



NEWS

Fire Safety in Budget Accommodation Buildings

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Proposed Building Work in Budget Accommodation Buildings

Building certifiers and contractors are being urged to keep up-to-date with new fire safety standards for budget accommodation buildings.

Some budget accommodation buildings have had work done, only to find it did not comply with the Fire Safety Standard for Budget Accommodation Buildings.

New building fire safety laws were introduced in Queensland on 1 July 2002 following the Palace Backpackers Hostel fire in Childers on 23 June 2000.

The new laws established specific requirements for budget accommodation buildings, including mandatory compliance with the Fire Safety Standard for pre-1992 buildings.

There are two compliance deadlines for owners of budget accommodation buildings.

Stage 1 required owners to prepare and implement a Fire Safety Management Plan and install early warning systems and emergency lighting in their buildings by 1 July 2003.

Stage 2 requires building owners to fully comply with the remaining provisions of the Fire Safety Standard for Budget Accommodation Buildings by 1 July 2005.

This may require some owners to complete building works such as additional exits and fire rated stairways, install fire hose reels or carry out simple works such as reversing door swings or installing new door hardware.

Development applications for proposed building work to achieve compliance with the Fire Safety Standard (including proposed alternative solutions) must be assessed by councils.

This is different to the normal situation where development applications can be assessed by councils or private building certifiers.

Building contractors discussing proposed works with owners should make them aware that work needs to comply with the Fire Safety Standard which may not necessarily be the same as the requirements of the Building Code of Australia (BCA).

Further, they should also be aware development applications need to be submitted as soon as possible to ensure works can be completed by the 1 July 2005 deadline.

Before starting building works in budget accommodation buildings, building contractors are encouraged to ensure the building works have been assessed for compliance with the Fire Safety Standard.

If you are unsure whether the building is a budget accommodation building or would like advice on the laws, contact your local council.

Further information, including copies of the Fire Safety Standard, Fire Safety Guidelines and building checklists, are available on the fire safety website at www.lgp.qld.gov.au/firesafety.