

# Plumbing Information Note: Use of gas composite pipe in bushfire prone areas

## Background

Composite or multilayer (e.g. PeX/Al/PeX) pipe is increasingly used in gas installations throughout Victoria, due to ease of installation. Gasfitters need to be aware that non-metal pipe cannot be used on the exterior of any residential buildings in a designated bushfire prone area.



## Designated bushfire prone areas

Most of rural Victoria and many suburban Melbourne areas have been designated by the Minister for Planning as bushfire prone areas. For more information about these areas, including mapping, refer to [www.vba.vic.gov.au/consumers/bushfire-information](http://www.vba.vic.gov.au/consumers/bushfire-information)

## The National Construction Code and AS3959

Under the National Construction Code, wherever a building permit is required and your site is in a designated bushfire prone area, all residential buildings (class 1, 2 and 3) and attached garages (class 10a) must be built in accordance with AS 3959-2009 *Construction of buildings in bushfire-prone areas*. This Australian Standard states that:

*“above-ground, exposed water and gas supply pipes shall be metal.”*

Composite or multilayer pipe is not suitable for any exposed or exterior use in any bushfire prone area, and metal pipes (e.g. copper, galvanized iron) must be used on the exterior of buildings for both water and gas supply.

Before using composite or multilayer pipe (or any non-metal pipe), ask the builder whether the house is required to be built to this requirement.

Where composite gas pipes have been used on the exterior of a dwelling or residential building in a designated bushfire prone area, the Building Surveyor may take enforcement action for non-compliance with the *Building Act 1993*, the *Building Regulations 2006* and the building permit.



Refer also to *Plumbing Information Note – protection of multilayer piping*