

17 MARCH 2023
VERSION 3

Building Recovery

INFORMATION PACK

**Cyclone
Gabrielle
Response**



Introduction

Following Cyclone Gabrielle Hastings District Council has set up a new building recovery team to assist residents with stickered properties.

In times like these, the team understand that it can be difficult to know where to start or who to talk to. With this in mind they've pulled together an information pack.

The team encourage residents to have a look though everything and reach out with any questions about the coloured stickers or repairing/ re-building process.

The team can be contacted on buildingrecovery@hdc.govt.nz

* This version of the Building Recovery Information Pack was updated on 17 March 2023.

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Coloured stickers (placard) on buildings – what do they mean?



Following a major weather event such as flooding, homes may have a rapid assessment, which is an initial check to ensure human life and safety.

Following an assessment, a building or home will receive either a white, yellow or red sticker (placard). These are a legal notice and should not be changed or removed unless you have permission from the building recovery team.

If your building or home has a sticker that is yellow or red, contact your insurer first. You may need to use a suitably qualified tradesperson or chartered professional engineer to do repairs or further inspections.

Once repairs are completed (please note some repairs may require a building and/or resource consent), contact us at buildingrecovery@hdc.govt.nz to have any restrictions reassessed.

WHITE – FULL ACCESS

The building may have suffered little or no damage and can be used. However, it doesn't necessarily mean the building is safe, there could be unseen damage.

If your building has received a white sticker, speak to your insurer about any further assistance you'd like. White stickers will expire 21 days after the date it was posted and can then be removed from the building and kept for your records.



YELLOW - RESTRICTED ACCESS

TO PART(S) OF THE BUILDING ONLY (YELLOW 1)

The building may have moderate damage and access is restricted. Access is restricted to some of the building only. This means you cannot access the restricted area(s) noted on the sticker (placard).

If you own the building, you'll need to contract a qualified tradesperson or chartered professional engineer to do the repairs or further inspections. You should talk to your insurer about this work.

Once the repairs have been completed (please note some work may require building and/or resource consent), contact us at buildingrecovery@hdc.govt.nz



SHORT TERM ENTRY ONLY (YELLOW 2)

The building may have moderate damage and access is restricted. Access is restricted to short-term entry only. This means you cannot stay at the property.

If you own the building, you'll need to contract a qualified tradesperson or chartered professional engineer to do the repairs or further inspections. You should talk to your insurer about this work.

Once the repairs have been completed (please note some work may require building and/or resource consent), contact us at buildingrecovery@hdc.govt.nz

RED – NO ACCESS

The building cannot be used and entry is prohibited because it has sustained moderate or heavy damage or may be at risk from external factors and poses a significant risk to health or life.

If you own the building, further investigation and repairs are required before the building is safe to use. A red sticker doesn't automatically mean it's all over for your house - it means there is a safety issue - don't go near it.

If access is needed for an insurance assessor or to retrieve personal items, you need permission from our compliance team. Contact us at buildingrecovery@hdc.govt.nz or call 06 871 5000 to arrange.



Getting started

Your property has been stickered, what next?

I have insurance

I don't have insurance

Contact your insurer to discuss the damage to your property. They will advise the process they need you to follow relating to assessment and repairs. They will also advise about the likely building professionals which they will engage, or they will provide you with approval to engage your own professionals.

Make contact with a licensed building practitioner (LBP) yourself to work through your remediation process. They should be able to advise you what approvals you may require for consent in order to comply with the relevant legislation.

Utilise the guides available to help you decide how to approach your building repair work (industry professionals should be aware of these).

BRANZ - GUIDE TO RESTORING A HOME AFTER FLOOD DAMAGE (APPENDIX 1)
www.branz.co.nz/pubs/bulletins/bu666

MBIE - BUILDING CONSENT EXEMPTIONS FOR DAMAGED BUILDINGS (APPENDIX 2)
www.building.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/managing-buildings/post-emergency-building-assessment/building-consent-exemptions-for-damaged-buildings-quick-guides.pdf

MBIE - EXEMPT BUILDING WORK FAQs
www.building.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/building-officials/guides/new-building-consent-exemptions-information-and-faqs-for-building-consent-authorities.pdf

Use our checklist (see page 4) to make sure you have everything you need for re-assessment.

Contact buildingrecovery@hdc.govt.nz and ask for a re-assessment.

Pathways for repair

A. Building consent exemptions for damaged buildings (building work that doesn't require a building consent)

The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) has produced a quick guide to provide information on what building work may not require a building consent.

This quick guide should be read in conjunction with the guidance from the discretionary exemptions below (B) and guidance from your insurance company.

www.building.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/managing-buildings/post-emergency-building-assessment/building-consent-exemptions-for-damaged-buildings-quick-guides.pdf

B. Discretionary Exemptions

Some work does not need a building consent. The following work is exempt under Building Act 2004 Schedule 1, item 2:

- Replacement of thermal or acoustic insulation in external walls.
- Replacement of wall linings that provide wall bracing.
- Replacement of floor linings and coverings.
- Replacing wet area showers.

Please note that building consent exemptions do not extend to damage that is:

- a result of land failure or movement,
- relating to a fire separation (such as a fire wall), or
- flood repair work to commercial or industrial buildings.

C. Building Consent

Where a building consent is required follow the standard process for applying. Design professionals will be familiar with this process and more information is available on the Hastings District Council website.

Our building recovery team will be focused on processing applications for building consent which are required to enable people to return to their buildings if they have been prohibited by a red or yellow sticker.

Please note: Depending on the scale of your remediation you may need resource consent as well as a building consent.

Next steps

Once work has been completed, Council building officers will need to re-visit your house and sign off the work before the sticker can be removed from your property and you can move back in. Please contact our building recovery team on buildingrecovery@hdc.govt.nz for more information on this.

PRE RE-ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

The following checklist is for homeowners who are completing work themselves or for a licensed building practitioner (LBP) to complete the required work.

Name of owner:				
Address of dwelling:				
	YES	NO	N/A	WORK COMPLETED BY OWNER/LBP
Have you verified the moisture levels in the framing?				
Have you cleaned out your cladding system cavity?				
Have you re-installed insulation in the walls?				
Have you re-installed insulation in the subfloor?				
Have you re-instated internal linings (including brace elements) to original status?				LBP only
Has your septic tank/bore/piped services been checked or serviced?				Registered plumber/drain layer only
Have you replaced all fixtures for bathrooms/kitchens/washing machine etc. and are these sealed?				
Have you received a PS3 producer statement for your internal membrane? (i.e. wet area shower) You can find more information on www.building.govt.nz				Certified applicator only
Have you re-instated the existing solid fuel burner in the same location? Note: Changing the make and model will require building consent approval.				
Have you re-instated domestic smoke detectors within 3m of sleeping spaces?				
Have you received a Certificate of Compliance (CoC) from your electrician?				
Have you received a Record of Works from your licensed building practitioner?				

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- All work completed by a licensed building practitioner must be signed off and the record of works submitted to Council on completion to remove a red or yellow sticker on the property.
- All electrical work must be signed off by a registered electrician and a **Certificate of Completion (Energy Works Certificate for electrical)** supplied and submitted to Council. Your registered electrician will issue this certificate.
- If you install a waterproof membrane (tanking) to a wet area shower or bathroom this also must be completed by an approved installer who will provide a **producer statement that will be submitted to Council along with the Licensed Building Practitioner record of works.**

INSULATION

Please note, if you have properties that did not have insulation prior to the loss, and the repairs need to be completed under the requirements of the Building Act 2004, schedule 1 (available on Council's website www.hastingsdc.govt.nz/services/building-consents-information/exemptions). The homeowner may want to contribute to the cost to install new insulation.

There is an exemption for this work that must be applied for at Council. The cost will be \$250 and you need to produce a plan how the insulation is to be installed, i.e. no building paper, plan to wrap in between studs creating a moisture barrier and install insulation as per installation guidelines (Council needs to agree to this before proceeding under the exemption).

Visit www.hastingsdc.govt.nz/services/building-consents-information/exemptions or phone the duty building officer on 06 871 5000.

Additional info

Rates

Properties that have been deemed uninhabitable (red stickered) are being granted a rates remission. Usually, we ask home owners to apply for this but in the case of Cyclone Gabrielle, we are automatically granting a rates remission during the period people's properties are officially marked as uninhabitable. Initially this will be for the third and fourth instalments of the 2022/23 rates year. Council has also put a temporary stop on direct debits on any red stickered properties (Council will contact affected ratepayers before reactivating these direct debits).

For properties with a yellow sticker, property owners are requested to complete an application form and Council will provide either a remission or postponement (payment plan) for the 2022/23 instalment 4 rates due for payment in May 2023.

- For a remission to be granted, the yellow sticker must be on the main dwelling/building on the property.
- If the main dwelling/building is usable (white or no sticker) but a yellow sticker has been applied to another building(s) on the property (i.e. workshop, storage unit, sleepout, cabin etc.), rates will not be remitted however payment can be postponed for a period of time, determined between Council and the applicant (but no later than 30 June 2025).

Once the application is received, Council's Rates team will get in contact to work through the application and where required, discuss postponement details and future payment plans. The application form is available from Council offices or can be downloaded from our website.

Any remission applied (for both red & yellow properties) will only apply to rates until 30 June 2023 and will then be reassessed for the 2023/24 rating year.

Given the challenges people may have had paying their rates over the past couple of weeks, Council has also made the decision to remit penalties applied for late payment on the third instalment that was due for payment on the 24th February 2023.

Tenancy information

If you are the tenant or landlord of a rental property, you can find information on your rights and obligations at www.tenancy.govt.nz or by phoning **0800 TENANCY (0800 836 262)**.

Flood-damaged items collection

Council is working through flood-affected communities to collect flood-damaged household items. See www.hastingsdc.govt.nz/floodwaste for more information.

Silt removal

A number of logistical issues have been worked through to enable cyclone-related silt disposal. To advise an address for rural or residential silt collection please call **0800 108 838** and press '2' for cyclone-related waste collections. You will be asked a few questions to enable our collection teams to select the right collection and disposal options.

Identifying asbestos

As you plan for work in your home we recommend considering the presence of asbestos. Houses built, or that had work done, between 1950 and 2000 are quite likely to contain some asbestos. If this is exposed or damaged, it can be harmful.

Places you can find asbestos include in vinyl flooring, interior and exterior wall cladding and soffits, fences, texture coatings, fireplaces, stoves, hot water cupboards, electrical switchboards, roofs, guttering and downpipes.

See www.worksafe.govt.nz for more information.

Gas sources

Don't attempt to move or reconnect any gas sources (bottles, cylinders etc.) without having them checked. Call the supplier for advice.

FAQ

What should I do first?

If you are insured this should be your first contact to discuss the damage to your property. They will advise the process they need you to follow relating to assessment and repairs. They will also advise about the likely building professionals which they will engage, or they will provide you with approval to engage your own professionals.

If you aren't insured we recommend making contact with a licensed building practitioner yourself to work through your remediation process. They should be able to advise you what approvals you may require for consent in order to comply with the relevant legislation.

How quickly can I get back into my house?

This will depend on the sticker you have and the amount of work you need to do before having it re-assessed. Once the required work has been completed Council's building inspectors will re-inspect the building, and if all issues are resolved, the building will be given a new status. Contact our building recovery team on buildingrecovery@hdc.govt.nz for more information about the re-assessment process.

Once I get into my house, how should I deal with all the damage?

Before you start the process of cleaning up, the Insurance Council of New Zealand (ICNZ) offers some important recovery and related insurance advice. Visit www.icnz.org.nz/industry/disaster-recovery/ for more information.

You can also find helpful information on their consumer guide for Cyclone Gabrielle insurance recovery advice here: www.icnz.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Consumer-guide-Cyclone-Gabrielle-insurance-recovery-advice-Feb-2023.pdf.

Do I have to start repairs now?

If you're not ready to start work you don't need to immediately. If insured, we do recommend contacting your insurer as soon as possible.



Can I do the required work myself?

Yes you can do the required work yourself. Please note all building work must comply with the building code, regardless of the requirement for consent (section 17 of the Building Act 2004).

Do I need a building consent to do the required work?

Some work does not need a building consent. The following work on flood-damaged homes is exempt under Building Act 2004 Schedule 1, item 2:

- Replacement of thermal or acoustic insulation in external walls.
- Replacement of wall linings that provide wall bracing.
- Replacement of floor linings and coverings.
- Replacing wet area showers.

Please note that building consent exemptions do not extend to damage that is:

- a result of land failure or movement,
- relating to a fire separation (such as a fire wall), or
- flood repair work to commercial or industrial buildings.

BEFORE YOU START:

While Council has exempted the above work, another party (such as an insurer or lender) may require you to obtain a building consent before carrying out the work. You may also choose to obtain a building consent so a record of the work completed is in your property file.

All building work must comply with the building code, regardless of the requirement for consent (section 17 of the Building Act 2004).



How can I make my house safer for future flooding events?

Civil Defence offer advice to help rebuild your home if you live in a flood prone area.

This includes:

- habitable floor heights
- placement of electrical outlets
- recommended wall and floor coverings.

Visit www.civildefence.govt.nz for more information.

How quickly can you come and re-inspect my property?

We have a team dedicated to building recovery and will do our best to get their as quickly as we can. Timeframes will depend on the number of properties we need to get to and where they are.

Who can I get to do the work?

We suggest using people with appropriate qualifications, skills and experience who are either part of an industry organisations. The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment has guidance on its website on choosing a design professional.

My builder/plumber wants more information on my property, how do I get it?

For more details on your property email buildingrecovery@hdc.govt.nz

My house has been red stickered, how can I access it?

Short-term entry may be permitted after consultation with Council's building recovery team, on a case-by-case basis, and subject to appropriate supervision. Please contact our building recovery team on buildingrecovery@hdc.govt.nz for more information.

I have a red-sticker does this mean my area is red-zoned?

No. The Crown may decide to red zone residential land they deem no longer suitable/safe for housing. Following the red zoning of parts of Christchurch, this was done through the extension of a voluntary offer to purchase properties on badly damaged land. The red zone land then became the property of the Crown, and owners were able to use the payment and their insurance (if held) to re-build in a new location.

What do I do if my house is in an area that was heavily impacted by the floods?

We are very aware that waiting to find out if your home will be in an area that is red-zoned is very distressing and the sooner we can get decisions on these matters the better. Some residents will want to stay, and others won't want to return, and both are looking for certainty so they can make plans for their future and know where to focus their efforts for rebuilding their lives.

The Recovery Taskforce Chief Sir Brian Roche, has recently made various media statements stating that "an early job will be helping determine which areas should no longer be inhabited, or red zoned, as areas of Christchurch were after a devastating 2011 earthquake."

What if I want to stay on my land?

Once an area is red-zoned, it is deemed as uninhabitable and a 'no build zone'. You will not be able to obtain consent to build or obtain insurance.

Who do I talk to about zoning?

Stuart Nash is the Regional Minister for Recovery or Minister Grant Robinson's office, as the Minister for Cyclone Recovery. Alternatively, you may wish to contact Anna Lorck (MP for Tuki Tuki).

Who do I talk to about the sticker on my building?

Council has established a team to support owners in getting their homes or buildings back to a safe and sanitary standard.

If you have questions about the sticker on your building

You can find more information on our website at www.hastingsdc.govt.nz/buildingrecovery, or you can get in touch by email at buildingrecovery@hdc.govt.nz or by calling 06 871 5000.

What if I don't have insurance?

Support and assistance may be available through:

- Hawke's Bay Disaster Relief Fund. Visit www.hbrc.info/HBDisasterFund for more information.
- Ministry of Social Development's Civil Defence payments, please contact them on 0800 400 100.

More information on building recovering following Cyclone Gabrielle can be found online at www.hastingsdc.govt.nz/cyclone-gabrielle

Taking care of yourself

Feeling all sorts of emotions is normal in difficult times. If you need to talk free call or text 1737 anytime for support from a trained counsellor. For tips on coping after a natural disaster and looking after yourself visit www.allsorts.org.nz.

ISSUE 666 BULLETIN



RESTORING A HOME AFTER FLOOD DAMAGE

December 2021

- Once building access is safe and services such as electricity are turned off or made safe, flood debris should be cleared away quickly so drying can start as soon as possible.
- Finishing work must not begin until the building is fully dry. Beginning work too soon may result in longer-term damage such as mould growth and timber decay.
- This bulletin updates and replaces Bulletin 455 *Restoring a house after flood damage*. It does not cover making residential properties resilient to flooding.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.0.1 After a home is flooded, the building may need remedial work to help it dry out and to repair any damage.

1.0.2 The building owner should contact their insurance company as early as possible and follow the insurer's instructions. Work on the building should not begin until the owner has confirmed that the insurance assessor has visited and/or the insurance company has authorised the work to go ahead.

1.0.3 Presented with an expensive repair plan, the owner may choose not to proceed, particularly if they have no insurance or are underinsured and cannot afford the repairs. The risks of doing nothing include:

- the building may be damp and unhealthy to live in
- the building condition may deteriorate and become unsafe or uneconomical to repair
- the building may eventually be declared dangerous or unsanitary by the local territorial authority, which can then require work or demolition at the owner's cost
- the condition of the home may affect its future saleability.

1.0.4 An owner may decide to demolish or to sell the building 'as is'.

1.0.5 Whether they own or rent their home, people often have a large emotional investment in it, and being flooded is a traumatic experience. Bear this in mind during work on the building.

1.0.6 This bulletin updates and replaces Bulletin 455 *Restoring a house after flood damage*. It does not cover making residential properties resilient to flooding.

2 REQUIREMENTS

2.0.1 Remediation work sometimes involves reconstruction. This is considered building work under the Building Act and must comply with the Building Code [section 17 of the Act].

2.0.2 The requirements of the Building Code and the need for building consent must be considered for each particular type of repair.

2.0.3 Where work involves general repairs and replacing existing materials with comparable materials, it may not need building consent. For example, replacement of damaged wall linings with comparable materials may be exempt from needing building consent unless the lining being replaced contributes to the building's structural behaviour or fire-safety properties or is being substantially or completely replaced [see Building Act Schedule 1 *Building work for which building consent not required*]. Check with the local authority to find out if building consent is needed.

2.0.4 Building consent is generally needed if:

- structural elements are being replaced
- repairs are being made to fire separations in non-detached dwellings.

2.0.5 Other parts of the building that are not remediated must continue to comply with the Building Code to at least the same extent as before the flooding. Apart from considerations for escape from fire in multi-unit residential buildings, there is no requirement to upgrade parts of a building not being repaired.

2.0.6 If the work involves an upgrade or alteration, check whether it needs building consent. Extensions or additions will require consent and will need to comply with the current Building Code, including thermal performance requirements.

2.0.7 If the house structure is substantially damaged, a structural engineer must be consulted to decide whether it can be repaired. If not, salvageable items should be removed and arrangements made for demolition.

2.0.8 Demolition may or may not require building consent. Schedule 1 of the Building Act allows exemptions for the full demolition of detached buildings not more than 3 storeys high. Partial demolition will generally require building consent but may be exempt if the removal does not affect the primary structure of the building, any specified system or any fire separation. If in doubt, check with the local authority.

3 IMMEDIATELY AFTER A FLOOD

3.0.1 Civil defence emergency management personnel will advise householders when they can return home. This procedure gives a chance to recover important items, but it does not necessarily mean that the dwelling is safe or can be occupied.

3.0.2 If a building is not safe to enter for structural and/or health reasons, emergency authorities will usually place a red 'Entry prohibited' placard near the entrance [Figure 1]. The building must not be entered until this is removed or changed. A yellow 'Restricted access' placard allows access to some parts of the building or short-term entry only. A white 'Can be used' placard allows access but does not mean the building is safe to work or live in. Further safety checks may be required. Before beginning work, check with the local authority or civil defence emergency management that return to the property is allowed.

3.0.3 Before starting the clean-up, check that the property presents no immediate danger:

- Floodwaters have receded enough to make the building safe to enter and no further flooding is expected.
- Land damage such as undermining and subsidence will not pose a risk for people on site.
- The building is structurally safe – a structural engineer, suitably qualified building consultant or experienced builder who is also a licensed building practitioner [LBP] should confirm this.
- A registered electrician has either checked and confirmed that the power supply and installation is safe or has cut off the power supply [appliances must be checked individually]. They may hook up temporary electrical services if it is safe.
- The gas supply has been checked by a registered gasfitter and either tagged as safe or disconnected.

ENTRY PROHIBITED

(THIS IS NOT A DEMOLITION ORDER)

There has been a quick visual inspection of this building:

- This building is at risk from an external hazard
- This building has been seriously damaged

Description of hazard observed: _____

Extent of barricades required: _____

Diagram attached showing restricted areas

Access is not permitted without written authorisation from the Civil Defence Emergency Management Controller or other Responsible Person.

Building Name and Address: _____

This building has been subject to a rapid assessment:

- Exterior Only
- Exterior and Interior

Assessor ID: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____

This placard has been placed on behalf of the CDEM Controller or other Responsible Person under the authority of s133BT of the Building Act 2004 or the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002 (cross out as applicable).

For further information:

- <https://www.building.govt.nz/managing-buildings/managing-buildings-in-an-emergency/>
- For enquires about this building: _____

DO NOT REMOVE THIS NOTICE

RESTRICTED ACCESS

- TO PART(S) OF THE BUILDING ONLY
- SHORT TERM ENTRY ONLY
- Access to be supervised by a person authorised by the issuing authority

There has been a quick visual inspection of this building:

- This building has been damaged and its structural safety is questionable
- Enter only at own risk
- Future events may cause more damage that may change this assessment

Description of hazard observed: _____

Restricted areas are: _____

Restrictions on use:

- Removal of essential documents/valuables only
- Removal of property
- Other: _____

Diagram attached showing restricted areas

Building Name and Address: _____

This building has been subject to a rapid assessment:

- Exterior Only
- Exterior and Interior

Assessor ID: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____

This placard has been placed on behalf of the CDEM Controller or other Responsible Person under the authority of s133BT of the Building Act 2004 or the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002 (cross out as applicable).

For further information:

- <https://www.building.govt.nz/managing-buildings/managing-buildings-in-an-emergency/>
- For enquires about this building: _____

DO NOT REMOVE THIS NOTICE

CAN BE USED

NO RESTRICTIONS ON ACCESS

There has been a quick visual inspection of this building:

- No obvious structural problems were observed, but;
- This does not mean that the building is completely safe
- This does not mean that the building is not damaged
- Future events may cause more damage that may change this assessment

The following items have generally not been inspected:

- Utilities (electrical, gas, water, sanitary facilities, etc)
- Secondary elements (ceilings, windows, fittings, etc)

Building owners and tenants have an important role in regard to the future safety of occupants and the public:

- The owner should organise for someone to look at the building more thoroughly
- Tell the issuing authority if you find anything that could be dangerous

Building Name and Address: _____

This building has been subject to a rapid assessment:

- Exterior Only
- Exterior and Interior

Assessor ID: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____

This placard has been placed on behalf of the CDEM Controller or other Responsible Person under the authority of s133BT of the Building Act 2004 or the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002 (cross out as applicable).

For further information:

- <https://www.building.govt.nz/managing-buildings/managing-buildings-in-an-emergency/>
- For enquires about this building: _____

DO NOT REMOVE THIS NOTICE

Figure 1. Placards that may be placed on dwellings following severe flooding. © The Crown.

- The sewerage system is safe and presents no health danger to workers cleaning. Flooded septic tanks should be checked by a certifying plumber and/or registered drainlayer and pumped out as soon as possible if necessary and the disposal field cleared of any silt.

3.0.4 When entry to the dwelling is permitted, maintaining security may be difficult. The occupants should remove any remaining valuables.

3.0.5 Before any clean-up or repair work begins, take photographs and/or videos of all the damage and store them safely. Where you can see the maximum height that floodwaters came up to, mark that point in each room with a permanent marker.

3.0.6 With buildings on suspended timber floors, try to determine whether the house has moved on its foundations. If this seems likely, consult a registered engineer. Door frames out of shape and new cracks in walls may be evidence of this.

4 HEALTH AND SAFETY

4.0.1 Floodwater is often contaminated. Do these things to keep safe during clean-up:

- Wear long trousers, a top with long sleeves, gloves and sturdy shoes and have a mask handy.
- Prioritise safe disposal of accumulations of sewage and dead animals in the vicinity of the building and manage any other health hazards.
- Only drink purified water until the regular supply is confirmed as safe to drink and you have run taps until the water is clear.
- Discard all food exposed to the flood unless stored in sealed airtight containers. Wash all food containers carefully before opening. Do not eat vegetables from the garden if the garden was under floodwater. Disinfect and wash crockery, glassware and cutlery thoroughly before use. Dispose of thawed food in freezers where the power has been off for 2 days or more.
- If the water in a water storage tank was affected by floodwater, dispose of the water, clean out and disinfect the tank.
- Keep small children, pets and anyone with asthma or allergies away during clean-up.
- Use liberal amounts of disinfectant when cleaning, and wash hands thoroughly before eating and drinking.
- Disinfect cuts and skin injuries immediately and cover with a waterproof dressing.
- If you need light, use a battery-powered torch or lamp and not a light with a naked flame.

5 CLEANING UP INSIDE

5.0.1 Remove wet belongings, furniture, bedding, wet curtains and floor coverings. Once items are thoroughly cleaned and dried, arrange to store these elsewhere. Some items that cannot be satisfactorily cleaned and dried (such as innersprung mattresses) will need to be disposed of.

5.0.2 Appliances and systems that have been covered by floodwater should be checked and may need to be

removed. These include space heating and water heating systems and so on. Some may be cleaned, dried and checked/tested before being reinstalled/used while others must be disposed of.

5.0.3 Leave nothing inside the house that can trap moisture and slow the drying process.

5.0.4 Locate and clear pockets of trapped water and debris:

- Remove skirtings, cupboard kick panels and front panels to showers and baths.
- Remove wall linings sufficiently to allow cleaning of the wall cavity and the removal of wet insulation materials.
- Drill holes in or remove ceiling linings when water is trapped above.
- Ensure the power supply is disconnected and then remove electrical switch plates and fittings.

5.0.5 Remove any water, mud and silt that may be trapped:

- underneath the bath and shower tray
- in and beneath cupboards
- under stairs
- in wall cavities and between internal linings and claddings
- in a fireplace, chimney or woodburner
- above the ceiling
- in electrical switchboards and wall sockets (ensure power is disconnected)
- in sanitary fittings such as toilets, bidets, cisterns and pipes.

5.0.6 Remove all visible mud and debris. If sufficient clean water is available, use a hose with a reasonable nozzle pressure, starting from the top or upper limit of the flooding and working down. Insert the hose into concealed spaces to flush out dirt as work proceeds.

5.0.7 After hosing down, wipe or wash surfaces with disinfectant to reduce the risk of flood-carried infections and contaminants.

5.0.8 It is usually easier to clean wall framing cavities from the inside due to the presence of wall underlay on the outer face of the framing and the need to remove wet insulating materials. However, if the floodwater carried silt, this may be trapped between the wall cladding and the underlay. If this is the case, remove the outside cladding sufficiently to allow the silt to be removed. Silt left behind will affect wall underlay performance.

5.0.9 Hard linings such as wood panelling or wallboard can be scrubbed with a stiff bristle brush, water and detergent to remove dirt from cracks, corners and crevices. The surfaces should be well rinsed with clean cold water.

5.0.10 Gypsum plasterboard has a low tolerance to water and will almost always have to be replaced if it has been immersed.

5.0.11 Where plasterboard is used as bracing, it must be removed and complete sheets replaced, following specified fastening schedules to ensure the bracing

capacity is restored to the original. Removing these bracing elements means temporary bracing is required, particularly when the building requires an extended period for drying. Always consult a registered engineer, building consultant or experienced licensed builder. Building consent will be required.

5.0.12 If the plasterboard is not a bracing element and depending on the wall finishes being reinstated, it may be possible to remove a strip to 300 mm higher than the flood damaged zone. Where plasterboard sheets are cut, include nogging or flat-wise timber to provide some support at the edges for stopping. However, a better result will be achieved if full sheets are removed and then replaced after the framing has dried.

5.0.13 If it is not clear whether the plasterboard is used for bracing, replace with a braced lining with appropriate fixings and brackets.

5.0.14 Items made from composite wood materials such as medium-density fibreboard (MDF) or non-flooring grade particleboard have low tolerances to water immersion and may need to be replaced if fibres have swollen. This may affect skirtings, architraves, scotias, window jamb linings and joinery units.

5.0.15 Flooring board made from composite wood materials may also need to be replaced, as flooding damage could cause structural weakness. If checking the floor strength, it must first be completely dry. If in doubt, consult an appropriate expert.

5.0.16 Timber framing, whether treated or not, should be checked by a registered building surveyor before it is re-enclosed. It should be cleaned where required, treatment applied as advised and then be allowed to dry [see 9.0.3].

5.0.17 If there is significant mould growth, affected linings should be removed and disposed of in sealed bags. Any affected timber framing should be washed thoroughly, rinsed, treated and dried. If mould has been removed from the sides of a stud, it is likely to also be present on the back face of the stud, and this should be managed accordingly.

6 CLEANING UP SUBFLOOR SPACES AND BASEMENTS

6.0.1 For homes with subfloor spaces under suspended ground floors, clean out the space to prevent excess moisture remaining, to speed up the drying out of the structural timber above and to reduce the risk of future rot.

6.0.2 Options to remove water under the floor are:

- pumping out
- digging drainage channels to the outside
- digging a pit to drain the water into, then pumping or bailing the water out.

6.0.3 The water removed from under the building should be disposed of as far away as is practicable without impacting other properties. Where the subfloor is lower than the surrounding ground, it may take some time for water to stop accumulating.

6.0.4 Once the subfloor water has been drained, remove any dirt and debris left behind by floodwater. Leaving the silt slows the drying process, but solid debris including silt could be left if it is inaccessible and:

- there are no foul odours present
- the foundation vents are not blocked and there is at least 400 mm between the lowest timber and the ground
- the debris contains no organic matter.

6.0.5 Remove wet insulation. Underfloor insulation should be reinstated or replaced after the subfloor is dry to the level required by the current Building Code or the material manufacturer. If metallic foil subfloor insulation is present, disconnect the electricity supply, remove the foil and replace with a Code-compliant product (foil cannot legally be installed or repaired).

6.0.6 Hose down the underside of the suspended floor to remove dirt from nooks and crannies, particularly around the perimeter. Dirt left behind can hold moisture, slow the drying and may cause rotting.

6.0.7 Check services such as drains, pipes, wiring and conduits for damage and repair if necessary. Silt can be deposited into drains through gully traps. Flush these with clean water.

6.0.8 The best way to dry the subfloor space is to maximise airflow:

- Clear any debris blocking ventilation openings.
- Knock out the grilles to underfloor vents.
- Cut back plants that are obstructing vents.
- Remove items stored under the dwelling.
- Leave subfloor access doors open.
- Remove part of the foundation enclosure such as base boards or sheet linings. If these materials are part of the subfloor bracing system, install temporary diagonal bracing and ensure the bracing is restored to the equivalent of the original. If in doubt, consult a registered engineer or experienced licensed builder.
- Form new ventilation openings in concrete foundations, ensuring there is no structural compromise.
- Set up fans to circulate air if space allows and they can be set up safely. Hire centres often have larger industrial fans.

6.0.9 Concrete foundations can hold water and will need time to dry.

6.0.10 If a basement is flooded, pump the water out over several days. Emergency management authorities advise that, if water is removed from a basement too quickly, water-saturated soil outside the basement could put strong pressure on basement walls, with the risk of collapse.

7 CLEANING UP OUTSIDE

7.0.1 Remove and dispose of driftwood, rubbish and decaying vegetation.

7.0.2 Protect the outside of the building to prevent further rainwater entering while the interior is drying.

7.0.3 Clean external walls with water and detergent as soon as possible, as dirt on the surface will keep it damp.

Use a stiff nylon or bristle brush for brick or blockwork and a soft brush or cloth for timber. Do not waterblast, as this is too aggressive and can do damage.

7.0.4 Wedging out or removing the bottom two or three weatherboards will allow draining and flushing out of the bottom of the wall cavity where it continues past the inside floor level. This will also give much better ventilation to the wall and assist in drying. Sheet claddings that span from top to bottom may have to be removed completely.

7.0.5 With masonry veneer cladding, silt may be cleaned out by inserting a hose through the perpendicular drain points. Where there is more significant silting, remove bricks or blocks in the bottom course to make access ports to flush out the silt.

7.0.6 All monolithic claddings (stucco, exterior insulation and finish systems [EIFS], flush-stopped fibre-cement sheet) should be inspected by a registered architect, registered building surveyor or building surveyor experienced with this type of building. Some of these materials are quite absorbent. Fibre-cement sheet, for example, must be allowed to dry thoroughly.

8 DRYING OUT THE HOME

8.0.1 Once wet materials have been removed and the dwelling is thoroughly cleaned, drying out can begin. Drying out, particularly in winter, can take several months.

8.0.2 Ideally, a building should dry as quickly as possible to reduce risks such as mould growth. Removing linings will speed the drying of concealed places, and linings can be replaced when the building is dry. Relining should not be carried out until the moisture content in the timber wall framing has dropped to acceptable levels [see 9.0.3], and the framing must show no signs of rot. Where time is critical, it may be more practical to replace timber that is wet than wait for it to dry.

8.0.3 On dry days, keep all windows and doors open to maximise ventilation. On wet days, leave windows ajar so there is still some ventilation. Leaving cupboard doors and drawers open will speed the drying of storage areas.

8.0.4 Heaters (and fans and dehumidifiers) can be used, but too much heat may cause wood to warp and split. An inside air temperature of approximately 20°C (or at least 8°C above the outside air temperature) will increase the drying rate without creating additional problems. Ventilation as well as heating allows warm moist air to escape (although doors and windows should be closed if using dehumidifiers). Do not light a fire in a brick fireplace unless it has dried fully – steam created from the moisture can cause damage as it expands, and wet bricks and mortar can explode.

8.0.5 To speed drying of floors:

- remove polyurethane coating or sealer
- lift water-resistant floor coverings such as vinyl sheet, vinyl tiles and ceramic tiles
- ensure good ventilation inside the home and under suspended floors.

8.0.6 Hardwood floorboards need to be dried slowly to prevent cracking and buckling. Do not attempt to straighten warped or buckled timber floors until the whole building has dried completely and the timber moisture content is 20% or less.

9 REPAIRS

9.0.1 The building must be sufficiently dry before repair work is carried out.

9.0.2 Undertaking repairs to the structure and finishes before the building is dry enough can result in:

- mould developing
- future degradation of structural materials if they are enclosed before drying
- poor adhesion (blistering) of finishes
- materials continuing to move as they finish drying, resulting in cosmetic cracking to plaster and paintwork
- lifting and bubbling of vinyl floor coverings
- health problems for occupants.

9.0.3 Timber in homes normally has an in-service moisture content of 12–20%. Timber standing in water will absorb it, and it may take months for the moisture content to return to what it was. The moisture content in timber framing must drop to below 20% before the wall linings are replaced (plasterboard manufacturers may require 18% or less). Before any wall linings are replaced, there should be a prelining inspection by the territorial authority. The timber must also be dry before timber weatherboards or exterior joinery are painted. Use a moisture meter to check. These can be hired.

9.0.4 For concrete floors, a flooring hygrometer is the most reliable for testing dryness. The concrete must be sufficiently dry to give a relative humidity reading of 75% or less before installing fixed floor coverings.

9.0.5 Damaged wall underlay in external walls may need replacing. Removing the outside cladding to replace underlay is best practice.

9.0.6 Replace insulation under the floor and in the walls. When reinstating insulation, take the opportunity to upgrade to current Code requirements or, ideally, better than Code.

9.0.7 BRANZ recommends upgrading to current bracing requirements wherever possible (see NZS 3604:2011 *Timber-framed buildings* for timber-framed buildings less than 3 storeys or consult an engineer). If there is doubt over what bracing was used at the time of construction, refer to the consent plans held by the local authority. If the construction dates from before 1978, a bracing schedule should be recalculated by an architect or engineer using NZS 3604:2011 and bracing installed.

9.0.8 Where appropriate, take the opportunity to add tie-down straps between the studs and bottom plates and check the number of foundation holding-down plates, straps and bolts and add to them if necessary.

9.0.9 Ventilation holes in foundation walls should be made vermin proof if they have been damaged or

removed to assist drying. Any base boards removed for drying should be replaced when drying is complete.

9.0.10 Replace doors and frames (including cupboard doors) that are damaged by swelling, warping and/or blistering or peeling surfaces.

9.0.11 Check particleboard floors for swelling at the joints by using a long straight edge. If swelling is more than 4 mm, the floor should be sanded flat. If it exceeds 6–8 mm, replace the floor.

9.0.12 Once the dwelling is cleaned and the building fabric dried, items that can be reinstalled after cleaning, repair or replacement include:

- appliances
- hot water cylinders and gas water heaters
- heaters
- central vacuum and heating systems
- electrical fittings
- carpet that does not have rubber backing or rubber underlay (rubber underlay will restrict the final drying).

9.0.13 No decorating should be carried out until moisture levels have dropped to the acceptable levels for relining.

9.0.14 Occasionally, a dwelling can be lived in while repair work is carried out, when:

- there is not a health risk
- the initial clean-up of water, mud and debris is completed
- the power supply is safely restored and electrical appliances have been checked
- potable water supplies and sewerage systems have been checked, repaired if necessary, tested and declared safe for use
- the local authority has lifted any notices on the dwelling.



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BUILDING PERFORMANCE

Building consent exemptions for damaged buildings

QUICK GUIDE

North Island severe weather events 2023 remediation and repair –
Building work that doesn't require a building consent



MINISTRY OF BUSINESS,
INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT
HĪKINA WHAKATUTUKI

Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Government

Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE)

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MBIE develops and delivers policy, services, advice and regulation to support economic growth and the prosperity and wellbeing of New Zealanders.

The Building consent exemptions for damaged buildings quick guide is produced by the Building System Performance branch. It is intended to provide information to council staff, building practitioners and homeowners with regards to buildings affected by the North Island severe weather events occurring in 2023 when beginning to consider remediation and repair work to their building.

While MBIE has taken care in preparing the document, it should not be relied upon as establishing compliance with all relevant clauses of the Building Act or Building Code in all cases that may arise. This document may be updated from time to time and the latest version is available from MBIE's website at www.building.govt.nz

Information, examples and answers to your questions about the topics covered here can be found on our website www.building.govt.nz or by calling us free on 0800 24 22 43.

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this quick guide is to provide council staff, building practitioners and homeowners with information on what building work may not require a building consent.

It is intended that this document provides guidance to support the remediation and repair work following the North Island severe weather events in 2023. It is not intended to provide guidance for new buildings; please refer to the full [Schedule 1 guidance](#) if you intend to construct a new building or undertake work not related to flood damage.

This quick guide should be read in conjunction with any guidance from your local building consent authority and/or insurance company.

2. Background

In late January 2023, Auckland and the surrounding regions experienced significant rainfall and high winds. Shortly after, in mid-February, Cyclone Gabrielle hit New Zealand, in which a national state of emergency was declared with a number of regions within the North Island affected. These severe weather events have resulted in flooding, tree falls and slips, causing damage to buildings and infrastructure.

Schedule 1 of the Building Act 2004 provides a list of building work for which a building consent is not required. It is important to note all work must comply with the Building Code, even if a building consent is not required.

You can find a complete list of building work that can be done without a building consent on the Building Performance website: [Building work that does not require a building consent](#). You can also use the interactive online tool for homeowners: [CanIBuildIt.govt.nz](#)



3. Before you start

Before you start remediation work on your building affected by the severe weather events, ensure the building is safe to enter and carry out work on. Ensure all affected electrical systems and services have been checked or isolated by a professional.

We recommend that you undertake the following before starting any remediation work:

For all [building occupiers](#):

- if you are renting, contact your landlord. A tenant is not responsible for damage caused by natural events, such as storms, floods and earthquakes.
- if repair work is urgent, as is likely the case if you are using this quick guide, a tenant can have repair work done and ask the landlord to pay them for it. A landlord must pay the tenant back for any urgent repair work the tenant had done, so long as the tenant made reasonable attempts to let the landlord know first. For more information on your rights and responsibilities, please visit www.tenancy.govt.nz

A building occupier is a person who lives or works in a house, flat or piece of land.

For building owners:

- contact your insurance company
- if you are arranging for the work to be undertaken, ensure you use the appropriate building practitioners for the work
- [ensure you understand your legal obligations with respect of the building work being carried out](#). Sections 41 and 42A of the Building Act 2004 allow for some building work to be carried out without obtaining a building consent in advance because the building work has to be carried out urgently –
 - for the purpose of saving or protecting life or health or preventing serious damage to property, or
 - in order to ensure that a specified system in a building that is covered by a compliance schedule, or would be covered by a compliance schedule were issued in respect of the building, is maintained in a safe condition or is made safe.

There are also additional clauses in the Building Act that may apply if the area has been designated. Please refer to Subpart 6B – Special provisions for buildings affected by emergency and discuss with the local council before relying on these clauses.

For building owners and building practitioners:

- ensure the building is safe to enter – is there still a risk of slips?
- take photos before and during the remediation work
- take appropriate H&S precautions (wearing safety gear, turning off power and gas, etc.)
- ensure you are familiar with the council website for any updates.

Keeping records

Even if you're carrying out remediation in response to an emergency, it is vital to keep good records of any building work that is carried out on your property.

Good record keeping includes but is not limited to:

- photographs of the work at various stages of completion
- details of the types of products used
- details of where you used certain products
- name and contact information of the person, people or company that carried out the work.

Insurance

It is important to note that insurance companies may have requirements to be notified of certain building work carried out on the property prior to commencement. Contact your insurer and keep photos and records.

4. Exemptions that may apply to remediate damage

Clause 2: Territorial and regional authority discretionary exemptions

This clause allows local Councils to use their discretion to exempt any proposed building work if it complies with the Building Code and is unlikely to endanger people or buildings.

This discretion can be used to exempt proposed building work from the requirement to obtain a building consent if:

- the completed building work is likely to comply with the Building Code, or
- if the completed building work does not comply with the Building Code, it is unlikely to endanger people or any building, whether on the same land or another property.

This is the only exemption in Schedule 1 which requires the council to make a decision about any proposed building work. For all the other exemptions, it is up to the owner to decide whether an exemption in Schedule 1 applies.

Note it is ultimately up to the council as to whether or not they grant a discretionary exemption. Examples of how a Council could treat this would be assessed on a case-by-case basis, with assessments made by a Council building officer.

If you want your proposed building work to be considered for this exemption, you should start by discussing it with your building consent authority. It is likely that you will have to make a formal written request. The building consent authority may charge a fee for issuing a discretionary exemption.

Clause 1: General repair, maintenance and replacement

The repair, maintenance and replacement of a building product or an assembly incorporated in or associated with a building, provided that a comparable building product or assembly is used, and, in the case of a replacement, it is in the same position.

This clause cannot be used if a complete or substantial replacement of a **specified system** is required, or the product contributes to the building's structural behaviour or fire safety properties.

A specified system is a system or feature of a building that contributes to the proper functioning of a building and has been declared to be a specified system. The list of declared specified systems is available at Building (Specified Systems, Change the Use, and Earthquake-prone Buildings) Regulations 2005 (SR 2005/32) (as at 16 December 2019) Schedule 1 Specified systems – New Zealand Legislation).

Clauses 3, 3A, 3B and 43: Single storey detached buildings

Building work in connection with a detached building that:

- is not more than one storey (with a floor level of up to one metre above the supporting ground and a height of up to 3.5 metres above the floor level); and
- does not contain sanitary (bathroom/toilet/sink) plumbing or storage for drinking water
- is not closer than its own height to the boundary.

Each clause has slightly different restrictions:

- Clause 3: the building does not exceed 10m² in floor area
- Clause 3A: the building exceeds 10m² but does not exceed 30m², is built from [lightweight building products](#) and in accordance with [Acceptable Solution B1/AS1](#)
- Clause 3B: the building exceeds 10m² but does not exceed 30m² and a [licensed building practitioner](#) supervises or carries out design or construction work
- Clause 43: the building exceeds 10m² but does not exceed 30m², the building is a kitset or prefabricated building and the product manufacturer has had the design of the building carried out or reviewed by a chartered professional engineer.

If the building is closer than its own height to the boundary, please refer to clause 7.

"Lightweight" means that either light timber or steel are used for the structural framing, the roof is less than 20kg/m² and cladding is less than 30kg/m².

Licensed building practitioner (LBP) – building practitioners who have been assessed as competent to carry out building work essential to the structure or weathertightness of residential buildings.

Clause 7: Repair or replacement of outbuilding

The repair or replacement of all or part of an outbuilding, if:

- the repair or replacement is made within the same footprint as the original outbuilding
- the replacement is made with a comparable part of an outbuilding
- the outbuilding is a detached building that is not more than one storey and is not intended to be used by members of the public.

Clause 8: Windows and exterior doorways in existing dwellings and outbuildings

Building work in connection with a window or an exterior doorway in a dwelling or outbuilding that is no more than two storeys except if the building work modifies or affects any [specified system](#).

Clause 10: Interior alterations to existing non-residential building

Building work in connection with the interior of any existing non-residential building such as a shop, office or school, if the building work does not:

- modify or affect the primary structure of the building
- modify or affect any [specified system](#)
- does not relate to a firewall or a wall made of brick, stone, concrete (or similar) joined with mortar
- does not include [sanitary plumbing](#) or drainlaying.

Clause 11: Internal walls and doorways in an existing building

Building work in connection with an internal wall (including an internal doorway) in any existing building unless the wall is:

- load bearing, or
- a bracing element, or
- a fire separation wall (also known as a firewall), or
- part of a [specified system](#), or
- made of brick, stone, concrete (or similar) joined with mortar.

Clause 12: Internal linings and finishes in existing dwelling

Building work in connection with any internal linings or finishes or any wall, ceiling or floor of an existing dwelling. This includes plasterboard linings to walls and ceilings (unless they are building elements as per clause 11). Wet area showers are generally outside the scope of this exemption. More information about internal linings can be found [here](#). The substituting plasterboard – guidance for building consent authorities can be found on the [Building Performance website](#).

Clause 13: Thermal insulation

Building work in connection with the installation of thermal insulation in an existing building except:

- an external wall of the building or
- an internal wall of the building that is a firewall.

Councils have the option to grant a discretionary exemption (clause 2 of Schedule 1) if the completed building work is likely to comply with the Building Code, or if the completed building work does not comply with the Building Code and is unlikely to endanger people or any building. Homeowners may wish to consider upgrading wall insulation to existing areas where it is damaged and requires removal and replacement.



Clause 13A: Ground moisture barrier

Building work in connection with the installation in an existing building's subfloor space of a ground moisture barrier.

Clauses 17, 17A and 46: Porches and verandas

Building work in connection with a [porch](#) or [veranda](#) that:

- is on or attached to an existing building
- does not overhang any area accessible by the public, including private areas with limited public access, for example, restaurants and bars.

Each clause has slightly different restrictions:

Clause 17: the [porch](#) or [veranda](#) is on the ground or first-storey of the building and does not exceed 20m² in floor area

Clause 17A: the [porch](#) or [veranda](#) is on the ground floor of the building, exceeds 20m² in floor area but does not exceed 30m² and any design or construction work is carried out or supervised by a [licensed building practitioner](#)

Clause 46: the [porch](#) or [veranda](#) is on the ground floor of the building, exceeds 20m² in floor area but does not exceed 30m², and any design is carried out or reviewed by a [chartered professional engineer](#).

Porch – covered space at the entrance of a building

Veranda – a roofed platform along the outside of a building.

Clauses 18, 18A and 44: Carports

Building work in connection with a carport that is on the ground level (carport must be fully supported by the ground).

Each clause has slightly different restrictions:

- Clause 18: the carport does not exceed 20m² in floor area
- Clause 18A: any design or construction work is carried out or supervised by a [licensed building practitioner](#) and exceeds 20m² in floor area but does not exceed 40m²
- Clause 44: exceeds 20m² in floor area but does not exceed 40m² and any design is carried out or reviewed by a [chartered professional engineer](#)

A chartered professional engineer is a professional engineer registered under the Chartered Professional Engineers of New Zealand Act 2002.

Clauses 20 and 41: Retaining walls

There are two exemptions for retaining walls. You should consider contacting a [chartered professional engineer](#) if repairs are necessary due to a significant landslip or slope instability.

- Clause 20: Building work in connection with a retaining wall that:
- retains not more than 1.5 metres depth of ground and
 - does not support any surcharge or any load additional to the load of that ground (for example, a driveway or a building).
- Clause 41: Building work in connection with a retaining wall in a [rural zone](#) if:
- the wall retains not more than 3 metres depth of ground and
 - the distance between the wall and any legal boundary or existing building is at least the height of the wall and
 - the design of the building work is carried out or reviewed by a [chartered professional engineer](#).

A rural zone is: Any zone or area (other than a rural residential area) that, in the district plan of the territorial authority in whose district the building work is to be undertaken, is described as a rural zone, rural resource area, rural environment or by words of similar meaning.

Clause 21: Fences

Building work in connection with a fence that does not exceed 2.5 metres in height above the supporting ground. This exemption does not include a fence to restrict access to a residential pool.

If you are planning on replacing your flood damaged fence with a fence that is taller than the previous fence, you will need to check with the council to see if you need a resource consent.

Clause 24: Decks, platforms, bridges, boardwalks, etc

Building work in connection with a deck, platform, bridge, boardwalk or the like from which it is not possible to call more than 1.5 metres even if it collapses. You should consider contacting a [chartered professional engineer](#) if repairs are necessary due to a significant landslip or slope instability.

Clause 30: Demolition of a detached building

You don't need a building consent to completely demolish a building that is detached and is not more than three storeys.

Clause 31: Removal of a building element

You don't need a building consent to remove a building element from a building that is not more than three storeys, provided that the removal does not affect:

- the primary structure of the building or
- any [specified system](#) or
- any fire separation.

This exemption applies to the removal of a building element such as a chimney or roof (including cladding) rather than to the complete demolition of a building. An example of this would be where a chimney was damaged as the result of flooding or in a high wind event.

Clause 50: Removal of structures

You don't need a building consent to remove any of the structures referred to include clauses 39 to 49 of Schedule 1 of the Building Act. However, you must seek the advice of a [chartered professional engineer](#) before removal of the structure.

Clauses 30, 31 and 50 referring to demolition or removal of building elements and structures do not apply to heritage-listed buildings. You should contact your local council for advice.

5. Sanitary plumbing and drainlaying

Sanitary plumbing and drainlaying must be carried out by a person authorised under the Plumbers, Gasfitters and Drainlayers Act 2006.

Sanitary plumbing is any work involved in fixing or unfixing any pipe, plumbing fixture or appliance including; any trap, waste or soil pipe, ventilation pipe, or overflow pipe and any pipe that supplies or is intended to supply water.

Clause 32: Repair, maintenance and replacement

A building consent is not required to repair and maintain any [sanitary plumbing](#) and drainage in or associated with a building, provided that comparable building products are used and the replacement is in the same position.

This clause does not apply:

- if a complete or substantial replacement of a [specified system](#) is required, or
- for the repair or replacement of any water heater (unless permitted under clauses 36 to 38).

Clause 33: Drainage access points

A building consent is not required for the opening and reinstatement of any purpose-made access point within a drainage system that is not a network utility owned system or part of a network utility owned system.

Clause 34: Minor alteration to drains

A building consent is not required for the alteration to drains to a dwelling if the alteration is of a minor nature, such as shifting a gully trap. This exemption cannot be used for making any new connection to a service provided by a network utility operator.

Clause 35: Alteration to existing sanitary plumbing (excluding water heaters)

A building consent is not required to alter existing sanitary plumbing (excluding water heaters) provided:

- the total number of sanitary fixtures in the building is not increased by the alteration and
- the alteration does not modify or affect any specified system.

Clause 36: Repair and maintenance of existing water heater

A building consent is not required for the repair or maintenance of an existing water heater if comparable building products or a comparable assembly is used.



Clause 37: Replacement of open-vented water storage heater connected to supplementary heat exchanger

A building consent is not required for the replacement of any water storage heater connected to a solid fuel heater or other supplementary heat exchanger if the replacement:

- is a comparable open-vented water storage heater and
- is fixed in the same position and uses the same pipework as the water storage heater being replaced.

Clause 39: Replacement or repositioning of water heater that is connect to, or incorporates, a controlled heat source

A building consent is not required for the replacement of any water heater (including the repositioning or an existing water heater) if the replacement water heater is connected to, or incorporates, a controlled heat source or, if connected to or incorporating more than one heat source, two or more heat sources, all of which are controlled.

6. Glossary

Building occupier – a person who lives or works in a house, flat or piece of land.

Chartered professional engineer – A professional engineer registered under the Chartered Professional Engineers of New Zealand Act 2002.

Licensed building practitioner (LBP) – building practitioners who have been assessed as competent to carry out building work essential to the structure or weathertightness of residential buildings.

Lightweight building products – "Lightweight" means that either light timber or steel are used for the structural framing, the roof is less than 20kg/m² and cladding is less than 30kg/m².

Porch – covered space at the entrance of a building

Rural zone – Any zone or area (other than a rural residential area) that, in the district plan of the territorial authority in whose district the building work is to be undertaken, is described as a rural zone, rural resource area, rural environment or by words of similar meaning.

Sanitary plumbing – Sanitary plumbing is any work involved in fixing or unfixing any pipe, plumbing fixture or appliance including; any trap, waste or soil pipe, ventilation pipe, or overflow pipe and any pipe that supplies or is intended to supply water.

Specified system – A specified system is a system or feature of a building that contributes to the proper functioning of a building and has been declared to be a specified system. The list of declared specified systems is available at [Building \(Specified Systems, Change the Use, and Earthquake-prone Buildings\) Regulations 2005 \(SR 2005/32\) \(as at 16 December 2019\) Schedule 1 Specified systems – New Zealand Legislation](#)

Veranda – a roofed platform along the outside of a building.



Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Government

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