



# GUIDELINE

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FUNDED BY  
THE BUILDING  
RESEARCH LEVY

FREE MONTHLY UPDATE ON BUILDING ISSUES PREPARED BY BRANZ AND  
FUNDED BY THE BUILDING RESEARCH LEVY

## WHERE DOES BRANZ FIT IN?

Two comments often made to BRANZ staff are: "You guys make the rules" and "You are a government department". In both cases the answer is "No, we don't, and we are not".

In most cases the responsibility for building industry rules rests with a government department, namely the Department of Building and Housing. They are responsible for the administration and management of the Building Act, the Building Regulations, the New Zealand Building Code and the Approved Documents (Acceptable Solutions and Verification Methods).

Standards are the responsibility of Standards New Zealand, an independent, self-funded body charged with the responsibility of developing and marketing a wide range of New Zealand and joint Australian/New Zealand standards. Standards cover a wide range of products and systems from timber-framed buildings to condos, and they operate under the Standards Act 1988. A standard relating to building matters may be called up as a Verification Method or as an Acceptable Solution by the Approved Documents to the Building Code. Standards become part of 'the law' when they have been adopted as defining what should be achieved.

When either of these two organisations promotes any new document, standard or regulation, industry input is sought during development and comment canvassed on the output through peer review and public comment. BRANZ is certainly actively involved in peer review and comment on Building Codes and standards, as are many other 'interested parties', but we DO NOT write the standards or make the rules.

BRANZ is certainly not a government department. Building Research is an incorporated society governed by a Board drawn from industry which is charged with receiving and putting to good use the Building Research Levy. BRANZ Ltd, to give it its correct name, is a limited liability company owned by Building Research and it contracts to Building Research to carry out Levy funded work. BRANZ Ltd also carries out projects on a commercial basis for a range of clients. As well it bids for, and receives, a significant amount of funding from the Foundation for Research, Science and Technology to carry out public good research and information transfer for the building industry. In a number of instances projects are funded by a range of sources – for example the popular seminars are funded by the Levy, attendance charge and sponsorship.

BRANZ publishes a wide range of material intended as 'good advice' to the building industry that reflects best practice. They are not normally written to form an Acceptable Solution or standard, but may be referenced in such documentation. However, they do provide information that will enable the designer or practitioner to arrive at an informed decision on the subject being considered, but they are not compliance documents.

## BRANZ IS NOT YOUR DESIGNER

Phone calls to the BRANZ helpline often seek design solutions to a problem. Where the question is being asked by a designer, we will attempt to steer them in the right direction to allow them to develop their solution. However, where the question is being asked by a builder, project manager or client, our response is to refer them to the designer to provide the solution.

With recent changes in the Building Act the onus is on the person carrying out the design (whether they be architect, engineer, builder, draughtsperson) to provide sufficient information in the consent

application documents to show compliance with Building Code requirements.

With the advent of registered building practitioners, designers will have to show, for the type of projects they are commissioned to design, that they are suitably experienced to carry out such design.

Therefore it is not BRANZ's role to be the designer.

## WOOD BURNER SPECIFICATIONS

From 1 September this year wood burners installed on properties of less than 2 hectares must meet specific particulate discharge (to improve regional air quality) and thermal efficiency standards. The wood burner design standards set by the Ministry of Environment require that all new wood burners must have:

- a maximum particle discharge of 1.5g/kg; and
- a minimum thermal efficiency of not less than 65%.

As BRANZ reads it, all wood burners installed after 1 September 2005 must meet the requirements of Section 22 of the standard listed above.

For more details visit [www.mfe.govt.nz](http://www.mfe.govt.nz).

## FREE JOINTS

Our ears always pick up when something free is mentioned.

In the August/September 2005 *BUILD* magazine, Figure 1 on Page 23 showed three ways to construct a free joint in a concrete slab-on-ground. The bottom right drawing showed a deep saw cut through the reinforcing. This option should not be used as an expressed, open joint in a wet floor situation – the reason being that there is an increased risk of corrosion of the exposed edge of the mild steel reinforcing at the saw cut. Free joints where the reinforcing is protected by the concrete are more suited to wet floor situations.

## CITE FUTURE EVENTS

### CITE Access, Egress and Barriers

30 August–1 September – Auckland

\$1,200 + GST (\$1,350 incl. GST)

### CITE Weathertightness Design

Week 1: 5–9 September – Taupo  
Week 2: 10–14 October – Taupo

\$4,000 + GST (\$4,500 incl. GST)

### CITE Building Compliance of IQP

7–9 September – Wellington

\$1,200 + GST (\$1,350 incl. GST)

### CITE Fire Design

Week 1: 20–23 September – Auckland  
Week 2: 1–4 November – Auckland

\$3,000 + GST (\$3,375 incl. GST)

Early bird specials are available.

Contact Fiona Street, CITE Education Officer. Phone 04 238 1291 or email [BRANZCITE@branz.co.nz](mailto:BRANZCITE@branz.co.nz).

## BRANZ SEMINARS

Coming up in October/November (starting in Nelson on 10 October) at our usual centres is 'Plumbed Out', a seminar on the ins and outs of AS/NZS 3500 and NZBC G13 with particular emphasis on consent documentation.

Contact Gail King, Seminar Coordinator (phone 04 237 1170). Registration is available on line at [www.branz.co.nz](http://www.branz.co.nz).

Actual dates will be published in the September *Guideline* but are available now on the BRANZ website.

Do you want to receive *Guideline* by email? Just send your email address to Helen Anderson at [HelenAnderson@branz.co.nz](mailto:HelenAnderson@branz.co.nz) with *Guideline* in the subject line, or you can download it free at [www.branz.co.nz](http://www.branz.co.nz).