

Showing your products comply with the Building Code

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There are product assurance options for showing how your product complies with the Building Code.

If you make or supply a building product, you are responsible for making sure it complies with the Building Code.

To demonstrate compliance, you will need to provide evidence and may need to get your product tested, appraised, or even certified.

The amount of time and cost involved, and how far you want to go will depend on factors such as:

- the nature of your building product or system, including the degree of risk involved
- the Building Code clauses you need to show compliance with, and what you need to do to meet your responsibilities under the Building Act
- who needs to rely on your information and what technical evidence you already have
- whether your product is new to the New Zealand market and innovative, or has already been used here and has proven performance
- the degree of marketing advantage you are after.

You have many options to show your product meets the requirements of all the relevant Building Code clauses. You may need to pursue more than one. These options include:

- technical information
- independent assessments
- industry-based schemes
- appraisals
- product certification.

We explain each of these options below.

Technical information

Technical information underpins all other product assurance options. It is critical in getting your building product or method accepted in the market.

Technical information is usually developed by you, (the manufacturer or the supplier). It should contain fact-based performance claims and test results relevant to the performance requirements of the Building Code.

Good technical information helps:

- trade merchants to accept your product
- designers and builders to correctly specify and install it
- building consent authorities assess consent applications for Building Code compliance
- building owners to understand any maintenance requirements.

Technical information is not marketing material or product warranty information.

Independent assessments

Independent assessments involve the verification of your product information by competent assessors. These include chartered professional engineers and recognised testing laboratories.

As a manufacturer or supplier, you will usually carry out your own product testing and analysis first. An independent assessment reviews and verifies your results. This is then recorded as an endorsement to your technical information.

Industry-based schemes

Industry-based schemes are based on product families or sectors. Your product is assessed against specified and audited industry requirements.

Industry-based schemes are voluntary. Manufacturers who belong to these schemes are responsible for making sure their products comply with the scheme requirements, as assessed by the industry organisation.

An effective industry-based scheme has:

- publicly available rules that outline the scheme framework
- a regular, publicly available programme of independent compliance audits
- a means by which complaints can be raised and dealt with
- clearly-stated penalties which can be applied if there is a breach of scheme rules, governance or expected quality of a product or system
- a governance structure consisting of industry, user and independent representatives whose role is to ensure the scheme's ongoing integrity.

Examples of industry-based schemes are:

- ready-mixed concrete, which is assessed by the New Zealand Ready Mixed Concrete Association
- glass certified by the Insulating Glass Unit Manufacturers Association.

Appraisals

An appraisal is a technical opinion of a building product or system's fitness for purpose. It involves extensive testing and verification of Building Code compliance, and is done by an independent appraisal organisation.

An appraisal looks at any specific installation systems or processes. It recognises limitation on a product's intended scope of use.

Appraisals have no legal standing. However, they can form a useful part of your evidence of compliance.

Your product will be assessed against a wide range of performance factors. These include:

- the requirements of the Building Code
- performance under test conditions
- in-service performance
- accuracy of the product's technical information
- manufacturing procedures and quality control systems.

Your appraisal may follow a standard assessment process if your product has few or no innovative features (for example, window frames).

However, your appraisal may be specifically designed if it is testing a new or innovative building product, construction, system or feature.

Appraisal organisations

An appraisal organisation should be independent of the product's manufacturer or distributor.

It should have:

- thorough and validated testing procedures (for example, its processes are reviewed by a third party)
- suitably qualified staff (such as engineers and research scientists).

The organisation should also carry out or require:

- regular inspections to ensure the product conforms during manufacture
- regular inspections to ensure the product conforms when in use
- knowledge of the Building Code and building science.

You can use an appraisal organisation from outside New Zealand. However, the product needs to be assessed against the New Zealand Building Code.

Product certification (CodeMark)

Product certification is a voluntary scheme that provides an easily-understood and robust way to show a building product or system meets certain performance requirements of the Building Code.

The product assurance scheme was established by the Building Act and is administered by the MBIE. The current scheme is known as CodeMark.

If your building product or system is product certified, building consent authorities must accept it as complying with the Building Code (when used as specified).

Those who use your product will still need to apply for a building consent for their building work.

Only accredited product certification bodies can assess your building products or systems for this scheme.

There are some third party certification bodies that are not CodeMark accredited but who do assess products against the requirements of certain Standards or the Building Code and issue product certificates.

Certification under these schemes is different from CodeMark in that the certificate does not have to be accepted by BCAs as evidence of compliance with the Building Code. However, it may still help as part of your product assurance options to demonstrate compliance with the Building Code; particularly if the certification body is well known and reputable.

[Learn more about product certification \(https://www.building.govt.nz/building-code-compliance/product-assurance-and-multiproof/codemark/\)](https://www.building.govt.nz/building-code-compliance/product-assurance-and-multiproof/codemark/)

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