

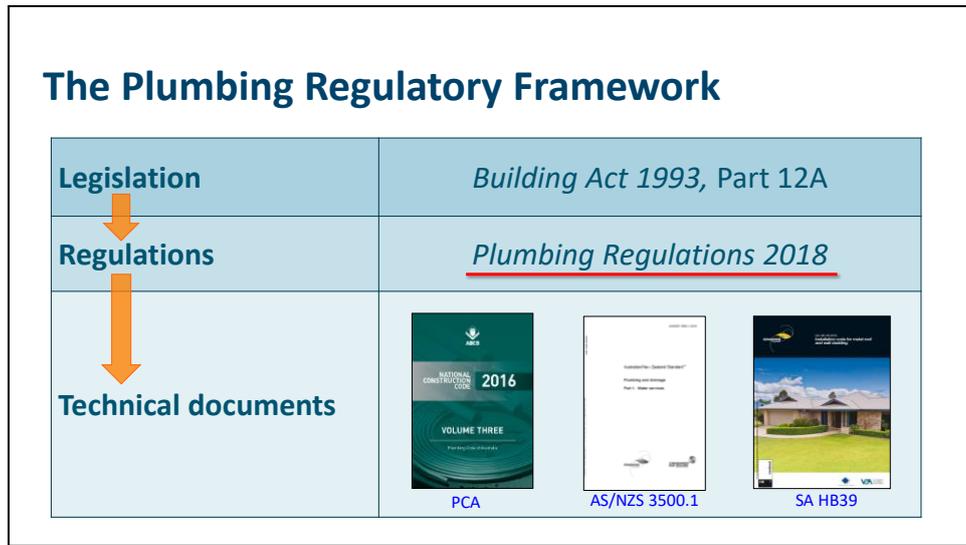


# Plumbing & Gas Regulations 2018

## Seminar Series

Notes

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- The *Building Act 1993* and the Plumbing Regulations are the key legislative and regulatory documents that set out the requirements for plumbing work in Victoria.
- Part 12A of the Building Act sets the broad framework for the regulation of the plumbing industry, but it is the Regulations that provide all of the detail.
- The Regulations prescribe many key requirements regarding the regulation of plumbing work in Victoria, including:
  - Defining what work is treated as regulated plumbing work;
  - Setting minimum experience and qualification requirements that people must hold in order to get registered or licensed;
  - Prescribing the various classes and specialised classes of plumbing work;
  - Providing definitions, or scopes of work, which describe what work you can do under each class;
  - Adopting Volume 3 of the National Construction Code, also known as the Plumbing Code of Australia, thus making its requirements law in Victoria;
  - Incorporating various other technical documents, e.g. HB 39 for roofing, which makes it mandatory to comply with their requirements; and,
  - Setting fees for plumbing matters e.g. registration/ licensing fees, cost of compliance certificates etc.
- **Broadly, the Plumbing Regulations set the requirements for what is regulated plumbing work, who can do it and how they must do it.**

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## Overview of the *Plumbing Regulations 2018*

- The Victorian Government considered existing requirements in the 2008 Regulations to be broadly appropriate.
- Majority of changes are minor, making current requirements clearer and easier to read.
- **Clarification** to requirements relating to the routine servicing of fire protection equipment have received extensive feedback. This will be discussed in detail later.
- More significant **changes** include:
  - A new minimum experience requirement for licensing
  - Reclassification of two specialised classes of work
  - Introduction of a new specialised class – Thermostatic mixing valve work.

- Overall, the Government considered the existing regulatory requirements to be broadly appropriate.
- Accordingly, the new Regulations do not significantly change the requirements from those that were in the Plumbing Regulations 2008.
- In most areas, the existing requirements have been retained.
- Some of the key changes that will be discussed during this presentation include:
  - the introduction of an additional two-year period of practical experience required to be eligible for licensing;
  - reclassifying two current specialised classes of work as main classes;
  - the creation of a new specialised class – ‘thermostatic mixing valve work’; and
  - the introduction of new technical requirements for:
    - the laying of sanitary drains under buildings, and
    - backflow prevention devices where a hand-held spray may be used next to a water closet.
- However, the vast majority of changes are language and drafting amendments that improve the readability and clarity of the Regulations.
- Many of these changes won’t seem that significant, but because they make the requirements for plumbing work clearer, the new Regulations are more effective and easier to understand.
- Clarification to routine servicing of fire protection equipment

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- The most significant change in the new Regulations is the introduction of minimum experience requirements for licensing.

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<b><i>Plumbing Regulations 2008 – Experience requirements</i></b>	
<b>Registration</b>	<b>Licence</b>
<p><b>Completion of an apprenticeship</b>  <i>OR</i>  <b>4 years of employment in that class</b>  <i>(2 years for drainage and irrigation)</i></p>	<p><b>Nil</b></p>

- Under the 2008 Regulations, people applying for a licence are not required to possess any additional experience over that which is needed for registration.
- This means that it is possible to obtain a licence shortly after completing an apprenticeship. Some applicants even apply for licensing when they apply for their registration.
- However, working under a licence carries a much greater level of responsibility, including the ability to certify work via compliance certificates and supervise other plumbers.
- In reviewing the 2008 Regulations, the Government expressed concern that, although licensed plumbers carry extra responsibility, there was no requirement for applicants to demonstrate any additional period of industry experience before being granted that responsibility.

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<b>Plumbing Regulations 2018 – Experience requirements</b>	
<b>Registration</b>	<b>Licence</b>
Completion of an apprenticeship OR 4 years of practical experience <i>(2 years for drainage and irrigation)</i>	Additional 2 years of practical experience

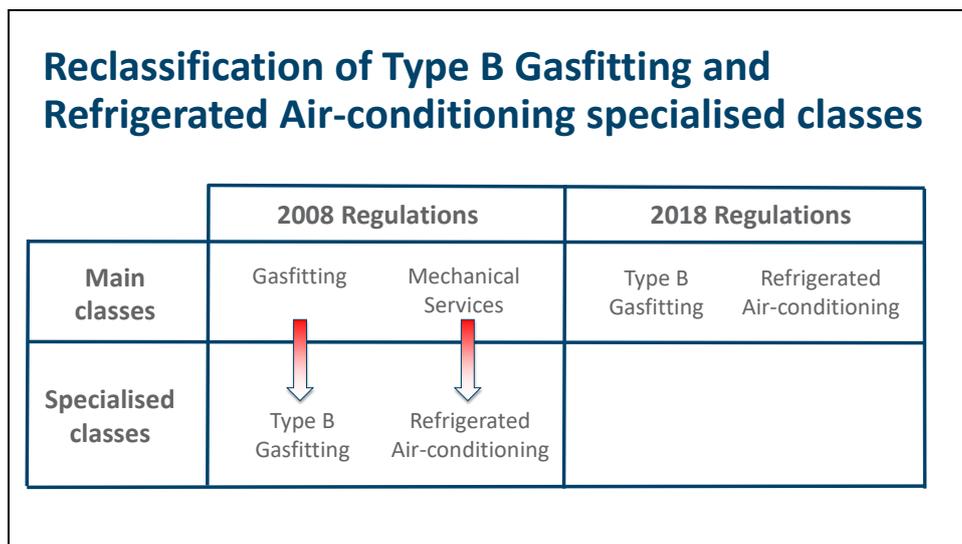
- The new Regulations now require all licensing applicants to complete an additional two years of practical experience on top of the experience required for registration.
- This requirement applies to all classes and specialised classes of work.
- The intent of this new requirement is that plumbers gain further experience working as a registered practitioner before they are eligible for a licence.
- Gaining extra experience will not only ensure that newly licensed plumbers are better prepared to take on the extra responsibility of working at the licence level, but also potentially reduce the rate of non-compliant plumbing work.
- VBA data shows that the average period of time between when a plumber is first registered and when they apply for licensing is just over 1.5 years.
- However, that is just an average. This new experience requirement targets other applicants with no or minimal experience working as a registered plumber.

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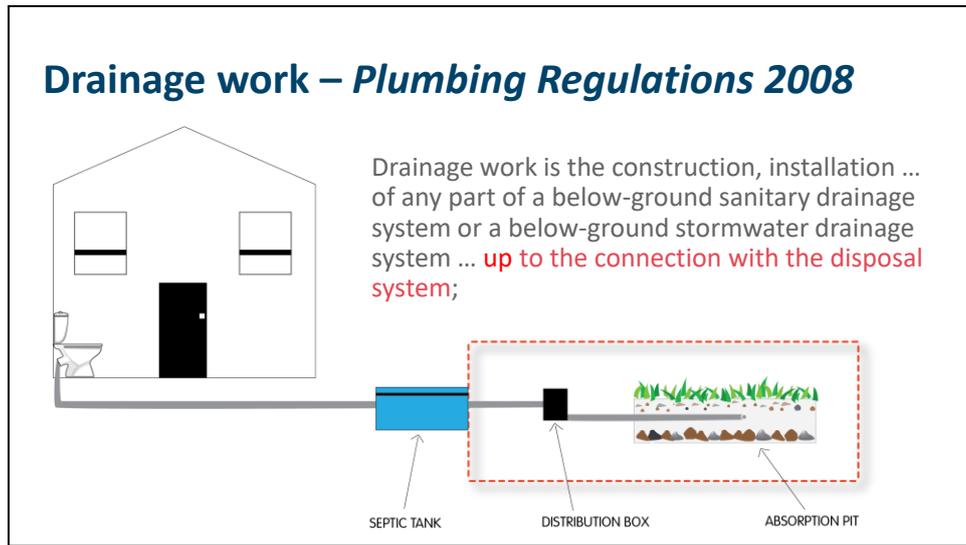
- Two current specialised classes of work have been reclassified under the new Regulations.
- Type B Gasfitting work and Refrigerated Air-conditioning work will now be treated as main classes of work.

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- Under the 2008 Regulations, applicants for these specialised classes were required to hold the relevant parent class as a prerequisite; gasfitting work for type B and mechanical services work for refrigerated air-conditioning.
- This requirement created difficulties, as many applicants come from training backgrounds different to these parent classes.
- For example, applicants for refrigerated air-conditioning work often train as refrigeration and air-conditioning apprentices via the Certificate III in Air-conditioning and Refrigeration.
- Although competent to perform refrigerated air-conditioning work following the completion of their apprenticeship, they had trouble getting registered, as they were not eligible for the Mechanical Services parent class.
- Similarly, applicants for the specialised class of Type B gasfitting work come from varied backgrounds, including the electrical trades and instrument fitting.
- Persons trained in these trades do not commonly have any background in gasfitting work, which made it difficult for them to successfully apply for Type B gasfitting work.
- Under the new Regulations, Type B gasfitting work and refrigerated air-conditioning work will be treated as standalone main classes. This means that applicants will no longer need to hold any parent class.
- These changes better reflect the existing training pathways of applicants for these two areas.
- Aside from the removal of the parent class requirement, the qualification and experience requirements for refrigerated air-conditioning work will remain broadly unchanged.
- Under the 2018 Regulations, registration in Type B gasfitting work will require completion of a minimum Certificate III-level qualification that provides knowledge and competence in Type B gasfitting work.
- This qualification requirement has deliberately been kept broad in recognition of the varied relevant training qualifications that applicants from different training backgrounds may hold.
- The prescribed experience requirement for Type B gasfitting is two years of relevant practical experience while working under provisional registration.

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- There is no change to the activities that fall within the scope of work for this class.
- However, several changes have been made to the definition of drainage work to make it easier to read and understand what work is regulated under this class.
- One issue with the definition in the 2008 Regulations is that it is ambiguous where the regulated scope of drainage work ends.
- For example, we receive technical enquiries asking whether work on absorption trenches to dispose of treated effluent is regulated under this class.
- This is not wholly clear, as the definition uses the ambiguous phrase “up to the connection with the disposal system”.
- The VBA considers that work on land application systems on the outlet side of septic tanks is regulated under this class. The new Regulations make this clear.

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### **Drainage work – *Plumbing Regulations 2018***

Work on a below-ground sanitary drainage system is regulated up to and including—

- (i) the land application system; or
- (ii) the connection to a holding tank; or
- (iii) the connection with the discharge reticulation system.

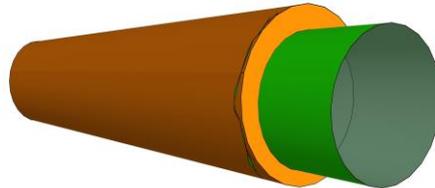
Work on a below-ground stormwater drainage system is regulated to the point of discharge.

- Rather than using a broad term such as ‘disposal system’, the definition of drainage work in the 2018 Regulations sets out the various points at which a below-ground sanitary or stormwater drain can terminate.
- These are noted on the slide.
- Work on below-ground sanitary drains is regulated up to and including:
  - A land application system; or
  - The connection to a holding tank; or
  - The connection with the discharge reticulation system.
- Work on below-ground stormwater is regulated to the point of discharge.

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## Drainage work – other changes

- Drain relining is specifically referenced within the scope of work.
- Excavation using trenchless technology and directional boring is excluded.



- Another matter that is clearer in the new Regulations is that work relining a below-ground drain is deemed to be regulated work under this class.
- This is another area where there appeared to be some ambiguity.
- The insertion of a specific reference to relining within the new definition of drainage work makes clear to industry and other stakeholders that relining a drain is regulated work.
- Two quick points about drain relining work:
  1. Recent changes to AS/NZS 3500.2 include new technical requirements relating to the carrying out of drain relining work; and
  2. As with most other work on sanitary drains, you must make the drain available for inspection by the VBA and issue a compliance certificate.
- Finally, a new exclusion has been inserted to provide clarity that excavation using trenchless technology or directional boring is not regulated drainage work.

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- The 2018 Regulations also introduce new installation requirements for below-ground sanitary drains running beneath buildings they are not exclusively servicing.

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## **AS/NZS 3500.2 – Sanitary plumbing and Drainage**

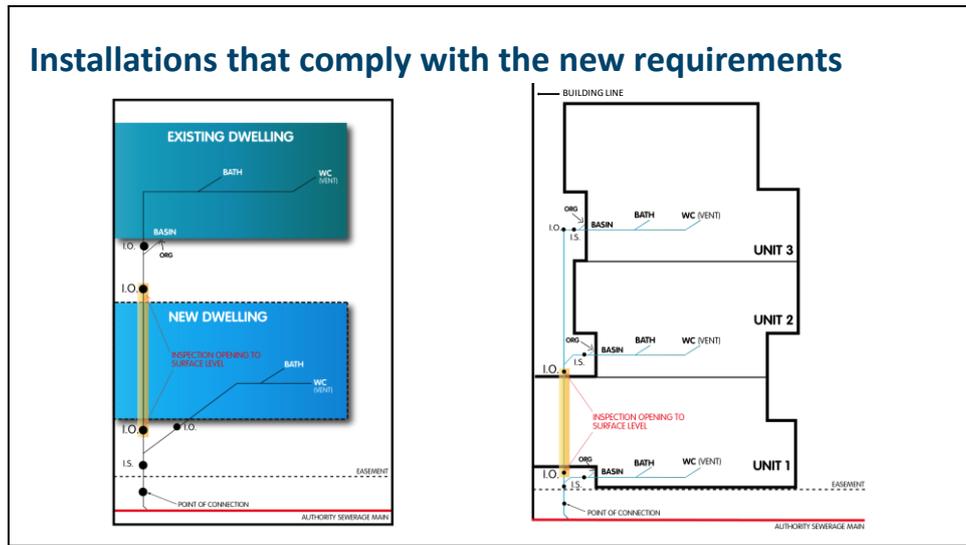
### **Clause 3.2 – Location of Drains**

Any drain located under or inside a building shall only serve fixtures within that building.

NOTE: Drains should be located external to the building wherever practicable.

- Clause 3.2 of AS/NZS 3500.2 requires that sanitary drains under buildings only service fixtures within that building. It also notes that drains should be located external to buildings wherever practicable.
- This requirement is important for many reasons, including providing greater ease of access for maintenance, minimising impacts to occupiers of the affected building and localising any drainage failure to the building it serves.
- However, this requirement can be difficult to comply with in situations where blocks are subdivided and additional dwellings are being constructed, or when properties are built right to the boundary.
- During the 2016–17 financial year, the VBA received 521 applications for a plumbing modification seeking to vary the application of this requirement.
- Each modification application is carefully assessed on its merits. However, applications relating to drains below buildings are commonly approved as long as standard installation conditions are complied with.
- These common conditions are now prescribed in Schedule 2 of the new Regulations as mandatory installation requirements where a below-ground sanitary drain cannot be installed in accordance with Clause 3.2.

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- Below-ground sanitary drains should be located external to buildings, where practicable.
- If it is not practicable, and the drain is running under one building, but servicing another, then this variation will be permitted, as long as all of the following requirements are met:
  - the drain is laid in a straight line under the building, with no branches or changes of direction;
  - the drain is constructed of a material that complies with the requirements of the standard; and
  - upstream and downstream inspection openings with shafts terminating at the finished surface level are provided in permanently accessible positions.
- If it is impracticable to comply with Clause 3.2 of the Standard, compliance with the new requirements in the Regulations means you no longer need to apply for a modification in this situation.
- These new requirements do not permit plumbers to run drains under buildings for convenience or any other reason, other than it being impracticable for the drain to be located externally.

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## Fire Protection work

### Clarification changes in the 2018 Regulations

- Shorter, clearer definition.
- ‘Routine servicing’ added to provide clarity that this work is fire protection work.
- *Routine servicing*: the inspection (including survey), testing and preventative maintenance of fire protection equipment carried out in accordance with AS 1851.
- The VBA is working with key industry stakeholders to determine an appropriate transition pathway for competent persons currently undertaking this work outside of the regulatory requirements.
- It is likely that one or more forms of a restricted class of fire protection work class will be created to transition current, competent providers to compliance with the regulatory requirements. Provisional arrangements will also be considered, should they become necessary.



- The definition of Fire Protection work will remain broadly unchanged from the 2008 Regulations.
- The new definition is shorter, because the list of relevant equipment has been replaced by a general reference to ‘fire protection equipment’.
- However, this is a defined term that includes the same items listed in the 2008 Regulations: fire hydrants and hose reels, pump sets, and commercial and domestic sprinkler systems.
- Overall, the same range of work is captured in this class. The definition of Fire Protection work has simply been refined for improved readability.
- The only other change to the definition is the insertion of a specific reference to ‘routine servicing’ in the scope of work.
- ‘Routine servicing’ is defined as “the inspection (including survey), testing and preventative maintenance of fire protection equipment carried out in accordance with AS 1851”.
- This amendment removes the ambiguity regarding this work in the 2008 Regulations.
- The updated definition clarifies the requirement that the routine servicing of fire protection systems and equipment must be carried out by a plumber registered or licensed in Fire Protection work.

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- Only minor changes have been made to the definition of Irrigation (Non-agricultural) work. The new Regulations simply improve the readability and clarity of the definition.
- The scope of work in the 2008 Regulations is too long, so the new definition has been shortened to make it clearer what work is regulated under this class.

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## Irrigation (Non-agricultural) work

### New definition of 'connection point'

*Connection point* means the outlet side of the meter assembly, control valve or backflow prevention device located immediately upstream from the pipework exclusively servicing the irrigation system.



- The most significant change in this class is the introduction of a revised definition of 'connection point'. The definition in the 2008 Regulations was too broad and unintentionally captured work deemed to be water supply work.
- An example of this would be where an irrigation system branches off from a drinking water supply downstream of the property boundary.
- This would be a common situation in parks where a drinking water supply runs from the property boundary to service buildings, drinking taps, public bathrooms etc. and a branch is taken off that for irrigating the park's lawns and gardens.
- Under the old definition of 'connection point', irrigation work would commence at the principal control valve nearest the property boundary, even though this would mean that the irrigation contractor is working on the drinking water supply.
- The revised definition addresses this loophole and makes clear that Irrigation (Non-agricultural) work only starts from the outlet side of the meter assembly, control valve or backflow prevention device immediately upstream of the pipework that is exclusively servicing the irrigation system.

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- There are only a couple of minor changes to the definition of Gasfitting work in the new Regulations.

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## Gasfitting work

**Changes in the 2018 Regulations**

- Definition altered to ensure work on biogas systems are captured.
- No change to specialised classes definitions:
  - Type A Appliance Servicing
  - Type A Appliance Conversion.



- Firstly, there were concerns that the definition of Gasfitting work in the 2008 Regulations did not capture relevant work on biogas systems.
- The reason for this is that the definition only captured work downstream of the outlet of either a customer's billing meter or a consumer's gas storage container.
- Biogas systems, however, have neither a billing meter nor a gas storage container and, therefore, did not appear to be captured within the scope of work.
- Accordingly, the definition in the new Regulations has been amended to use the term 'gas supply point', which is a defined term broad enough to capture biogas systems.
- This change ensures the Plumbing Regulations align with the requirements of the Gas Safety Act, which does regulate biogas and also uses the same 'gas supply point' terminology.
- Type A appliance conversion work and Type A appliance servicing work are two specialised classes requiring gasfitting work as the parent class.
- No change has been made to the scopes of work for either specialised class – they remain exactly as they were in the 2008 Regulations.
- There is, however, a small change to the qualifications required for registration and licensing in Type A appliance servicing work.
- In the future, applicants for this class will need to hold a Restricted Electrical Worker's Licence (Class 2).
- This reflects the fact that servicing work can require disconnecting and reconnecting appliances hardwired to the mains supply.

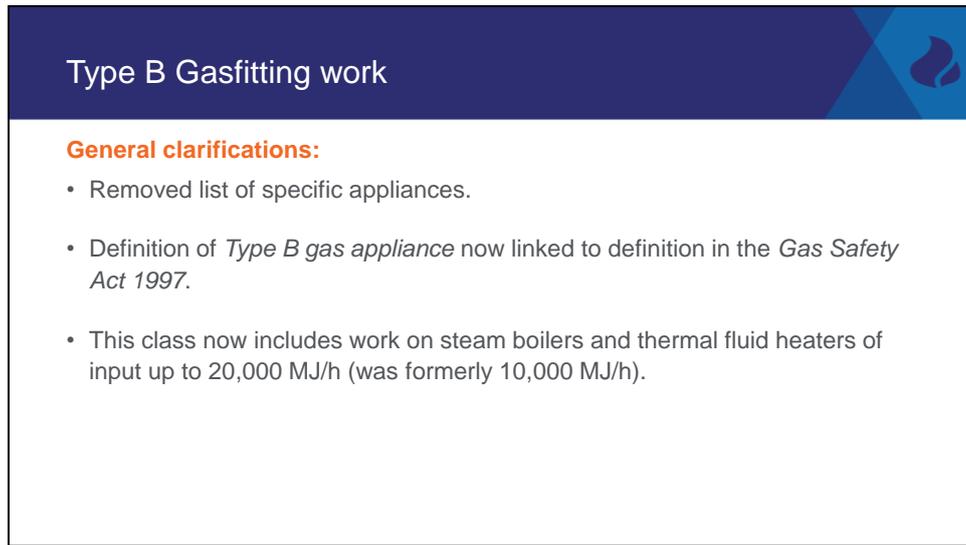
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*Plumbing Regulations 2018 (Type B Gasfitting work)*

- Type B Gasfitting work is now a main class (previously a specialised class).
- Definitions of Type B Gasfitting work and Type B Gasfitting Advanced work clarified.
- Clarification of pathway to Type B registration and licensing.

- Changes have been made to the qualification and experience requirements for Type B Gasfitting work. These changes reflect that Type B Gasfitting work is now a main class of work, and also consider the varied backgrounds of applicants in this class. The requirements for registration are:
  - Minimum of Certificate III course that delivers knowledge and competence in type B gasfitting work.
  - Restricted Electrical Worker's Licence (class 2)
  - Completion of approved competency units
  - VBA examination
  - Minimum two years of practical experience while provisionally registered.

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**Type B Gasfitting work**

**General clarifications:**

- Removed list of specific appliances.
- Definition of *Type B gas appliance* now linked to definition in the *Gas Safety Act 1997*.
- This class now includes work on steam boilers and thermal fluid heaters of input up to 20,000 MJ/h (was formerly 10,000 MJ/h).

- Specific list of appliances was dated and added confusion, as it was a finite listing.
- ‘Type B gas appliance’ has the same meaning as it has in the *Gas Safety Act 1997*.
- Re-aligned to reflect industry need – no additional gas risk related to this change

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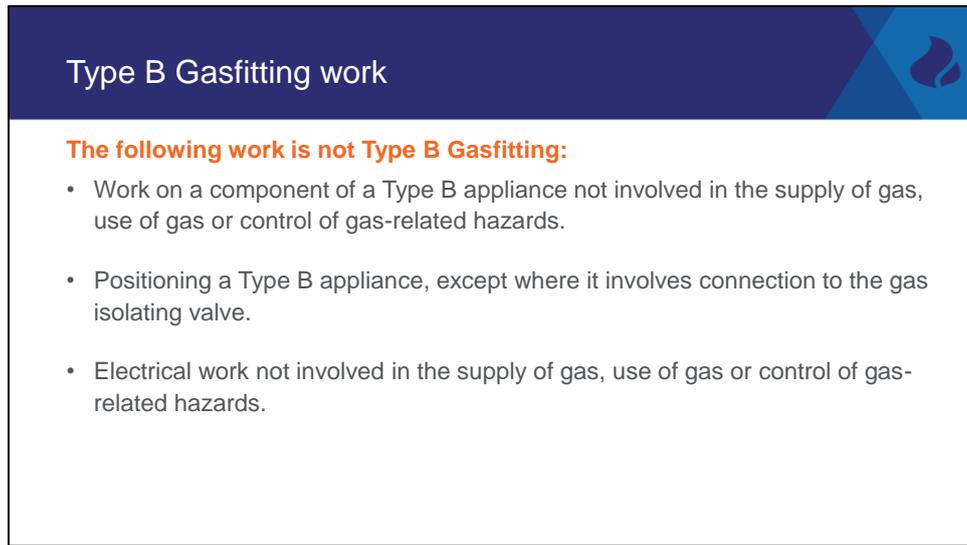
Type B Gasfitting work

**Three areas of work fall outside the definition:**

- Adjustment of input parameters on a programmable burner management system.
- Commissioning an appliance in the absence of manufacturer-supplied commissioning data.
- Work on an appliance associated with volatile solvents of hazardous atmospheres.

- These three areas require additional skills and competencies outside the scope of Type B Gasfitting.

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### Type B Gasfitting work

**The following work is not Type B Gasfitting:**

- Work on a component of a Type B appliance not involved in the supply of gas, use of gas or control of gas-related hazards.
- Positioning a Type B appliance, except where it involves connection to the gas isolating valve.
- Electrical work not involved in the supply of gas, use of gas or control of gas-related hazards.

The points above can be performed by persons who are not Type B licensed or registered.

The focus of the scope of Type B Gasfitting work is the activities related to the supply and use of gas, and the control of gas-related hazards.

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### Type B Gasfitting Advanced work

**Clarifications:**

- Removed list of specific appliances, ensuring that the definition captures work on any Type B appliance.
- Includes the three aspects from the previous slide that distinguish Type B Gasfitting Advanced work from Type B Gasfitting work:
  - Adjustment of input parameters on a programmable burner management system.
  - Commissioning an appliance in the absence of manufacturer-supplied commissioning data.
  - Work on an appliance associated with volatile solvents or hazardous atmospheres.

- Type B Gasfitting Advanced enables work on all Type B appliances.
- The list of appliances implied restrictions.
- Type B Gasfitting Advanced has the skills and competencies to perform the three tasks excluded from Type B, although proprietary training may be required for programmable burner management systems.

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### Changes to the servicing of single-head split systems

- Class no longer includes servicing, maintenance and repair of single-head split systems.
- Mechanical Services includes install and commission only.
- This change takes effect in November 2019.



- The biggest change to Mechanical Services work relates to the servicing, maintenance and repair of single-head split systems.
- Under the 2008 Regulations, the definition of Mechanical Services work included all work on single-head split systems, including installation, commissioning, service and repair.
- However, it was identified that the prescribed training requirements for mechanical services only deliver competency to install and commission, not to service, maintain or repair these systems.
- The 2018 Regulations limit mechanical services plumbers to the installation and commissioning of single-head split systems only.
- This means that this class will no longer include the service, maintenance or repair of this equipment.
- However, this change is one of two new requirements in the Regulations that are subject to a 12-month delayed implementation.

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<b>Changes to the servicing of single-head split systems: Delayed implementation</b>	
18 November 2018	<p><b>Plumbing Regulations 2018 commence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Status quo is maintained for 12 months.</li> <li>• All work on single-head split systems, including servicing, remains within the scope of Mechanical Services work.</li> </ul>
18 November 2019	<p><b>Change to definition of mechanical services work takes effect</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mechanical Services work now only includes installation and commissioning of single head split systems.</li> <li>• Servicing, maintenance and repair of these systems can only be done under the Refrigerated Air-conditioning work class.</li> <li>• Install and commission of ceiling cassette systems and add-on condenser units for ducted systems added to Mechanical Services work.</li> </ul>

- The status quo for this work will remain in place until 18 November 2019, meaning that mechanical services plumbers can continue to service, maintain and repair these systems during the implementation period.
- On 18 November next year, the scope of work will change, and mechanical services plumbers will no longer be able to service these systems.
- Only plumbers registered or licensed in Refrigerated Air-conditioning work will be able to service, maintain and repair single-head split systems.
- In addition, on 18 November 2019, the install and commission of ceiling cassette systems and add-on condenser units for ducted systems will form part of the scope of mechanical services work.
- The change to requirements relating to the servicing of single-head split systems will affect all mechanical services plumbers, regardless of whether they already hold this class, or if they are granted it after November 2019.
- The 12-month implementation period provides mechanical services plumbers with the opportunity to apply to the VBA for the necessary registration or licence, if they wish to continue the servicing aspects of this work.
- Further details regarding the application process will be provided early in the New Year.

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## Mechanical Services work – other minor changes

### Changes clarifying that the following activities do not fall under Mechanical Services work:

- Disassembling/re-assembling a flue terminal to clean a solid fuel heater
- Cleaning a cooling tower
- Treatment of heating water

- There are a couple of small additions that aim to clarify work that is not Mechanical Services work.
- Firstly, it is clarified that disassembling and reassembling a flue terminal for the purposes of cleaning a solid fuel heater does not need to be done by a mechanical services plumber.
- This change has been made in response to technical enquiries requesting clarification over whether cleaning a solid fuel heater flue is regulated plumbing work or not.
- This exemption only covers taking the flue terminal off for access to clean the flue and then re-attaching it. It does not allow any further disassembly or other work on the flue itself.
- There is also a new exclusion clarifying that the cleaning of a cooling tower is not an activity that must be carried out by a plumbing practitioner.
- Finally, the existing exclusion relating to the treatment of cooling water has been broadened to include treatment of heating water.
- This exemption merely clarifies that adding dosing chemicals to the system is not Mechanical Services work. It also ensures a consistent approach for both heating and cooling water.

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- Refrigerated Air-conditioning will become a main class of work under the new Regulations.
- There are also several changes to the definition of Refrigerated Air-conditioning work, mainly clarifying the range of work that falls within this class.

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## Refrigerated Air-conditioning work

### Changes for clarity include:

- “equipment associated with the *heating or cooling of a building*”
- Examples of relevant equipment included, e.g. evaporator, pipework etc.
- Inclusion of all work on single-head split systems
- “any ductwork that is necessary for the purpose of any work described in this paragraph.”
- Inclusion of work on split system heat pumps

- The definition now clarifies that this class only regulates work on equipment associated with the heating or cooling of a building.
- This was not clearly stated under the 2008 Regulations, although it was broadly understood that this class did not include work on refrigerated equipment like cool rooms, commercial freezer cases etc.
- The new definition also improves clarity by listing examples of components that commonly form part of equipment regulated under this class, e.g. compressors, condensers, fans, pipework etc.
- The definition in the new Regulations now includes all work on single-head split systems.
- Under the 2008 Regulations, work on single-head split systems was specifically excluded from this class. However, in practice everyone that holds Refrigerated Air-conditioning work also held Mechanical Services work and, therefore, had access to this work through that parent class.
- As Refrigerated Air-conditioning will now be a main class of work, this exclusion was removed, as work on single-head split systems is clearly Refrigerated Air-conditioning work.
- This class covers all work on single-head split systems, including servicing, whereas from November next year, mechanical services work will only cover installation and commission.
- Under the 2008 Regulations, this class included work on “flexible ductwork, associated with the heating and cooling of a building”.
- This has been changed in the new Regulations to “any ductwork that is necessary for the purpose of any work described in this paragraph.”
- This change clarifies that persons holding the Refrigerated Air-conditioning work class can do work on any form of duct, flexible or solid, that is directly necessary to complete the installation of the refrigerated air-conditioning equipment, e.g. the plenum, the lead-in to the ducted system.
- Another change to the definition of Refrigerated Air-conditioning work is that it now clarifies that it includes work on split system heat pumps.
- This does not, however, include the connection to the water supply, as that is Water Supply work.

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## Roofing (Stormwater) work

**Changes for clarity include:**

- New definitions for *membrane* and *roof covering*
- Exclusion of work on class 10a buildings with floor area < 10m<sup>2</sup>
- Exclusion of work on roof coverings made of timber, concrete, bitumen and glass



- The definition of Roofing (Stormwater) work in the new Regulations is clearer in regards to the work that is included and excluded under this class.
- Definitions for the terms ‘roof covering’ and ‘membrane’ are now included.
- These definitions make clear two key points:
  - The application of a membrane is not regulated work; and
  - A membrane is not a roof covering.
- This makes clear that applying a membrane to metallic roof sheeting or tiles does not change the requirement that the installation of the metallic roof covering must be done by a registered or licensed roof plumber.
- There is also now a specific exclusion clarifying that work on a freestanding class 10a building, with a floor area not exceeding 10 square meters, is not roofing work, unless the roof drainage system connects to a below-ground drain or retention tank.
- Accordingly, things like small flat-pack sheds, chicken coops and the like are not regulated within this class, even though their metal roofs fall within the definition of this class.
- The 10-square meter size limitation is aligned with the exclusion of these buildings from the requirements of the *Building Regulations 2018*.
- Finally, the list of excluded roof covering materials has been broadened to include timber, concrete, bitumen and glass.
- The intent behind the Regulations has never been to regulate roofs made of these materials, and the change in the new Regulations ensures that the wording matches this intent.

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## Sanitary work

### Changes include:

- Clarifying the different points to which work on a sanitary plumbing system is regulated
- Inclusion of work relining sanitary pipework
- Exclusion of the installation of shower bases and baths, except where connection to a waste outlet is made



- The new Regulations do not introduce many changes to the definition of Sanitary work.
- Like Drainage work, the scope of work for this class has been amended to make clearer the different points that sanitary plumbing systems are regulated to.
- This change includes removing the vague term ‘disposal point’ and inserting references to “holding tank, wastewater treatment system or a below-ground sanitary drainage system.”
- The activity ‘relining’ has also been included in the scope of Sanitary work. This reflects the fact that this technology has broader application than just below-ground drains.
- The most notable point of clarification for this class is the insertion of a specific exclusion for work installing a bath or shower base other than the connection of a waste outlet.
- Work installing baths and shower bases is typically not recognised as being wholly within the plumber’s responsibilities; for example, carpenters/builders will typically frame up the timber support for a bath.
- The new definition makes clear that this is not sanitary plumbing work.
- However, the connection to the sanitary pipework is always plumbing work.
- Therefore, anyone can put the fixture in place if a plumber is later making the connection to the sanitary pipework or drain.
- However, if putting the fixture in place necessarily results in the connection being made at the same time, for example, where the fixture connects to a smart waste, that work must be done by a plumber holding the sanitary work class.

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## Water Supply work

**Changes include:**

- Inclusion of work relining a heated or cold water service
- Exclusion of work treating water used in a heated or cold water service
- Removal of work repairing, altering, maintaining and testing a TMV

NOTE: No changes made to the Backflow Prevention work specialised class

- There are a couple of very minor changes and one more significant change that has been made to the definition of Water Supply work.
- One minor change is that relining work has been included as a regulated activity, as it has been in other relevant classes.
- The other minor change clarifies that the treatment of water used in a heated or cold water service is not regulated.
- This exclusion aligns with the similar exclusion under the Mechanical Services work class and clarifies that activities like manual dosing are not regulated under the Water Supply class.
- The most significant change to water supply class is that it no longer includes the repair, alteration, maintenance and testing of a TMV.
- In the 2018 Regulations, those activities now fall under the new specialised class of Thermostatic Mixing Valve work.
- There is no change to the definition of Backflow Prevention work, which, of course, is a specialised class requiring the holding of Water Supply work.

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- There is one new and significant technical requirement for Water Supply work in Schedule 2 of the 2018 Regulations.

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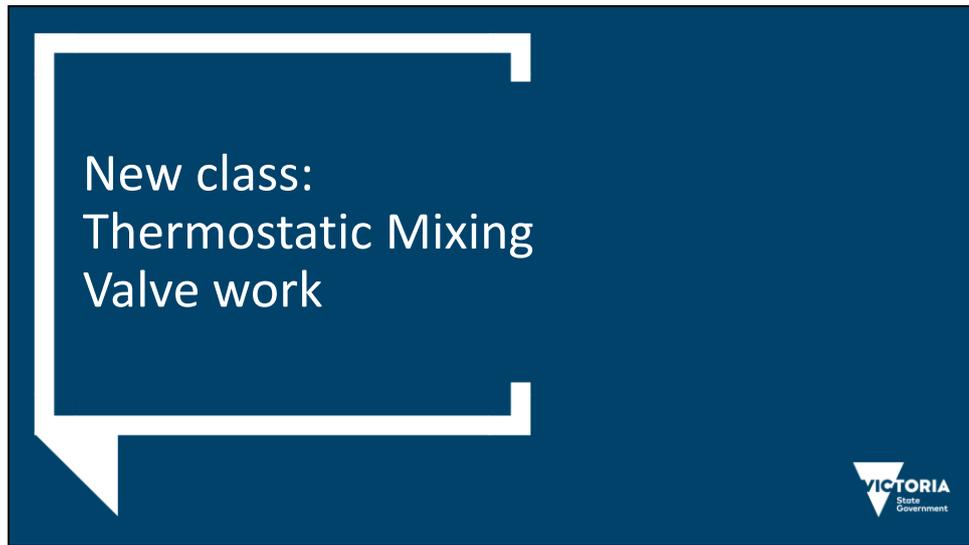
### **New Technical Requirement: Backflow protection for water points adjacent to water closets**

All water points installed adjacent to water closets that are not connected to a sanitary fixture must be protected by a high hazard backflow prevention measure.



- All water points installed adjacent to water closets that are not connected to a sanitary fixture must be protected by a high hazard backflow prevention device.
- This requirement addresses the significant cross-connection risk posed by the installation of water points in these locations for the use of hand-held sprays.
- This new requirement is necessary, as the relevant Australian Standard, AS/NZS 3500.1, does not adequately cover the risks in this area.
- That standard does not address a situation where a plumber is asked to provide a water point to which the homeowner later connects a hand-held spray purchased from a hardware store.
- The new requirement in the Regulations will fill this gap.
- The VBA has prepared a new fact sheet to assist plumbers with understanding these new requirements.

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- The final class of work to discuss is the only new class in the *Plumbing Regulations 2018* – Thermostatic Mixing Valve work, or ‘TMV’ work, for short.

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**Work on TMVs under the *Plumbing Regulations 2018***

Water Supply work: Installation, replacement and commissioning of TMVs

Thermostatic Mixing Valve work: Repair, alteration, maintenance and testing of TMVs

*Note: The above reflects arrangements from 18 November 2019*

- Thermostatic Mixing Valve work is a specialised class and applicants must hold Water Supply work to be eligible for registration or licensing in this new class.
- The definition of Thermostatic Mixing Valve work includes the repair, alteration, maintenance and testing of TMVs.
- It does not include installation, replacement or commissioning: these tasks continue to be treated as Water Supply work.
- Premises servicing high-risk populations such as hospitals, health clinics and schools have their TMVs serviced on an annual basis at minimum.
- All plumbers carrying out the maintenance of TMVs in the future must have completed relevant training and must be competent to do this work.
- No plumber currently holding Water Supply work will be automatically granted the new TMV work specialised class.

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<b>Specialised class of Thermostatic Mixing Valve work: Delayed commencement</b>	
18 November 2018	<b>Plumbing Regulations 2018 commence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All work on TMVs remains Water Supply work during the 12-month implementation period</li> </ul>
18 November 2019	<b>Commencement of the specialised class of Thermostatic Mixing Valve work</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Water Supply work no longer includes the repair, alteration, maintenance or testing of TMVs</li> <li>No automatic granting of this class. Current water supply plumbers must make an application to the VBA if they want to continue working with TMVs.</li> </ul>

- This new specialised class is subject to a delayed 12-month implementation and will only commence on 18 November 2019.
- Water supply plumbers will have 12 months from the start of the new Regulations to apply to the VBA and demonstrate that they hold the necessary level of competence if they wish to keep doing this work after that date.
- The repair, alteration and maintenance of TMVs will remain as Water Supply work until that date.
- Further details about the application process for the new specialised class will be provided early in the New Year.
- Finally, there is a new technical standard incorporated into the Regulations that Thermostatic Mixing Valve work must comply with: *AS 4032.3 Water supply— Valves for the control of heated water supply temperatures Part 3: Requirements for field-testing, maintenance or replacement of thermostatic mixing valves, tempering valves and end-of-line temperature control devices*

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## Other minor changes in the new Regulations

- Revised definition of minor tap repairs.
- A requirement for plumbers to consider the installation specifications detailed in manufacturer's instructions.
- Applicants for licensing must complete relevant approved units of competency in addition to completing an exam.
- Applicants for specialised classes must complete relevant approved units of competency in addition to completing an exam.

- The definition of minor tap repairs has been amended to clarify the tasks that fall under this term and, as a result, can be carried out in a dwelling by non-plumbers.
- There is also a new requirement that plumbers must have regard to written manufacturer's instructions.
- This does not make it mandatory to install to the specifications listed in a manufacturer's instructions. However, plumbers will need to consider the manufacturer's requirements and their suitability for the particular installation they are undertaking.
- We generally recommend that plumbers comply with manufacturer's instructions, as the manufacturer usually prescribes requirements relevant to the specifics of the particular product being used, and often, the product warranty relies on these specifics being complied with.
- However, the most important consideration for you when you carry out your work is to ensure that you comply with the requirements of the Regulations, PCA and Standards.
- Another change is that the new Regulations now require completion of the approved competency units as a requirement for licensing in each class of work.
- Previously, the requirement was just completion of the VBA's examination of licence competencies for that class; the new Regulations require both.
- Similarly, all specialised classes of work now also require completion of the relevant approved units of competency, and not just completion of the VBA examination, as some classes currently do.
- This change will ensure that applicants for licences and the specialised classes of work have completed all training deemed necessary to deliver the required knowledge and skills to undertake the work they are seeking registration or licensing in.

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## Other important matters

- All registered and licensed plumbers will be moved into the equivalent classes defined in the 2018 Regulations.
- No changes to fees.
- A new list of approved units will be published to commence on the same day as the 2018 Regulations.
- A new checkbox will be added to the compliance certificate form asking if a cross-connection test was performed following completion of certain water supply work.
- NCC 2019 seminars will be run in May.

- Upon commencement of the new Regulations, all currently registered and licensed plumbers will directly transition to the equivalent work classes.
- This means that, whatever classes of work you currently hold, you will continue to hold those classes under the new Regulations.
- There are no increases or changes to fees under the new Regulations; all fees will remain at their current amount.
- The VBA's approved units of competency will be updated to coincide with the commencement of the new Regulations.
- Completion of the VBA's approved units is a requirement for registration and licensing in every class of work.
- The updates that will be made are minor in nature and have been made to ensure the approved units align with the changes in the 2018 Regulations.
- More information about these changes will be available on the VBA website closer to the commencement date.
- A small change is being made to the compliance certificate form, requiring plumbers to declare that they have performed a cross-connection test following the completion of certain water supply work.
- This box must be ticked whenever water supply work has been carried out on a property with a recycled/alternative water service, even if the work was only carried out on the drinking water service.
- The requirement to carry out this test is already a requirement under the relevant Standard. This check box just reminds you of your existing obligation.
- Finally, a new edition of the National Construction Code, including Volume 3, the Plumbing Code of Australia, will be published and take effect in May 2019.
- This document will supersede the current 2016 edition.
- The VBA will run a seminar series in May next year to inform you of relevant changes in the NCC and provide you with important other information.