

Ensuring building work complies with the law

Understand how to ensure any building work that doesn't need a building consent will comply with the building code

How to comply

Although you can carry out certain building project work without a building consent, all building work must still comply with the Building Code and all other relevant legislation such as those under the Resource Management Act 1991, the Electricity Act 1992 and the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 to ensure buildings are always safe, healthy and durable.

To help you get started, here are some links to resources that might help you ensure your exempt building work complies with the building code. The resources are categorised according to the parts of the building code they refer to.

It is recommended that you understand the relevant Building Code requirements before carrying out any exempt building work. Understanding the Building Code usually requires experience working in the building and construction industry. If you are unsure whether your project work will comply with the Building Code, you will need advice from a professional such as a:

- Licensed Building Practitioner, or;
- Chartered Professional Engineer

MBIE is also developing information and education tools to help non-professionals better understand how to make sure building projects comply with the Building Code, and this will be released as it is developed.

An introduction to the Building Code

If you have little or no experience in the building industry, our series of online learning modules will help you understand how the Building Code works. We suggest you take a look before you start your building work.

[NZ Building Regulatory System Modules \(https://learning.building.govt.nz/course/index.php?categoryid=15\)](https://learning.building.govt.nz/course/index.php?categoryid=15)

Ensuring building work is structurally stable and durable

The following links contain information which will help you to understand how to make your building project work comply with Building Code Clauses B1 - Structure and B2 - Durability.

Constructing timber-framed buildings

This Standard provides instructions for constructing the timber framing for buildings. These instructions can be followed for timber-framed sleepouts, sheds, garages on concrete slabs and timber decks. They also specify how to select the types of fixings that are required to ensure they will be durable.

This Standard requires modifications to ensure the building work will comply with the Building Code, so you also need to [read information under the Building Code requirements for structural stability \(https://www.building.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/building-code-compliance/b-stability/b1-structure/asvm/b1-structure-1st-edition-amendment-19.pdf\)](https://www.building.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/building-code-compliance/b-stability/b1-structure/asvm/b1-structure-1st-edition-amendment-19.pdf). Refer to Section 3.0 from page 23A.

[Standard for constructing timber-framed buildings \(https://www.standards.govt.nz/assets/Publication-files/BSP/NZS3604-2011.pdf\)](https://www.standards.govt.nz/assets/Publication-files/BSP/NZS3604-2011.pdf)

Ensuring timber and wood-based products are durable

This Standard provides instructions that can be followed to ensuring that the timber and wood-based products used in buildings will be durable. This includes the framing and wood-based products such as cladding materials that are attached to the framing.

This Standard requires modifications to ensure the building work will comply with the Building Code, so you also need to [read information under the Building Code requirements for durability](#) (<https://www.building.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/building-code-compliance/b-stability/b2-durability/asvm/b2-durability-2nd-edition-amendment-12.pdf>). Refer to Section 3.2 from page 15.

[Standard for constructing timber-framed buildings](https://www.standards.govt.nz/assets/Publication-files/BSP/NZS3602-2003.pdf) (<https://www.standards.govt.nz/assets/Publication-files/BSP/NZS3602-2003.pdf>)

Constructing concrete masonry buildings

This Standard provides instructions for constructing concrete masonry structures. This includes masonry walls and their foundations. These walls are not lightweight. This Standard also gives the types of materials that are required under different conditions.

This Standard requires modifications to ensure the building work will comply with the Building Code, so you also need to [read information under Building Code requirements for structural stability](#) (<https://www.building.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/building-code-compliance/b-stability/b1-structure/asvm/b1-structure-1st-edition-amendment-19.pdf>). Refer to Section 2.0 from page 23.

[Standard for constructing concrete masonry buildings](https://www.standards.govt.nz/assets/Publication-files/BSP/NZS4229-2013.pdf) (<https://www.standards.govt.nz/assets/Publication-files/BSP/NZS4229-2013.pdf>)

Constructing light-steel framed buildings

This standard provides instructions for constructing light steel framing for buildings such as garages and sleepouts. This Standard also gives the types of materials to be used for light-steel frames.

[Standard for constructing light-steel framed buildings](https://nashnz.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/NASH-Standard-Part-2-May-2019.pdf) (<https://nashnz.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/NASH-Standard-Part-2-May-2019.pdf>)

Constructing permanent barriers

This document provides construction details for permanent barriers required in and around buildings. This does not cover swimming pool fences.

[Guidance on barrier design](https://www.building.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/building-code-compliance/b-stability/b1-structure/guidance-on-barrier-design/barrier-design-guidance.pdf) (<https://www.building.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/building-code-compliance/b-stability/b1-structure/guidance-on-barrier-design/barrier-design-guidance.pdf>)

Ensuring building work provides protection from fire

The following instructions for designing small buildings will help you to understand how to ensure your project work will comply with the fire safety requirements within Building Code Clauses C1 to C6:

Constructing buildings to ensure fire protection

This information provides the requirements for installing smoke alarms, and construction details for fire rated walls and windows in small buildings such as sleepouts.

[Building Code solutions providing fire protection](https://www.building.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/building-code-compliance/c-protection-from-fire/asvm/cvm1-cas1-protection-from-fire-amendment-4.pdf) (<https://www.building.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/building-code-compliance/c-protection-from-fire/asvm/cvm1-cas1-protection-from-fire-amendment-4.pdf>)

Ensuring building work drains rainwater and surface water

The following instructions for constructing the systems used to collect and drain rainwater and surface water will help you understand how to make your project work comply with Building Code Clause E1 – Surface Water.

Constructing buildings to ensure rainwater and surface water are collected

This information describes how to ensure the rainwater and surface water that is collected from building roofs, patios and other surfaces is correctly disposed of.

[Building Code solutions for rainwater and surface water collection](https://www.building.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/building-code-compliance/e-moisture/e1-surface-water/asvm/e1-surface-water-1st-edition-amendment10.pdf) (<https://www.building.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/building-code-compliance/e-moisture/e1-surface-water/asvm/e1-surface-water-1st-edition-amendment10.pdf>). Refer to page 33.

Ensuring building work will not be affected by external moisture

The following instructions for designing external wall and roof claddings will help you understand how to ensure your project work will comply with Building Code Clause E2 – External Moisture.

Constructing buildings to ensure external moisture protection of timber-framed buildings

This information provides details on design and construction of external wall cladding, windows, and roof cladding of timber-framed buildings.

[External moisture protection information \(https://www.building.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/building-code-compliance/e-moisture/e2-external-moisture/asvm/e2-external-moisture-3rd-edition-amendment-9.pdf\)](https://www.building.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/building-code-compliance/e-moisture/e2-external-moisture/asvm/e2-external-moisture-3rd-edition-amendment-9.pdf)

Building to ensure weathertight concrete and concrete masonry

This document provides construction details to prevent external moisture entering concrete and concrete masonry buildings including outbuilding and sleepout.

[Weathertight concrete and concrete masonry information \(https://cdn.ymaws.com/concretenz.org.nz/resource/resmgr/docs/ccanz/ccanz_cp01.pdf\)](https://cdn.ymaws.com/concretenz.org.nz/resource/resmgr/docs/ccanz/ccanz_cp01.pdf)

Building to ensure weathertight light steel framed buildings

This document provides details on design and construction of external wall cladding, windows and roof cladding of light steel framed buildings.

[Weathertight light steel framed buildings information \(https://nashnz.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/NASH-Building-Envelope-Solutions-2019.pdf\)](https://nashnz.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/NASH-Building-Envelope-Solutions-2019.pdf)

Ensuring building work is energy efficient

The following instructions for insulating buildings will help you understand how to ensure your project work will comply with Building Code Clause H1 Energy Efficiency.

Building for energy efficiency

This information provides design criteria to insulate your home. It specifies minimum insulation ratings for floors, walls, glazing and roofs. Hot water systems should be insulated to achieve energy efficiency.

[Building Code Clause for energy efficiency information \(https://www.building.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/building-code-compliance/h1-energy-efficiency/asvm/h1-energy-efficiency-4th-edition-amendment-4.pdf\)](https://www.building.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/building-code-compliance/h1-energy-efficiency/asvm/h1-energy-efficiency-4th-edition-amendment-4.pdf). Refer to page 19 onwards.

[Standard to find information on thermal insulation \(https://www.standards.govt.nz/assets/Publication-files/BSP/NZS4218-2009.pdf\)](https://www.standards.govt.nz/assets/Publication-files/BSP/NZS4218-2009.pdf)



New Zealand Government

This information is published by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's Chief Executive. It is a general guide only and, if used, does not relieve any person of the obligation to consider any matter to which the information relates according to the circumstances of the particular case. Expert advice may be required in specific circumstances. Where this information relates to assisting people:

- with compliance with the Building Act, it is published under section 175 of the Building Act
- with a Weathertight Services claim, it is published under section 12 of the Weathertight Homes Resolution Services Act 2006.