



Guideline

January 2020

Welcome to this update on technical and informative advice for the building and construction industry on issues relating to building controls and good construction practices.

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Welcome to the first *Guideline* for 2020! We hope you had a relaxing break.

Changes to NZS 3604:2011

Comments invited on scoping document

Standards New Zealand is developing the scope for a revision of NZS 3604:2011 *Timber-framed buildings* and is seeking feedback on seven proposals:

- Solutions for improved thermal performance
- Foundation solutions for expansive soils
- Foundation solutions for liquefaction-prone soils
- Steel bracing elements for wide openings
- Support systems for long-span beams, lintels and trusses
- Framing around internal stairwells
- Isolated internal masonry walls

The draft can be downloaded [here](#). The closing date for comments is 3 February 2020.

Glazing in residential wet areas

Make sure you are following the updated standard

Glass injuries cause a significant number of hospitalisations in New Zealand.

Bathrooms are a particular risk because floors may be slippery. Grade A safety glass is required in framed and unframed shower doors, screens and bath enclosures and all glazing less than 2.0 m from the floor. This includes glass shelving. There are specific requirements around double and triple glazing (safety glass is required on the inner pane). Where bathroom, ensuite and spa room doors are glazed, the glazing must be safety glass.

Glazing completely or partly within 2 m vertically or horizontally of the walking surface alongside spa pools or swimming pools must be safety glass.

NZS 4223.3:2016 *Glazing in buildings – Part 3: Human impact safety requirements* is one of the sponsored standards that can be downloaded for free from the [Standards New Zealand](https://standards.newzealand.govt.nz/) website.

Acceptable Solution F2/AS1 states that glazing likely to be subject to human impact must comply with this standard.

Media rooms without windows require careful ventilation design

The most common methods of Code compliance don't apply

Media rooms are becoming more common in larger homes today and are sometimes constructed without openable windows. Care should be taken assessing the proposed design against the options in G4/AS1 to choose a suitable ventilation strategy. It is best to do this early when layout changes are still possible.

One of the performance requirements of Building Code clause G4 *Ventilation* is: "Spaces within buildings shall have means of ventilation with outdoor air that will provide an adequate number of air changes to maintain air purity." Designers have several options in Acceptable Solution G4/AS1. Mechanical ventilation (G4/AS1 paragraph 1.5) is an obvious one but there are alternatives.

Media rooms with an external wall but no openings to the outside via windows must be ventilated to the outside by high-level trickle ventilators through the external wall (or in building elements in the wall) and have a distance of less than 6 metres between the external wall and opposing wall (G4/AS1 paragraph 1.3.2).

Media rooms can be ventilated via another habitable space (although not a kitchen, laundry, bathroom or toilet) if four requirements are met:

- The other habitable space has openable windows and/or other openings to the outside of net openable area of no less than 5% of the combined floor area of the combined spaces.
- There are high-level and low-level trickle ventilators located on the external wall sized according to the combined floor area.
- The permanent opening between the two spaces is no less than 5% of the combined floor area of the spaces.
- The combined distance of the habitable spaces, measured between the external wall and furthest opposing wall, is less than 6 metres (G4/AS1 paragraph 1.3.4).

When do external stairs for houses need a handrail?

Acceptable Solution D1/AS1 provides answers

D1/AS1 classifies stairs as accessible, common or private. A stairway that forms part of the main access route to a house (and may be used by the public) is a common stairway. A stairway used by a single household unit only is a private stairway. Generally, common and private stairs that are 2 m wide or less and have more than two risers must have a handrail on at least one side. However, a handrail can be omitted on stairs with two or three risers that access a single household unit.

Consents may not be required but work must still comply with the Building Code

Work that does not require a building consent is still subject to rules

Building work does not always need a building consent, and not having to apply for a consent can save a lot of time and money. Work that doesn't need a consent is set out in Schedule 1 of the Building Act 2004.

Building work that does not require a building consent must still comply with the Building Code (section 17 of the Building Act 2004). When it comes to renovations, a building's level of compliance with the Building Code must not be adversely affected once the exempt building work is completed (section 42A of the Act).

Recent news

Building consents hit 45-year high

The number of new home building consents reached 37,010 in the year ended November 2019. That is the highest in a year since the mid-1970s, reported [Statistics New Zealand](#). The highest number recorded was 40,025 in the February 1974 year, when the population was almost 2 million fewer.

New houses emit too much carbon

A [research study](#) by BRANZ and Massey University calculated how much carbon dioxide new houses can emit to help meet 2050 climate targets. New Zealand houses currently produce more than five times too much carbon dioxide.

Changes to landfill levy proposed

Submissions are open until 3 February around changes to the landfill levy. A lot of construction and demolition waste is not subject to a levy at the moment. The proposal is for a levy of \$20 per tonne for construction and demolition fill and for an increase at municipal landfills from \$10 to \$50 or \$60 per tonne. You can find more information [here](#).

Government flags more subcontractor protection

While an [independent review](#) by KPMG last year found that most of the construction industry was complying with the retention money provisions in the Construction Contracts Act 2002, the report raised a few concerns. The Minister for Building and Construction has indicated announcements will be made this year about work to ensure subcontractors are protected.

BRANZ SEMINARS

Performance-plus design and construction

Minimum acceptable standards of construction provided by standards and the Building Code are often interpreted as a target instead of what they are – an accepted legal minimum.

This seminar series provides an overview of the benefits of designing and constructing beyond the minimum and identifies opportunities for achieving performance-plus at little or no extra cost. The series will cover the advantages of performance-plus design in terms of improved liveability, accessibility, durability, longevity, reduced building running costs, improved indoor environments and greater energy efficiency. Reducing carbon emissions to reduce climate change will also be covered.

The seminar will provide a special focus on volume housing where performance-plus design and construction can be applied to choices that add to the value proposition with manageable or minimal cost increases.

Audience

The target audience is architects, designers, builders, group home builders, building officials, building surveyors, apprentices, students

Presenters

Greg Burn – NZCD (Arch), Dip Bus (Marketing) – Structure Ltd

Dates

Date	Location	Venue
Wed 12 Feb	Hamilton	FMG Stadium Waikato
Thu 13 Feb	Tauranga	Trinity Wharf Tauranga
Fri 14 Feb	Rotorua	Millennium Hotel Rotorua
Wed 19 Feb	Invercargill	Ascot Park Hotel
Thu 20 Feb	Queenstown	Crowne Plaza Queenstown
Fri 21 Feb	Dunedin	Scenic Hotel Southern Cross
Wed 26 Feb	New Plymouth	Devon Hotel
Thu 27 Feb	Whangarei	Forum North
Fri 28 Feb	Auckland 1	North Harbour Stadium
Wed 04 Mar	Christchurch 1	Chateau on the Park, A DoubleTree by Hilton
Thu 05 Mar	Hokitika	Beachfront Hotel Hokitika
Fri 06 Mar	Nelson	Rutherford Hotel Nelson
Wed 11 Mar	Timaru	Landing Service Conference Centre
Thu 12 Mar	Christchurch 2	Addington Events Centre
Fri 13 Mar	Blenheim	Marlborough Convention Centre
Mon 16 Mar	Upper Hutt	Silverstream Retreat
Tue 17 Mar	Napier	Napier Conference Centre
Wed 18 Mar	Auckland 2	Crowne Plaza Auckland
Mon 23 Mar	Wellington	InterContinental Wellington
Tue 24 Mar	Palmerston North	Distinction Palmerston North Hotel & Conference Centre
Wed 25 Mar	Auckland 3	Ellerslie Event Centre

All seminars are 3 hours long and run from 1.00–4.00pm. Register online at www.branz.co.nz.

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