

Plumbing: Drainage Inspections

Q&A

The following answers have been provided to questions asked during the Plumbing: Drainage Inspections webinar on 26 October 2023.

The answers provided are correct as of 09 November 2023.

Where can I find a copy of the presentation slides?

A copy of the presentation slides and recording of the webinar are available from the [VBA website](#).

Is the Relevant Building Surveyor responsible to declare a plumber's performance solution on the building permit?

The Relevant Building Surveyor is responsible to declare all performance solutions used to determine compliance with the following performance requirements of the BCA that relate to the building to which the permit applies.

If I am connecting to a current or new approved septic system, do I still need to book an inspection?

As these sorts of systems are under the jurisdiction of the local council, you cannot get a PIC number, so you can't book an inspection. These sorts of works are still subject to possible audits.

Is a PIC Number required if I am doing only alterations of in ground sanitary works? Most authorities will not issue a PIC if not making new connections, hence unable to book a VBA inspection without a PIC Number.

All below ground drainage works requires consent from the local water corporation. This is a question for the water corporation. The VBA requires all below ground works to be offered for inspection as per the *Building Act 1993*.

Do the inspections check that all the requirements of the water corporation are complied with?

The VBA requests the water corporation's paperwork so we can see any special conditions imposed, such as build overs or easements.

At the time of inspection, the VBA can only see the works that have been laid in the trench, pre backfill. We do look for those basics of the I.S to ground level and that the rest meets minimum standards. We don't stay for the backfilling or check if they submit 1:500 as laid plans.



Can drains be partially backfilled prior to inspection? If you install a suspended drain and just have to cut in a junction to the existing underground drain, do you need to book an underground drainage inspection?

All below ground drainage works requires an inspection to be offered, whether cutting in a branch or junction below ground, you would be altering the below ground drain.

Can you please explain right to appeal a rectification notice?

A rectification notice can be appealed to VCAT within 5days from the date of issue. If it is a dispute around rectification works, this can be discussed with VBA rectification staff when you are contacted.

Why do rectification notices only have a generic email address? Can I speak to the auditor who conducted the drainage inspection?

Rectification staff from the VBA office will contact you and if you have questions pertaining to the works that have been identified, these staff will liaise with the Auditor, if required, to qualify any information pertaining to the notice issued.

Can a builder replace plumber at drain inspection?

The licensed plumber or a qualified representative is required at the inspection booking on that person's behalf. A builder is not the plumber or a representative.

Why is bedding for sanitary drains & stormwater drains different for the same diameter pipe?

As a regulator, we can only regulate the requirements set out in the standards. AS3500 parts 2 & 3 do have different requirements which need to be adhered to when performing different drainage types.

What happens when you must bore in areas of trees? How is this inspected?

The licensed plumber would be required to have the section of drain on test, and each side of the bore would need to remain uncovered for the inspection, with the sections that are exposed will be inspected for compliance.

Do you require a Consent to Connect number on urgent repairs? How deep below ground requires a Consent to Connect number? Do all repairs/ replacement of partial drains need an updated sewer plan?

You still need to obtain consent using an Urgent Repair Notice with the relevant water corporation before commencing any works.

This doesn't remove the responsibility to make a drain inspection booking after the works are completed. You must contact the VBA to report the emergency sanitary drainage work as soon as possible during operational hours. Call 1300 108 112 (Monday to Friday, from 7.30am-4.15pm).

You need to make a booking using VBA360 for an inspection for the next available day. The licensed plumber or a representative must be present at the booking time.

If the drain has been backfilled, you are expected to provide photos of the completed works as evidence of the works undertaken. If a Plumbing Authorised Officer attends, photos and all relevant documentation will be requested.

Any alteration to a below ground sewer requires a consent to connect number/alteration application made to your local water corporation. Depth is not a factor.

Any alteration/addition requires the 1:500 as laid plan to be updated.

**What are the requirements for hot discharge on drainage pipes?**

All hot discharge can only discharge to drainage pipes that are suitably rated and approved to carry such temperatures. The manufacturer of the pipes would have maximum temperature limitations for time expectations, please refer to the manufacturer.

How do I alter the drainage plan when I have connected to a previous added drain where an alteration plan was not completed?

You must attempt to locate and draw up a new/updated plan to the best of your ability in 1:500 and send it to the water corporation. New works and what you have identified from the existing works.

Are unit development detention systems required to be inspected, and by whom?

Detention systems are subject to council inspection but must be laid with compliant plumbing materials and could be inspected upon lodgement of a compliance certificate.

For further information or clarification please contact the Technical and Regulation Team via technicalenquiry@vba.vic.gov.au

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