

IT'S A 'NO' UNLESS IT'S A 'HELL YES'

When you operate with a Business Performance Mindset™, you gain clarity and control over the work you accept.

Too many plumbers say yes to everything: time-wasting jobs, unprofessional clients, or work outside their expertise. That leads to overwork, poor margins, and frustration.

Instead, adopt this rule: It's a 'No' unless it's a 'Hell Yes'! Your time is your most valuable asset, yet many plumbers give it away. Start making choices that maximise your earnings per hour, factoring in travel, admin, quoting, and call-backs.

Say no to time-wasters, low-margin jobs, and draining clients, and instead focus on high-value activities that grow your business and improve your life.

BUILD A TEAM THAT PERFORMS WITHOUT YOU

Many owners grip every decision tightly out of fear of mistakes, but that makes you the bottleneck.

Working smarter, especially in an industry facing labour shortages, means building skills from within. That requires investing time and money to create systems, train your team properly, and develop a clear, values-based playbook. This sets standards, defines expectations, and ensures everyone understands 'The Way We Do It Here'.

Never assume your team knows what's expected. Make it clear, measurable, and easy to follow. Give them the tools, training, and confidence to deliver – and set them up to win.

The payoff? A business that operates and grows without you making every decision.

FOCUS ON THE SCOREBOARD

Every successful sports team keeps score. Every player knows the target, their role, and how to improve.

Your business is no different. The number one reason Tradie Mindset™ operators struggle: they don't know – or own – their numbers.

That starts with 100% financial clarity. You need one source of truth for your numbers so you can lead with clarity, control, and confidence.

- Structure your Profit & Loss as a management report delivering the true operational performance, not just for tax.

- Hold a monthly meeting to review your operating profit: actual vs budget.
- Forecast weekly cash flow: what's in, what's out, what's left – and who must pay.

When you know the score, you stop guessing and start leading. That's when confidence grows, decisions get easier, and you finally feel in control.

START WINNING THE GAME – IT'S YOUR CHOICE

1. Define what winning looks like – income, hours, profit, margins.
2. Shift to a Business Performance Mindset™ – owner first.
3. Adopt 'It's a No unless it's a 'Hell Yes' policy – protect your time.
4. Build systems, a playbook, and financial clarity – and lead. **TMP**



Matthew Jones, founder of Cube Performance and the Institute of Trades Professionals, helps tradie business owners build profitable, sustainable businesses through focus, discipline, and smart systems. A former plumber and corporate leader, he's assisted over 6,000 businesses since 2007 and authored Power Up Your Tradie Business. Learn more about business leadership courses at instituteoftradesprofessionals.org

Save 4.5 cpl on all fuel*



Be rewarded with Everyday Rewards points^

Apply at <https://www.ampol.com.au/business/products-and-services/fuel-cards/ampolcard/apply?ReferralCode=MPANSW#>



Or scan the QR
code to sign up.



*AmpolCard Terms and Conditions, eligibility criteria and fees apply.

^Everyday Rewards Membership and points Terms and Conditions apply.

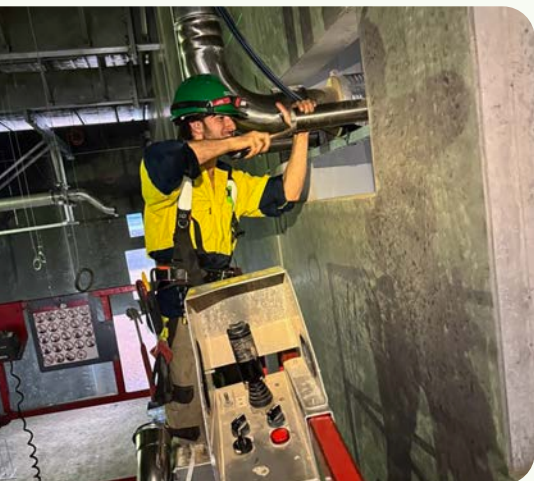
Please see, <https://www.ampol.com.au/business/products-and-services/fuel-cards/ampolcard>



APPRENTICE STORIES

First-year apprentice **JACE HINDMARSH** (Master Plumbers Apprentices) says his early apprenticeship has been a great introduction to plumbing's varied career pathways.

Keeping an open mind



Q Where are you doing your apprenticeship? I am doing my apprenticeship with Axis Plumbing in Tamworth. Axis has the Oakburn Processing plant out at Baiada's rendering plant, which is a large commercial site.

Q Did you feel prepared for the first day of your apprenticeship? I felt relatively prepared for my first day – I had done some work experience when I was in school for a local plumber, but realised that residential and commercial plumbing sites were polar opposites. Thus, I was challenged by having to get used to how it all worked.

Q Was it hard to balance training and work obligations? Being my first year in TAFE, I have found it fairly easy to stay on top of my training and work obligations. Tamworth's TAFE is in week blocks, so I can do some preparation for my TAFE weeks and focus on work, then when a TAFE block comes up, it is full focus.

Q Have travel requirements during your apprenticeship posed any issues? At the beginning of my apprenticeship, I did not have my 'P' licence, which meant my unfortunate parents had to get up at 5:30am to get me to work. Luckily, I got my licence, and my lovely parents could go back to having eight hours of sleep.

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? As I have only been in the industry for just over six months, I am learning in parts the things I was expecting to learn. I have come to learn that it is a combination of both 'on tools' learning and studies, and the studies will help you become a good plumber when things don't go to plan.

Q You must have had some great training mentors along the way – what makes a 'good instructor'? Even though I have only had a short time with only the lads at work, all of them will teach you different aspects and give you a bunch of breadcrumbs to put together. A good mentor, in my opinion, has a lot of patience and lets you have a go after instruction.

Q What advice would you give to a new apprentice about to start day one? Keep an open mind and stick to the cause despite the hard work and long hours in those slow days. Be open to try new experiences and to take on advice.

Q Looking back, what have been the main highlights?

So far, one main highlight has been learning plumbing with the lads as they have made it fun and easier, with them having good relations and banter between one another. The second is either the reaction of people to the smells of 'fresh chicken' with the nearby rendering plant, or a mad dash to get tools out of the rain, leaving us absolutely drenched.

Q Where are you working now? Main fields of expertise?

I am still at the same place I started my apprenticeship; however, I have learnt about high-level pressure systems and have done some ground work drainage. I would say I am too early to have any area or expertise though.

Q What kind of working life will you be leading in five years' time? I am hoping that I will be almost done with my contracting license in plumbing so I can begin subcontracting my work out in the future. I would love to do some work away from home, as it allows for exploration of Australia and differing experiences that I wouldn't get the chance to see otherwise.

Q When you're not working or studying, what are your favourite hobbies or pastimes?

I enjoy playing some video games to keep up with friends from school, and training calisthenics when I do have free time. As well as hanging out with friends from school when they come back home on their university breaks. **TMP**

ACIRT **SUPPORTING** **MASTER PLUMBERS** **AND THEIR** **WORKFORCE**



**THE NO.1
REDUNDANCY
SAFETY NET**

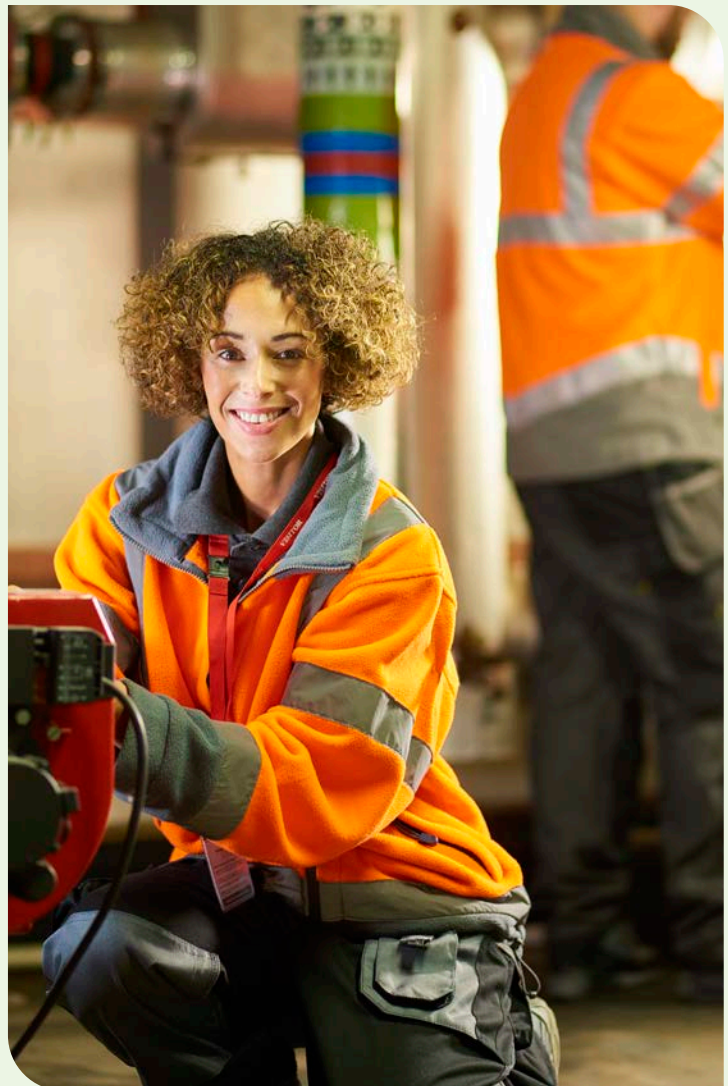
As a proud sponsor of Master Plumbers NSW, ACIRT is committed to the success of our industry's employers and the wellbeing of their dedicated workforce. For over three decades, ACIRT has provided a vital safety net, ensuring that your employees, who are also ACIRT members, are never left without support.

All Profits Back to Members: Not Unions - A Unique Advantage

Unlike many other redundancy funds, ACIRT operates on a unique principle: **all profits are paid back to our members, not unions.** This means the hard-earned money trusted to ACIRT directly benefits your employees and you.

Three Decades of Trust and Stability

ACIRT's commitment has built a foundation of trust and reliability. Our long-term commitment ensures ACIRT is not just a fund, but a dependable partner, providing stability and security for plumbing businesses and their valued employees for years to come. **We are here to stay, supporting the vital work you do.**



NEED HELP WITH YOUR ACIRT?

Visit acirt.com.au or call 1800 060 467 to speak with our team.



REGIONAL RAMBLINGS

Our regional expert **PETER RICHARDSON** has had a bellyful of administrative hassles and costs... and he suspects he's not alone!

Claims and more claims

The high cost of running a business! Here's a take on the problems from me and a few mates.

Article in *The Daily Telegraph* Friday 4 July 2025 by Jake McCallum, Rory Williams and Madeleine Damo – restaurants and cafes are shutting in record numbers: 'Sorry Sydney, The Kitchen Closed'.

The same problems apply to the construction industry, as per comments from Daniel Hunter, boss

of Business NSW, who notes the price of insurance, workers compensation, energy, tax, and compliances are at unprecedented levels.

Daniel Hunter told *The Daily Telegraph* he fears the state will "continue to see more and more business close down unless there is a serious look at the cost of doing business.

"It is no surprise that cafes and restaurants are going out of business in record numbers –

the cost of doing business is as high as it has ever been," he said. "The price of insurance, workers' compensation, energy, tax and compliances are at unprecedented levels."

A Business NSW survey in the "labour-intensive" hospitality industry reported an ongoing skills shortage, with "three in four NSW employers report[ing] difficulty recruiting or being unable to find suitable staff."





austworld.com.au





Celebrating 40 Years of Plumbing Wholesale Excellence



“ WHY DO THESE CLAIMS KEEP COMING BACK?

One-third of businesses told the survey they faced an increase of at least 30% in their general insurance costs over the past year.

“Payroll tax continues to take more than \$12.3 billion every year from about 52,000 businesses,” Mr Hunter told *The Daily Telegraph*.

“These changes would provide immediate relief to businesses, stimulate regional job creation and help modernise the state’s economic framework.”

DANGER? TRY ANOTHER WAY

Been in business for 57 years, and we have had no major Workers Compensation claims. Old method: assess the job, and if you see a problem or danger, then go to Plan B or C to lessen the danger or problem. Workers Compensation is in place to help fix any injuries to a person so they can successfully get back to work and their families. **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

Get Rewarded

Win \$10,000 Luxury Escapes Voucher

Join your **Trade Rewards** program and earn cash for every eligible natural gas appliance you sell - plus entries into the major prize draw to win a **\$10,000 Luxury Escape voucher**.

Eligible products include:

- Hot water systems
- Cooktops
- BBQ points
- Fireplaces
- Flued and portable heaters
- Ducted heating
- Pool and spa heating

How it works:

1. Sign up and receive a \$20 bonus or 2 prize draw entries
2. Log your eligible sales
3. Accrue reward dollars or cash out anytime
4. Share rewards with customers, colleagues, or mates



Start earning today
traderewards.com.au





REGULATION & SAFETY

SAFework NSW IN FOCUS: SPRING PRIORITIES

Plumbing involves a range of safety risks, and this season SafeWork NSW has identified key issues that continue to put plumbers at risk.

Falls from heights continue to be the biggest cause of traumatic injury and death, with most injuries being sustained by falls under 4m.

SafeWork continues its focus on young and at-risk workers, making sure apprentices are aware of the importance of safety, the risks on site, and both their and their employer's responsibilities.

It's reno season, and with every new reno comes new risks. Remember an old house in desperate need of a facelift may have layers of asbestos under that drywall. And don't let dust from that bathroom demo get into your lungs and cause silicosis.

It might be tempting to cut corners or save a few dollars by skimping on safety, especially on busy jobs. But the reality is: an injury on site will cost you far more – in lost time, lost income, and long-term recovery. A shortcut today can turn into a long delay tomorrow.



Springtime can be a busy and rushed time of the year for plumbers, as property owners undertake post-winter projects. But, SafeWork NSW advises, it can also be a dangerous time for workers. Below are some timely safety reminders...



(Left) Asbestos-containing pipe lagging; and (Right) asbestos-containing gutters, capping and roof.

ASBESTOS IN PLAIN VIEW

If asbestos-containing materials are in good condition and left alone, they usually don't pose much risk. But once you start cutting, drilling, or water blasting them, tiny fibres can be released into the air. Breathing in those fibres can lead to serious health issues like asbestosis, lung cancer, or mesothelioma. Around 4,000 Australians die each year from asbestos-related diseases. That's twice the number of people killed on our roads.

If you're working on a home or building built before 1990, then it's likely to contain asbestos. Asbestos is commonly found in kitchens, bathrooms, floors, roofs, ceilings, and walls. There's no known safe level of exposure – so even a small amount can be dangerous if disturbed. Always check for the presence of asbestos before you start cutting, drilling, or removing materials.

When in doubt, a sample should be taken and tested by a National Association of Testing Authorities (NATA) accredited laboratory. For commercial buildings built before December 2003, check the asbestos register before starting work. If asbestos is found, request the asbestos management plan before proceeding.

SafeWork NSW recommends using a licensed asbestos removalist for any amount of asbestos.

- If you're removing less than 10m² of non-friable asbestos yourself, you don't need a licence – but you must follow the Code of Practice.
 - A Class A or a Class B licence is required to remove more than 10m² of non-friable asbestos.
 - A Class A licence is required to remove any amount of friable asbestos.
- Remember that employers have a legal obligation to provide workers with asbestos awareness training if they are likely to encounter asbestos on the job. SafeWork NSW has an online Asbestos Awareness & Safety course which, if taken, helps meet those legal obligations and gives participants the skills to protect themselves and their colleagues from harmful asbestos fibres and dust.



Visit SafeWork NSW website at www.safework.nsw.gov.au/asbestos or scan the QR code for more information, including how to identify asbestos and work safely, links to the Asbestos Awareness and Safety Course and the SafeWork NSW Code of Practice: How to safely remove asbestos.



Smell Gas? Report It Fast.

Jemena's Online Gas Leak Reporting Tool

As a plumber, you know how serious a gas leak can be. Jemena's gas leak reporting tool makes it faster and easier than ever to report a potential leak in our NSW gas network.

Whether you're on-site or advising a customer, you can use the tool to:

- Quickly report leaks 24/7
- Pinpoint the location on a map
- Upload photos and details on the spot



gasleakreport.jemena.com.au

Let your customers know too.
It's the fastest way to alert us
to a gas emergency.



TURNING WASTE INTO
RENEWABLE GAS:
CREATING MORE
ENERGY OPTIONS
FOR INDUSTRIES



PARTOFTHEBIGPICTURE.COM.AU



Photo credit: InfraBuild



AUSSIE AUSSIE AUSSIE!

Dux's 3rd generation Ecosmart R290 heat pumps are designed and manufactured right here in Australia.



Available in 200L & 285L tank capacities



Energy efficient, uses up to 71.6% less energy than a standard electric water heater*



Control the heat pump using the Wi-Fi enabled controller or via the Smart Life App



Choice of various operating modes - ECO, Boost, Holiday, Rescue



Premium made tank rated to a maximum of 1,000kPa for full mains pressure



Available in plug in and hardwired models



Installable by plumbing & electrical trades



Schedule your heat pump to consume energy generated from your PV system



Scan the QR Code for more information about the Dux Ecosmart Heat Pump range.

Call **1300 365 115** or visit **dux.com.au**



110 YEARS
MANUFACTURING
IN AUSTRALIA

BUILT STRONGER TO LAST LONGER

*Annual energy savings of up to 70.8% (200DHC25) and 71.6% (300DHC25) are based on Australian Government approved TRNSYS simulation modelling using a medium load in Zone 3 and apply when replacing an electric water heater of a similar size. Any savings will vary depending according to the installation location, water heater type being replaced, hot water consumption and energy tariff of the water heater.

SILICA PERILS

Could you and your workers be at risk of exposure to silica dust? Cutting, grinding, or drilling materials that contain crystalline silica – like concrete, bricks, tiles, or stone and sandstone – can release dangerous levels of dust into the air. If that dust isn't properly controlled, it can be breathed in and cause serious lung diseases like silicosis, lung cancer and other respiratory illnesses. These illnesses are preventable. These tasks are often undertaken by plumbers and it's important to review and assess the silica dust risk carefully. Make sure you have the right controls in place, such as on-tool dust capture and collection systems and appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), and establish safe work procedures to protect your workers.



To find out more, scan the QR code.



NEW APPRENTICES & YOUNG WORKERS

If you're starting out as a plumber, it's important to know your safety rights.

Your employer must ensure you are properly trained and licensed, have the right tools and protective gear, and are supervised so you can work safely – whether you're on a roof, in a trench, or using power tools.

It's important to always follow safety procedures, ask questions when you're unsure, and never take shortcuts – especially when it comes to using tools and working on-site. At the end of the day, the goal is simple: get home safe.

Use the 'Wait – Take Five' approach before you start!

- 1. STOP** – Before climbing a ladder, getting on a roof, or starting any task, pause and assess the situation.
- 2. IS IT SAFE?** – Check your tools, PPE, and surroundings. Is the surface stable? Are there slip or trip hazards?
- 3. COULD IT HURT SOMEONE?** – Think about hot water, sharp tools, confined spaces, or working at heights.
- 4. SPEAK UP** – If something doesn't feel right or looks unsafe, let your supervisor or team know.
- 5. ASK** – Not sure how to do the job safely? Ask before you act. It's better to double-check than risk an injury.

Your supervisor or a more experienced plumber should show you how to do the job safely, watch you do it the first time, and keep



checking in to make sure you're on the right track.

For more information visit our Young

Workers webpage on the SafeWork NSW website, or scan the QR code.

* NEW INCIDENT * PLUMBER FALLS FROM ROOF

In March, a plumber was working on a roof, using a blower to clean out gutters, when he lost his footing and fell approximately 4.4m to the ground. As a result of the fall, he sustained serious injuries.



This incident highlights the significant risks involved in working at heights without adequate safety measures in place. Ensure where possible that work is completed from the ground, e.g. by using a high-reach blower or vacuum system.

A workplace injury can keep a worker off the job for months

or longer, and a fall like this can be completely life-changing. Beyond the physical toll, it can have daily impacts on your family and wellbeing, devastate your finances, and stop you from enjoying key moments in your life. It's a powerful reminder that one moment on the job can have lasting effects.



See the Incident Information Release on the SafeWork NSW website, or scan the QR code to find out more on how to prevent a fall.

SAFETY IN THE RENO & DEMO SEASON

While it's always nice to give old houses, out-of-date bathrooms and tired kitchens an upgrade, it's important to be aware that older homes can hide serious safety risks.

DISCONNECTION & RECONNECTION

Plumbers in NSW must hold a valid licence or certificate to perform plumbing and drainage work, including the disconnection and reconnection of water heaters.



For more information visit the NSW Fair Trading website by scanning the QR code.



SYDNEY WATER: Pre-treatment

Trade waste pre-treatment: oil water separators

Trade wastewater can contain solids, oil, grease, and other substances. If it is discharged directly into the wastewater system (sewer), it can cause blockages and overflows, overload our water resource recovery facilities, and pollute rivers and beaches. That is why you must install pre-treatment equipment.



Oil water separation systems remove free oil from wastewater, and include coalescing plate separators, vertical gravity separators and hydro-cyclone separation systems. Oil water separators are designed to receive and deal with the residues of oily water produced because of washing down. Areas that should drain to an oil separator include degreasing bays, vehicle wash areas, and workshop floors.

Not all oil water separators are the same and each one has a different capability and can be used for various trade waste business applications/processes.

These are some examples of businesses/on-site processes that typically require an oil water separator to be installed as a trade waste pre-treatment device:

- Panel beating and spray painting
- Car detailing
- Mechanical workshop
- Auto recycler
- Car wash – hand wash and pressure spray
- Car wash – mechanical
- Service station with under-canopy forecourt
- Auto recyclers
- Engine reconditioners
- Radiator repairers.

3 DISTINCT TYPES OF OIL WATER SEPARATORS:

1 A coalescing plate separator, or CPS, is a gravity separator with a plate pack fitted to remove oils and solids. It utilises the difference in specific gravity (i.e. settling speed) between immiscible components of a liquid waste stream such as engine oil

and water. The plates improve the gravity separation process by reducing the settling or rise distance. The pump supplied with the unit must be the pump authorised with the unit. Freestanding, above-ground separators, with a pumped inflow, are the only CPS systems acceptable to Sydney Water.

2 A vertical gravity separator, or VGS, is an oil water separator that uses a vertical cylinder design containing a continuous truncated conical spiral pack to separate non-emulsified oils and sludges from wastewater. Each VGS model is supplied with a specific sized diaphragm pump.

3 A hydro-cyclone separator system, or HSS, uses centrifugal force to separate oils from water. This system has a vertical installation with a small base so it can fit small locations.

Waste oils should be captured and stored in a drum for off-site removal by a transporter.

Authorised oil water separators are listed online at sydneywater.com.au in the trade waste section. You must only install oil water separators that are approved by Sydney Water when working within their area of operation. **TMP**

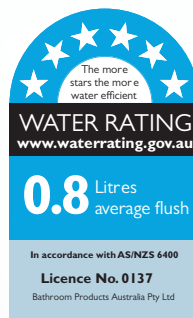
Venezia Electronic Urinal

Features and Benefits:

- WELS 6 Star, 0.8L per flush
- Microwave Sentinel™ Sensor Technology
- Microwave sensors operate through the VC, simply attach to the back of the urinal
- Wiring configuration makes installation and maintenance easy
- Stadium Mode reduces water usage

JURV100.400.401 Includes:

- Rough in Kit
- Fit-Off Sensor Kit
- Venezia Urinal





Premium PEX Systems



BUSHPEX - Australia's premium PEX Plumbing Systems,
has earned the trust of the industry and plumbers for over 16 years.

- ✓ **Premium PEX Systems**
- ✓ **Proven and Trusted Brand over 16 years**
- ✓ **Original Novopress Tooling resulting from collaborative R&D**
- ✓ **ISO9001 Certified Manufacturer**
- ✓ **Ongoing Batch Based Quality Assurance**



Elson is an ISO9001 certified manufacturer. Elson has been implementing stringent quality control procedures from raw materials to finished products, ensuring every BUSHPEX pipe and fitting is of consistent quality and exceeds Australian standards.

Contact us for more information and for distributors

☎ 1300 169 026 ✉ sales@elson.au



www.elson.au



www.bushpex.au

NEW PRODUCTS

Our plumbing expert **BILL ARMSTRONG** describes two brand new products which are designed to make plumbers' lives much easier!



FLOWMATE INSERT

Plumbers are problem-solvers by nature.

When something doesn't work, we fix it. But every now and then, we run into those little problems that keep coming back – like blocked downpipes.

It was on one of those all-too-familiar call-backs that the idea for Flowmate was born. After a full gutter clean and perfect flow, the plumber was back two weeks later – same roof, same blockage, same soggy customer complaint.

"It wasn't that we'd done a bad job," says Marc Plowman, co-founder of Flowmate.

"The problem was that as soon as a handful of leaves or a stray bit of bark landed in the downpipe, it was game over. Water had nowhere to go."

What followed was a series of sketches, prototypes, and expert input – all aimed at solving a simple question: what if you could just drop something in the downpipe to stop blockages before they start, something that actually works? The concept was refined into a simple, effective insert that slots straight into the downpipe opening. It stops blockages before they start – no tools, no sealants, no drama.

BUILT BY TRADIES

What sets Flowmate apart isn't just the product – it's who made it. Designed and tested by people who have worked on gutters for over 10 years, Flowmate was built for practicality, not perfection. It's easy for trades to install, and just as easy for the homeowner to understand and maintain.

For more information or trade pricing, visit www.flowmate.com.au



RIDGID® K-46 CORDLESS SINKSNAKE™

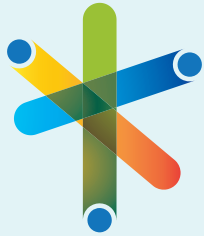
The RIDGID® K-46 Cordless SinkSnake™ clears tough blockages in 3/4" to 3" (20-76mm) lines such as sinks, tubs, shower, and urinals. Powered by the RIDGID 18V Advanced Lithium Battery Platform, it provides cordless freedom for professional daily use. Designed with ergonomics and versatility at its core, the K-46 features an integrated, multi-position kickstand for support, a 360-degree rotatable AUTOFEED® that advances and retrieves the cable in forward and reverse, an enclosed rotating drum, and compatibility with different cable sizes and cable tools for unmatched convenience.

- **Cordless Freedom:** Powered by the RIDGID 18V battery platform to deliver runtimes suited for professional daily use.
- **Ergonomic:** Integrated, multi-position kickstand alleviates the weight of the tool in common work environments, such as under cramped sinks and in tubs, for improved comfort and support.
- **Power:** Features a Brushless DC motor that clears tough blockages in 3/4" to 3" (20-76mm) lines such as sinks, tubs, showers and urinals.
- **Design:** Fully enclosed rotating drum protects plumbing fixtures from accidental damage.
- **Standard cable** included: 5/16" (8mm) – drain capacity: 1-1/4" to 2-1/2" (32-64mm).
- **Optional cables** available: 1/4" (6mm) – drain capacity: 3/4" to 2" (20-50mm) and 3/8" (10mm) – drain capacity: 1-1/4" to 3" (32-76mm).

For further information see the RIDGID Australia website www.ridgid.com/au/en or email ridgid.australia@emerson.com or phone 1800 743 443.



Bill Armstrong has been a member of the Association for over 25 years. He has served on the Master Plumbers 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



MASTER
PLUMBERS
NSW

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2025

Greg McElroy

President

Killara and Rose Bay Plumbing

Nathan Broughton

Vice-President

Chiswick Plumbing Group Pty Ltd

David Dighton

Treasurer

Thornleigh Plumbing Services

Bill Armstrong

Guardian

B&J Armstrong Plumbing

Ashley Lowther

Guardian

Life Member

Ryan Aquilina

Executive Committee Member

Rytec Plumbing

Leonie Crowe

Executive Committee Member

Murphy Plumbing Projects Pty Ltd

Nathan Wilson

Executive Committee Member

Rescue U Plumbing

Callum McKay

Guardian

Clarke McKay Pty Ltd

ADVERTISE IN
**THE
MASTER
PLUMBER**

BOOKINGS NOW OPEN
for the next issue:
Summer 2025

(Advertising booking deadline: October)

IT'S
YOUR
MAGAZINE

CONTACT

Derek Raney
(02) 8789 7000

**Membership &
Marketing Manager**

derek@masterplumbers.com.au

INTRODUCING OUR **NEW** PRO1000A!

Most Powerful Flush System - Adjustable up to 9/4.5L

PRO Cistern with Link & Seat

INSTALL WITH CONFIDENCE



PRO1000A

Low Level Flush Pipe Included

4.5/3L Dual Flush Technology

Simple Flush Volume Conversion to 6/3L or 9/4.5L

UV Resistant - Certified

Plastic Cistern with Bottom Inlet

Saves Water

EQUIPPED WITH FLUIDMASTER TECHNOLOGY



Inlet Valve
PRO45-AU



Outlet Valve
560AU02



www.Fluidmaster.com.au





**MITSUBISHI
MOTORS**
Drive your Ambition

TRITON

THE ULTIMATE WORKHORSE



The latest Mitsubishi Triton is our most powerful ute yet – built for the demands of your work. With a GLX payload capacity of 1,210kg and a cargo bed with ample room for a Euro pallet, it's ready to haul, carry and help you conquer your workday with ease.



3.5 Tonne Towing Power



Front Axle Capacity 1,580kg



1,210kg Payload

Visit Triton Cab
Chassis Showroom



**NOTHING CAN FRIGHTEN
A TRITON**

25MY Double Cab Chassis model shown with optional accessories. Terms, conditions and exclusions apply to Mitsubishi's 10 Year Warranty/10 Year Capped Price Servicing. See mitsubishi-motors.com.au for details.

AUSTRALIA'S FIRST

**10
YEARS**
NEW CAR
WARRANTY

**10
YEARS**
CAPPED PRICE
SERVICING

WHEN ALL SCHEDULED SERVICES ARE COMPLETED
AT A MITSUBISHI DEALERSHIP