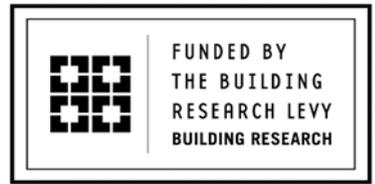


GUIDELINE

Free monthly update on building issues prepared by BRANZ Ltd and funded by the Building Research Levy



JULY 2007

New websites

Two new sustainability websites have just gone live.

BRANZ Ltd has launched www.level.org.nz – a website designed specifically for the building industry and sponsored by Building Research. Level will help you design and build homes which have less impact on the environment and are healthier, more comfortable, and have lower running costs. A companion website designed for the consumer and sponsored by the Ministry for the Environment, the DBH, Beacon Pathway, and prepared by the Consumers Institute is www.smarterhomes.org.nz

Hot off the press

Just released is amendment 2 to NZS 5261 2003, which clarifies the clearances between flue terminals and gas measurement systems, as well as protection requirements for combustible surfaces near gas cooking appliances.

Top of the cavity

Drained and vented cavities must have the top of the cavity closed off from all roof spaces, including attic roof spaces and enclosed soffits or verges to prevent the entry of moist air.

This can be done with a continuous horizontal top batten (the only continuous horizontal batten permitted), solid blocking between roof framing members or a soffit lining.

Where a soffit lining is used, the detail must ensure that water is not able to track between the soffit lining and the top of the cladding or between the raked cut edge of a cladding and the lining down the verge of a gable end.

Where a cladding to a gable end wall is installed over a cavity, an air barrier must be incorporated between the cavity and the attic roof space to prevent air entry.

Cantilevered balconies and bulletins

Under NZS 3604, cantilevered timber slatted balconies fall outside the scope of the Standard where the balcony balustrade has a mass of more than 5.5 kg/m² and a decking of more than 25 kg/m². Where a barrier is required, this can only be satisfied by a simple post and rail barrier which does not comply with the safety from falling requirements.

BRANZ has just withdrawn Bulletin 483 *Timber Slat Decks*. This is because amendment 2 to NZS 3604 has required a recalculation of the cantilever dimension given in Table 2 of this bulletin to accommodate the weight of a complying barrier. The revised span tables will be published in Build 101 and as a new Table 2 in a new Bulletin 489 *Timber Slat Decks/Balconies*, which will be published shortly.

Balloon framing

Balloon framing (framing more than one floor tall), while shown in NZS 3604 (Figure 8.21), is actually outside the scope of the standard and must be specifically designed.

NZS 3604 gives specific guidance on the fixing of ribbon boards to balloon framing. Where ribbon boards are housed into the studs, allowance must be made for the reduction in stud depth at that point.

Roof space ventilation

Under the NZBC, there is no requirement for ventilation of a roof space. Requirements for ventilation are set by the roof cladding manufacturers (usually limited to membrane systems) and depend on the roof cladding, the substrate material and the volume of enclosed space below the roof cladding. Ventilation may consist of substrate venting or, in some cases, roof space venting.

Research is currently underway at BRANZ to determine specific ventilation needs for different types of roof construction, the results of which will be used to develop a roof space ventilation bulletin. Bulletin 368 *Preventing Moisture Problems in Timber Framed Skillion Roofs* has now been withdrawn.

Engineering basis of NZS 3604

The engineering basis of NZS 3604 is described in BRANZ Study Report 166, available for free download from www.branz.co.nz. The study report is a useful reference when using SED for timber structures.

Asbestos

The use of asbestos fibres in the building industry stopped in the mid to late 1980s. However, asbestos is still present in a number of existing building materials. Key references when the presence of asbestos is suspected are NZBC Clause F2 Hazardous Building Materials and OSH guidelines www.osh.dol.govt.nz/order/catalogue/519.shtml. If asbestos is suspected, have a small sample tested before any work is carried out.

Testing can be carried out by Dowdell and Associates in Auckland and Capital Environmental Services in Wellington.

Generally, working with asbestos is considered restricted work under the *Health and Safety in Employment (Asbestos) Regulations* and must be carried out by specialist contractors.

Stair stringers

How do you size stair stringers for the span of the stairs? One option is to size the stringer using the floor joist tables within NZS 3604. If doing this, remember that the stringer must be deep enough to accommodate the riser/tread dimensions of the stairs.

BRANZ Seminars

Passive Fire Protection

Registration is still open for the above seminar. Passive fire protection measures are an incredibly important part of building design and construction. Aimed at building officials, architects and designers and presented by BRANZ Senior Fire Engineer, Ed Soja, this seminar will be held on the following dates:

Christchurch – Monday 16 July
Wellington – Wednesday 18 July
Auckland – Wednesday 25 July.

The seminar has been accredited for 15 CPD points by the NZ Registered Architects Board and is recognised by the BOINZ Training Academy.

Visit our website for more details and to register online – www.branz.co.nz (click on Seminars).