

Prefabricated buildings – Plumbing approvals process

Consumer, Building and Occupational Services
Plumbing Standards, Technical Regulation Unit

Purpose

This Regulatory Note is intended to provide guidance to Permit Authorities and certifying plumbers in relation to:

- The relevant and appropriate approvals process for prefabricated buildings, and
- Clarify the definition of an *unregistrable relocatable building*.

Background

It is increasingly common for structures to be prefabricated in a factory and transported to a property for use as a stand-alone building or joined with other modules to form a larger structure.

The manufacturing may be local, interstate or even internationally. In most cases the plumbing pipework and fixtures are installed in the manufacturing process and then connected to the water supply and drainage by local plumbers.

This Regulatory Note provides the clarification on the statutory approvals process and associated responsibilities for testing and certifying the plumbing installation.

This document describes the process for the following structures:

1. Prefabricated building – for permanent installation.
2. Unregistrable relocatable building
3. WaterMark certified prefabricated module.

Regulatory requirements

For all buildings, the Permit Authority is required to ensure through whatever means necessary, that the plumbing installation satisfies both the *Building Act 2016* (the Act) and the National Construction Code (NCC).

The following information will clarify the requirements for common scenarios.

Prefabricated buildings – permanent installation

A structure, both modular and complete, which is constructed in one location and then transported to a permanent location in Tasmania must adhere to the full approvals process outlined in the *Building Act 2016*.

Like the traditional on-site construction method, plumbing works must not commence until a *Certificate of Likely Compliance* has been issued and the appropriate authorisation has been received through a *Start Work Notification and Authorisation* (Form 60).

Prior to any work being concealed (wall linings, cladding), the mandatory notifications must be made to the relevant council. The council must then either inspect or provide authorisation to continue.

On completion of the construction work, if the plumber is not going to complete the onsite work, a *Standard of Work Certificate* (Form 71B) must be provided to the Permit Authority for the portion of work undertaken to that point.

A Reg. 44 Compliance Plate must not be affixed to a prefabricated building that will be located in a permanent position (See *Table 1*).

On-site connections

Upon delivery of a building to site, the plumber engaged to perform the site services work, is required to follow the standard notification and certification process. This includes the final commissioning of the complete installation. A plumber must only sign a *Standard of Work Certificate* (Form 71B) for work that they performed.

Acceptance by Permit Authority

The relevant Permit Authority must be satisfied that the plumbing installation is compliant with the NCC and will detail what supporting evidence may be accepted.

Examples of supporting evidence include a combination of photos, physical inspections, formalised quality assurance reporting from the manufacturer, and pressure testing of drains and water services once delivered to site.

Interstate construction

To streamline processes and avoid lengthy delays with assessments, interstate manufacturers are encouraged to have their plumbers obtain the appropriate Tasmanian licence, which will allow them to comply with the approval processes required under the Act.

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Illegal work

Plumbing work undertaken on any structure prior to, and or in the absence of a *Certificate of Likely Compliance, Start Work Notification and Authorisation* (Form 60), is considered illegal works. The Permit Authority must then follow the process for illegal plumbing work as detailed within the Act. This applies to any structure regardless of where it was manufactured.

Unregistrable Relocatable Buildings

Unregistrable relocatable buildings (*image.1*) are those that are designed and constructed for use across multiple locations. These buildings are regularly transported between sites and not intended for permanent use at that location. Examples include site amenity sheds, temporary worker accommodation and classrooms. This definition does not include road registerable vehicles (caravans and trailer-based structures). More information on road registerable vehicle structures can be found [here](#).

Unregistrable relocatable buildings are exempt from the building approval process under the *Building Regulations 2016*.



Image.1 – Unregistrable Relocatable Building

The person responsible for the plumbing work in the building, must affix a compliance plate to the chassis in accordance with Regulation 44 of the *Building Regulations 2016* (see *Table 1*). Connection of plumbing services on-site to an unregistrable, relocatable building is classed as Category 2 Low Risk plumbing work and does not require pre or post notification to the Permit Authority.

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Compliance Plates

Regulation 44 requires a compliance plate to be affixed to the chassis of the structure as close as practicable to the water or electrical supply point.

This compliance plate is a certification that the plumbing work is compliant with the NCC. It provides the relevant council the assurance that the installation is compliant.

Licence numbers of installing and certifying plumbers must be recorded on the plate. An example is seen in *Image.2* below. Owners must organise certification prior to use.

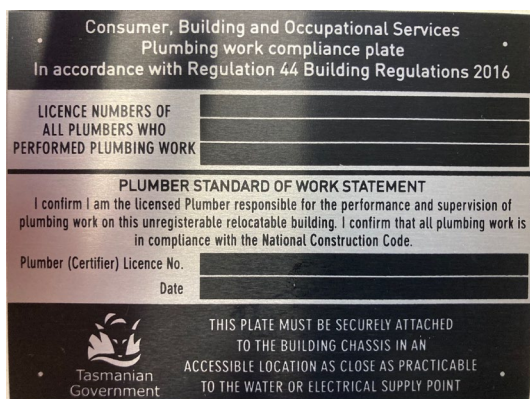


Image.2 Compliance Plate

Use of Reg.44 Compliance Plates	
Type of structure	Required?
Unregistrable relocatable building	Yes
Prefabricated building for permanent installation	No
Road-registrable structure	No
WaterMark certified prefabricated module	No

Table 1: Regulation 44 compliance plates

Compliance plates may be requested via an email cbos.info@justice.tas.gov.au providing plumber's licence details, number of plates required and for whom the work is being performed.

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WaterMark certified prefabricated modules

A WaterMark certified bathroom module is a prefabricated structure that has been manufactured offsite and incorporates integral WaterMark certified plumbing products and materials.

A prefabricated bathroom module manufactured and tested in accordance with Technical Specification WMTS-050 and holding a current WaterMark certification is accepted in all Australian plumbing jurisdictions.

The product description field within the WaterMark Product Database will list all WaterMark certified integral components used within the module.

Modules tested under this Technical Specification include:

- Shower modules
- Bathroom modules
- Laundry modules
- Kitchen modules
- Any combination of the above

The connection of a WaterMark certified plumbing module to the site services must be performed by a licensed plumber. All connections must be tested and certified to AS/NZS 3500, and all standard regulatory processes apply.

A Reg. 44 Compliance Plate must not be affixed to a WaterMark certified plumbing module. (see *Table 1*).

Confirming WM Certification

Plumbers must verify the currency of a product WaterMark certification prior to installation. The following steps are a guide to checking certification.

Step 1

Prior to specifying or installing a prefabricated bathroom module, confirm that the product holds WaterMark certification.



Step 2

Find the WaterMark licence number (highlighted in the image below) on the packaging, product literature or installation instructions.

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Step 3

Go to the [WaterMark website](#) and type the licence number into the search field.

Step 4

Review the certificate details provided and confirm that listed integral components match the product description.

Document development history

Version	Application Date	Sections amended
1.0	9 August 2023	Original release
2.0	01 February 2024	Rewrite

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