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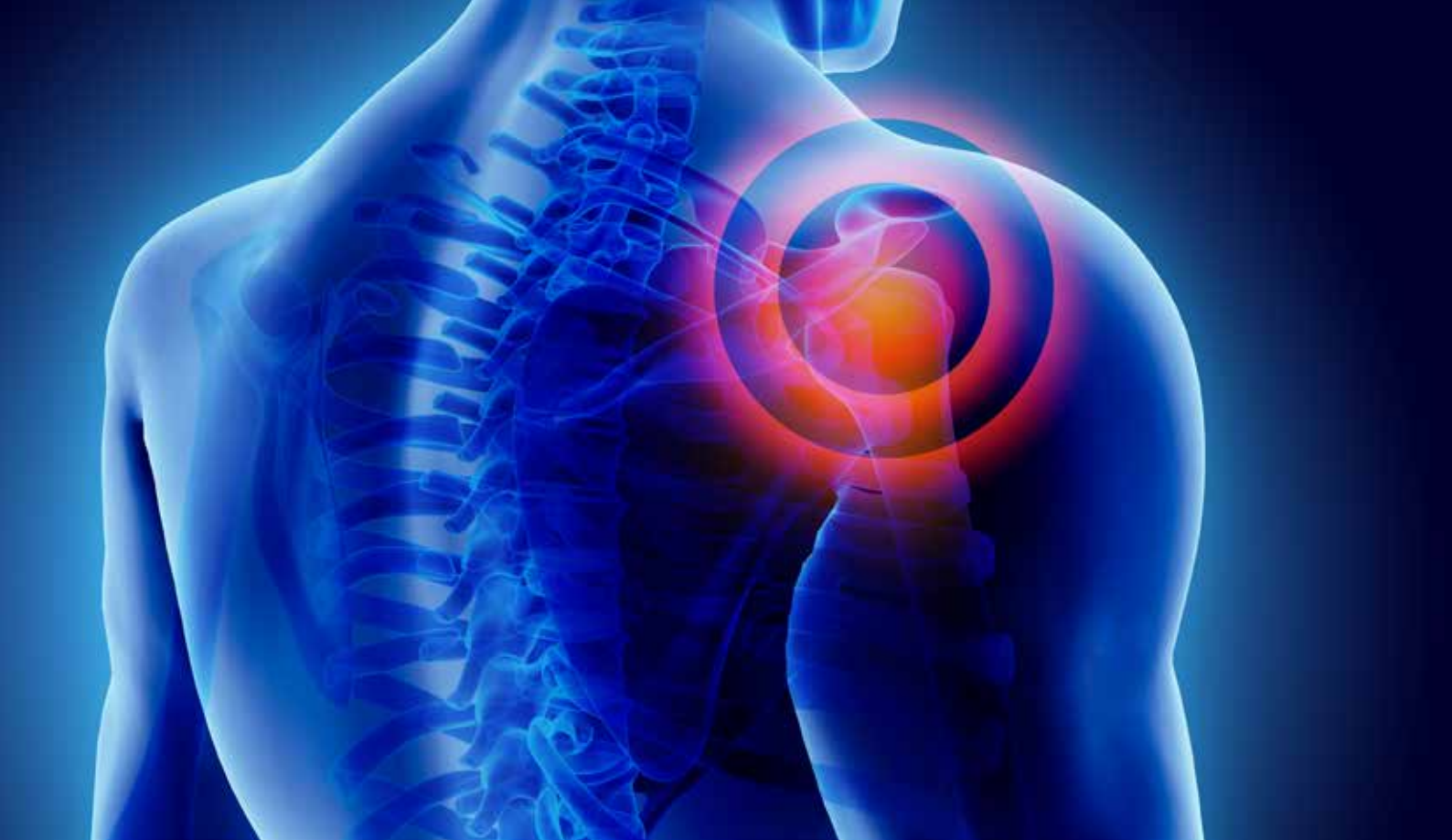
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How long before your body wears out?

03

HEALTH & SAFETY

With the building boom in boost mode, builders are feeling the pressure and working harder than ever before. As they say, there's no gain without pain, but is it worth it? When will you have to hang up the tools?

Builders are right up at the top of the scale when it comes to muscular skeletal problems. Or in plain speak:

- ☐ neck, back and shoulder strains
- ☐ damage to muscles, ligaments, tendons, spinal discs, nerves
- ☐ 'pulled' back muscles, ruptured discs
- ☐ squashed nerves causing severe pain (e.g. carpal tunnel syndrome in the wrist or sciatic leg pain from the back)
- ☐ shoulder muscle sprains and dislocations
- ☐ tendon injuries to the hands, forearms and elbows

So which pain do you have?

If you're a builder in your 40s, you'll probably have experienced at least one of these symptoms. And you'll have realised that at some point in the future, you'll have to ease back otherwise your body will simply wear out.

"Many hands-on builders do the equivalent of a marathon every day, except in many ways, it's more demanding," says ACC head of Workplace Safety, Paul Gimblett.

Lifting, working in awkward positions, repetitive manual tasks, using hand tools and powered tools in confined spaces, working with cranes and hoists,

CONTINUE >>

and the inevitable slips, trips and falls, are all part and parcel of the job just about every day.

"If you look at all the stats, it's clear that strains and twists and lifting, bending, kneeling and repetitive manual work are major risk factors.

"Building sites are incredibly challenging. There's a lot of cumulative stress from a muscular skeletal point of view, and it accumulates over time, so you have ongoing fatigue. And the harder you push yourself, the worse it gets."

How tired are you?

"If you're doing serious physical activity all day, by the end of the day, your muscles are fatigued and your physical ability is diminished. But your brain doesn't think about that, it doesn't register, so you continue working as hard as you did at the start of the day.

"Your muscles are fatigued and working them hard in that condition causes damage long term. What's more, when you're in that state, you are more prone to accidents."

It's tough making a decent living in the building industry, and when the good times come along, you step up a gear and push harder to do more and earn more.

"For example, a sole builder who comfortably managed to build two homes last year might have the opportunity to build three this year. But the increasing production pressure ramps up the risk of muscle fatigue and potential long-term disability.

"That same bloke might get a strain or injury during

the year, but with so much pressure to build, he'll carry on anyway (dependent on painkillers) and of course that just about always makes it worse."

Builders are athletes

Paul reckons builders are like elite sports people and believes they should look after themselves in a similar manner.

"They're working really hard and intensely for a long periods of time and the body needs the condition to be able to cope with it. The stress builds up. And it gets worse as you get older.

"The sports fitness model is a good one: nutrition, proper hydration, warm ups, muscle stretching. All of the things sports people do to condition their bodies can easily be applied to anyone working in construction industry.

"Some of the research we've done suggests that poor diet is an aggravating factor. When people are working in demanding conditions for long periods of time, when they feel tired, they crave sugar.

"A sweet drink or sugar hit might satisfy the craving, but it's not helpful. The challenge is to change the mindset of a 40 year old who has been doing it since forever. So you say, hey you've got to drop the pies and the sugary drinks, increase your protein and reduce your carbs, have a snack of nuts and not a Moro bar. It's a big ask.

"But like an athlete in an endurance race, nutrition is key otherwise you just crash and burn. Physiology is physiology whether you're a marathon runner or whether you're a builder."

What's it feel like to be off work for nearly 3 years?

After 32 years as a builder, Sam hasn't as much as lifted a hammer for over two years. He's been off work, constantly in pain, depressed and bored out of his mind.

While he "is being well looked after by ACC, regular income, surgery paid for, occupational therapy, counselling the lot, it's still a bloody miserable existence. Got a fishing boat but I can't even go fishing."

Sam turned 50 last year and has been a builder since he left school. The reason he's been off work for so long is because of work related damage

to the rotator cuff muscles and tendons in both shoulders.

Pain and stiffness

Rotator cuff muscles and tendons surround the shoulder joint and keep the head of your upper arm bone firmly within the shallow socket of the shoulder, and are crucially important in shoulder movements and shoulder joint stability.

Rotator cuff injuries occur most often in people who perform repetitive arm motions, often overhead, in their jobs. Carpenters and painters are especially at risk, and the risk increases with age.

"I'd been having problems for quite a while,

constant pain and stiffness, broken sleep because of the pain, and work was really hard going,” Sam recalls. “But we had so much work on and deadlines to meet so I just slogged it out.

“Then, after about 18 months, it became almost impossible to work so I went to see a doctor. I probably should have done it much sooner.”

Feeling worthless

Once the severity of the problem was diagnosed, it took many months for a rehabilitation plan to take shape. A surgeon recommended operations on both shoulders.

The first operation was completed mid last year, and it took until Christmas for Sam to get mobility back in the affected shoulder. In the meantime, his other shoulder was continuing to give him grief requiring constant pain medication and sleeping pills to get through the night.

“The pain is bad enough, it’s hard to cope with 24/7, and you don’t get good sleep. But the worst thing is feeling worthless. When you’re used to going to work every day, you get a sense of achievement, but when you can’t do anything and it’s a struggle just to get dressed, life soon gets pretty bleak.

“I started drinking a bit, much more than I should, and that just made things worse. I’ve been having a lot of counselling for depression but it’s hard to snap out of it when you know that even when you get better, you won’t be able to work on the tools ever again.”

Back to work?

Now that one shoulder is coming right, Sam is preparing for the surgery on his other shoulder in May this year, and he expects to be fully recovered by Christmas. After that, he can go back to work, but not on the tools.

“ACC have offered to help with retraining for a new career, but I’m really not sure what I’m going to do. The most logical thing is to get into building supervisory work or become a building inspector, something like that.

“I have a lot of mates in the building industry and the one thing I’ve learned is that you can’t be a builder on the tools right up until you retire at 65. You just wear out.

“If I had my time again, I would have made a plan to get off the tools by age 40, become a foreman or building supervisor, and get the young fellas to do the manual stuff.”

How the physical stress of building builds up mental stress

Talk to any builder about aches and pains and chances are they’ll reel off a long list of ailments. It’s a tough job, hard on the body, but also hard on the mind, especially if you’re carrying an injury.

According to a Harvard School of Public Health study, building and construction workers frequently suffer from mental illness as a result of their work related physical injuries, and often won’t seek help. She’ll be right. Classic blokey stuff.

The industry has one of the highest rates of work-related injuries and a significant prevalence of muscular skeletal pain among workers. In one

survey in the US, four out of ten construction workers over age 50 had chronic back pain.

Another study found that injured workers were nearly twice as likely to be diagnosed with depression than non-injured workers.

According to the Harvard study, “mental distress is often characterised by cognitive impairment, such as concentration and memory problems.” In other words, if you are suffering mental distress on the job, the chances of making a mistake or having an accident increases.

“Distracted workers tend to pay less attention to safety practices, which increases the risk of accidents and injuries,” the report says.

“Of serious concern is the fact that the distressed constructions workers don’t seem to seek professional help for their mental health problems. This could be due to stigma surrounding mental health in this group of workers, or it could be due to a lack of available and affordable treatment options.”

According to the survey, the most common diagnoses were depression, panic disorder, and generalised anxiety. Nearly 20% of the distressed workers showed clinical signs of suicide risk.

Employee wellness programme

A new initiative from NZCB.

New Zealand Certified Builders (NZCB) has partnered with Employee Wellness Programme (EWP) to provide its member builders with access to mental health support at times of stress. This includes a confidential counselling service nationwide, which NZCB members can access at preferential rates with NZCB picking up the cost for the first counselling session, as well as wider coaching and wellness support.

New Zealand has one of the highest suicide rates in the world and a high rate of mental health issues particularly in the building and construction industry, so this service comes at a critical time.

A recent Australian study found that construction industry workers are twice as likely as those in other professions to commit suicide. This is attributed to the male-dominance of the industry and its culture, with builders potentially feeling the need to live up to a particular 'macho' image that involves 'toughing things out'.



NZCB is one of New Zealand's two building trade associations, providing a broad range of support to its members – from skills development to the industry's most comprehensive building guarantee product. Partnering with EWP to provide this wellness service to its members recognises that the wellbeing of both business owners and their staff is critical to NZCB members' business success.

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Construction sector warned not to risk unlawful immigration advice

Does your business know the rules around immigration advice for overseas workers?

Immigration Advisers Authority (IAA) Registrar Catherine Albiston says it costs businesses time and money to hire tradespeople from overseas, a challenge made even harder if the wrong immigration advice is given and visa applications get declined.

Only a licensed or exempt immigration adviser can give immigration advice to migrants wanting to work in New Zealand.

Employers, recruiters and HR advisers can't provide New Zealand immigration advice without a licence. They can only provide very basic assistance, such as sharing Immigration New Zealand's forms and website, and putting workers in touch with a licensed immigration adviser or exempt person.

New Zealand immigration advice includes advising a person on visa options or how best to fill out an application form. Exempt people include current New Zealand lawyers and Immigration New Zealand staff.



If a worker is unsure where to go for New Zealand immigration advice, visa information is available on Immigration New Zealand's website or they could search the IAA's free register of licensed advisers.

We have also produced a simple guide about licensed immigration advisers in Samoan, Tongan, Simplified Chinese, Korean, Punjabi, Hindi and English, which can be downloaded from the IAA's website.

If there is any doubt, people in the construction industry can come to us for more information at www.iaa.govt.nz.

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BUILDING TRUST



A plea for more fairness in the resolution of building disputes

Everyone knows the old saying that the only winners in court cases are the lawyers. That reflects the reality that the traditional system of suing in the courts (litigation) has become so drawn-out, so complex and so expensive that it is effectively out of the reach of the common citizen. Ironically, all that complexity came about in an attempt to achieve fairness, because lawyers and their clients were gaming the system. And despite all the safeguards it still goes on.

If there is a lot at stake and you want the most reliable outcome, there is no substitute for litigation.

That is why in recent decades we have seen the emergence of “alternative” dispute-resolution methods. There are a variety of them, but the main ones in the construction context are mediation, arbitration, the Disputes Tribunals (our small claims courts), and adjudication under the Construction Contracts Act (“CCA”). The cost of those ranges from low to medium, and they are generally far quicker than litigation. However, you get what you pay for, so the outcomes can be a bit hit-and-miss at times. If there is a lot at stake and you want the most reliable outcome, there is no substitute for litigation.

Our justice system goes to great lengths to ensure that disputes are resolved fairly and reasonably, and no one gets an unfair advantage. So, for example, the Judge has to be well qualified and strictly impartial. Everyone gets plenty of time to prepare their case and everyone has to outline it to the other side well in advance. If your ability to pay any costs award against you is in doubt then you can be made to put the money up in advance. Complainants generally have to show that their allegations are more likely than not to be true, which is quite a high threshold. No one is allowed to hide or destroy any documents that could be damaging to their case. No one is allowed to ambush the other side with critical evidence that is hidden from them until



the last minute. Evidence is given on oath or by affirmation so that you can be liable for perjury if you mislead or deceive. And everything is done out in the open so that justice can be seen to be done.

The less formality, the less safeguards

With alternative dispute-resolution, those rules are relaxed. For example the Disputes Tribunals are very informal, you present your own case rather than use a lawyer, and the Referee can go with what seems fair and reasonable rather than strictly applying the law. In mediation, you can make any outlandish allegation you want, and the Mediator can only encourage the parties to reach agreement, rather than making a binding ruling. In arbitration the rules are more like litigation, but the Arbitrator

The construction industry is unique in having CCA adjudication available to it. In very few other industries can you get disputes resolved so quickly and cost-effectively.

tends to be an expert in the relevant field, and it is all done in private. In CCA adjudication everything is done extremely quickly and the Adjudicator generally doesn't get to meet the parties. Each side simply submits written arguments and the documents that support their case, and they get one brief opportunity to respond in writing to what the other side have said.

The construction industry is unique in having CCA adjudication available to it. In very few other industries can you get disputes resolved so quickly and cost-effectively. It was based on overseas models and it aims for “quick and dirty justice”. It is intended to get arguments sorted out on an interim basis during the course of the project so roadblocks can be overcome and progress can continue. But CCA adjudications typically cost upwards of \$10,000 because you have to pay the adjudicator, and upwards of double that if you need legal assistance. That is why it is ideally suited to big commercial

projects that take several years to complete and involve millions of dollars. For a number of reasons, it doesn't work quite so well in residential projects.

A favourite trick is to file the claim just before Christmas so it spoils the other side's holiday and leaves them unable to find any experts to assist them.

Residential adjudications can be abused

The main reason for that is there is plenty of opportunity to game the system in CCA adjudication. Why would some people do that? Because they are human beings, and in residential projects they feel the anxiety and the financial pain far more acutely than the professionals do in the commercial projects. Their natural inclination is to inflict at least as much pain on the other side as they are feeling, and understandably they take every opportunity to do so. They want to win, and they are going to use everything at their disposal to achieve that.

There are a number of ways you can do so in a CCA adjudication. Claimants have the advantage because they can spend weeks preparing their case before they start the adjudication, and then the Respondents have only a week (usually extended a little by the Adjudicator) to put together their defence. A favourite trick is to file the claim just before Christmas so it spoils the other side's holiday and leaves them unable to find any experts to assist them.

It is usually builders who initiate CCA adjudications, because they are chasing payment of their final invoices from disgruntled homeowners who have adopted the self-help remedy of taking possession of the nearly-completed building works and withholding payment to compensate for the grievances they have suffered. In those situations the homeowners have little interest in resolving the dispute because in their minds they have already won it.

The situation is different when the Builder has been fully paid and alleged defects emerge afterwards. If the Builder feels that the allegations are baseless, or simply doesn't want to face up to his responsibilities, then his incentive is to lie low and hope the homeowner runs out of steam.

One thing homeowners can do to forestall the day of reckoning is to file a complaint about the Builder

with the Building Disputes Board. That typically takes a year to resolve and results in a ruling about whether the Builder has done substandard work or not. Ironically that is quite a helpful process because the ruling can be used in a subsequent adjudication, by the party whom the ruling favoured the most.

The problem with experts' reports

What normally happens in an adjudication is that the Owner hires a building consultant to write a damning report on the standard of the work to date. The Builder has generally been banned from the site at this stage and cannot get a credible counter report done by his own consultant. This gives the Owner an unfair advantage, because these so-called expert reports carry a lot of weight with the Adjudicators.

In the adjudication, there is usually no requirement to provide evidence under oath, so both parties can say what they like provided it isn't contradicted by written evidence in the other party's possession. Although Adjudicators have extensive powers to request documents, appoint an expert adviser, call the parties together, conduct a site inspection, make requests and issue directions, they generally don't do so. So usually the Adjudicator doesn't see the site or meet the parties and therefore has limited opportunity to assess who is telling the truth and who is not.

What I would like to see in all residential adjudications is for one, neutral, jointly-appointed (and jointly-paid-for) building consultant to resolve any disputes concerning defective workmanship or materials.

That expert would conduct a site visit, consult both parties, and then write a report which would be final and binding. The report would identify what work and materials are defective, what are merely unfinished, and what are fully compliant with the plans and specification and the Building Code. That at least would make residential CCA adjudication determinations a lot less of a lottery than they are now.

by Geoff Hardy

Commercial Lawyer



Geoff Hardy has 42 years' experience as a commercial lawyer and heads up the construction law team at the Auckland firm "Martelli McKegg". He guarantees personal attention to new clients at competitive rates. His phone number is (09) 379 0700, fax (09) 309 4112, and e-mail geoff@martellimckegg.co.nz. This article is not intended to be relied upon as legal advice.



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Pink® Batts® Ultra® R4.0 140mm Narrow Wall	✓	✓	✓	✓	7160246	1140 x 360	140	4.1	5.0
Pink® Batts® R2.2 Narrow Wall	✓	✓		✓	7160243	1140 x 360	90	9.0	11.2
Pink® Batts® Ultra® R2.6 Narrow Wall	✓	✓	✓	✓	7160244	1140 x 360	90	7.4	9.2
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The importance of a business plan

Whether you're just starting out or are looking to grow your business and make the most of a buoyant building economy (or simply survive!), a well-thought-out business plan is a great resource to help you achieve your goals. Here are ten key reasons why you should have an up-to-date business plan.

To monitor your business: A business plan should serve as an ongoing business tool that you can use to monitor your progress. It is also important to regularly complete S.W.O.T Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) which is a timely reminder of the various risks your business faces. From this, you can develop strategies to mitigate this risk.

To outline each area of the business: A plan will provide an overview of all aspects of the business. You will be able to detail the who, what, where, when, and why of your day-to-day business operations, costs, and projected profitability.

To set up milestones: By forecasting where your business will be in six months, one year, or five years, you are not only letting potential investors know your plans, but also setting up realistic milestones for yourself and your employees. It is important to be able to celebrate achieving those milestones.

To attract top-level people: Your business plan will give talented people an overview of your business and enable them to understand expectations and that you are serious about the future.

To learn about the market: Researching, analysing, and writing about the market not only provides you with an overview for your plan, but gives you greater insight into the overall market and its potential.

To see if your business ideas will work: By writing a plan and outlining each aspect of your business, you can determine if your ideas are actually viable.

To determine your financial needs: The process of writing your business plan will force you to analyse your financial picture. It will also enable you to understand the business cycle you are working in and when to expect things to be tough.

To secure additional funding or loans: Your business plan can demonstrate that you have met goals and illustrate the company's growth and need for additional funding, if required. This will assist with banks having confidence in you and your business.

To devise contingency plans: While business plans often include some contingency plans, by virtue of having the document available, you can see how and where you can make such changes relatively quickly if, and when, necessary.

To attract investors: Before investors can decide whether or not to back your business financially, they will need to know as much as possible about how the business will operate/performance and what their investment dollar will be used for.

It is important when you are preparing your business plan to ensure it is clear, focused and realistic.

by Michelle Turfrey

Partner



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*Source: Dricon Brand Tracking Research June 2016, survey of 311 Tradespeople

Minimum wage rises on 1 April

The minimum wage is going up from \$15.75 to \$16.50 per hour. Here's what you'll need to know for your business.

When: 1 April 2018

What: The new minimum wage rates are

- Adult — \$16.50 an hour
- Starting-out — \$13.20 an hour (up from \$12.60)
- Training — \$13.20 an hour (up from \$12.60)

Starting-out and training minimum wages are 80% of the adult minimum wage. Read the Business.govt.nz page on minimum pay rules for a summary of who can earn the different rates.

Why: Government must by law review the minimum wage rates every year.

What you'll need to do: You and your staff can agree to any wage above the minimum rate. If your employment agreements are a few years old, you can use this as a chance to update them using our easy to use tool, the Employment Agreement Builder. Note that it is a legal requirement to have a written employment agreement with all your staff.

If you pay staff minimum wages, recalculate your budget for the rest of the year – you'll be paying out more in wages.

Read the Business.govt.nz page on **checking the cost of an employee** to get an idea of how much the increase will cost your business. You can also use the calculator to estimate costs of hiring a new employee.

**business.
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Tips and tricks with contract works insurance

Construction (contract works) insurance, often still called builders risk by banks and mortgage lenders, is a contractual requirement for most building projects. Here are some of the most important things to be aware of when it comes to contract works insurance.

What it covers

The policy covers accidental loss or damage to the contract works, such as from theft, vandalism, accidental damage, storm, fire and natural disasters such as floods and earthquakes. Existing structures on the site are usually not covered unless you specifically include them. Some policies will insure existing structures, but only those that are being worked on, so separate outbuildings, sheds, garages, retaining or septic systems may not be covered. Make sure you also include in the policy the value of any materials being supplied by the owner too.

Who it covers

It insures both the main contractor and the building owner. It also commonly includes all subcontractors under a single policy (make sure they're included in yours). This makes it much simpler when dealing with a claim, as there aren't multiple insurers with multiple policies trying to work out who's responsible.

Who takes it out

For new builds it is typically the builder's responsibility to arrange the contract works insurance. Unless they are working as labour only, in which case the principal would usually do it.

For alterations and renovations to an existing structure the homeowner is generally responsible for arranging contract works insurance, which is most commonly done with their existing house insurer.

Sometimes, if this proves difficult or costly they can arrange it separately, for example by using Builtin's online contract works system. Regardless, they must notify their house insurer that work is being done, or they could jeopardise cover on the existing structure.

If your client is responsible for arranging the contract works insurance, make sure you see a copy of the insurance certificate before you start work. Even though they may be contractually obliged to take it out, that won't necessarily save you if damage is done and there's no cover in place, particularly if you're responsible for the damage. Does your contract include a penalty or make the client liable if they don't arrange this cover? Probably not, so better to ensure they've done it before you start.

When to take it out

You should arrange the policy before any work starts, and that includes earthworks and foundations. It can be difficult to get cover for

projects that have already commenced. You're not saving any money by delaying when you take it out, as the cost is based on the finished value and overall timeframe for the build, from start to finish.

Builders building their own houses

When there is no client or bank requiring the contract works insurance certificate, builders often forget to arrange it, most commonly when they're building their own places. We often field calls when the builder goes to the bank for a loan to finish it off, and are asked to supply an insurance certificate. Arranging cover when the project is substantially underway can be more difficult and more costly.

When it ends

Cover under the contract works insurance usually ends on the earlier of: the end date on the policy; or practical completion of the work; or upon occupation by the owner (which could be temporary or partial); or if it's a spec, when 95% of the build cost has been spent.

Delays

If your project is delayed, arranging an extension to the policy can be more expensive than if you'd simply allowed for extra time from the start (even if you don't end up needing it). So give yourself plenty of time.

Cessation of work

Most policies will automatically expire if the site has been left unattended for too long. You should be aware of how long this period is and make sure you don't breach it, or speak to your insurer if something causes the project to be delayed.

Does it meet the requirements specified in your contract

New Zealand's most common standard form building contracts list specific allowances that must be included in the contract works insurance, such as for demolition, cost increases and professional fees. Make sure your policy reflects the figures in your contract.

Who pays the excess

Excesses for damage caused by natural disasters, hardly the fault of the builder, can be substantial in some regions, so make sure you have agreed who is responsible for the excess in your contract.

What's not covered

As with any insurance there are things not intended to be covered by the policy. Some common exclusions within contract works insurance include design and workmanship defects, hydrostatic pressure, consequential losses, gradually occurring damage and scratched glass.

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The apprentice diary: entry #9

Respect is something that has to be earned, and gaining the respect of your colleagues and especially the older more experienced builders means a lot to me.

Gaining respect

Now no one really enjoys the crappy jobs, and some go out of their way to make themselves busy doing another task. I on the other hand think it's an opportunity to put my hand up and say, "I'll do it", because if I don't do it, someone else has to. Don't get me wrong, I don't put my hand up for all of them, but it shows a willingness to get stuck in, and not shy away from dirty or hard yakka jobs. This builds respect from your peers, but just make sure you don't turn into the go to guy for all of the tough jobs.

Being level-headed helps

Talking of the older/more experienced builders, it's quite interesting to see how they take on a task compared to the younger qualified builders. One example is eyeballing a line versus using a string line to check if something is straight. We recently stood a whole house of frames, when it came to bracing and straightening the top plates, the younger builder wanted to use a string line, whilst the older was adamant eyeballing was just as accurate. I ended up opting for eyeballing, and I was surprised that it was very accurate, and not to mention very fast. I mention this as an example of there being different ways to achieve the same outcome, some faster than others. Finding that combo of accurate and fast is a winning combo in our trade.



Taking big steps

Standing frames for the first time was great, it was something new for me, but also within only a day there was a structure to the house that is a clearly visible big step in the build. I soon learned that clients like it too, and makes 'their build' more real.



Adding the roof trusses a few days later was the icing on the cake. Although there is a lot more work left before it's a finished project, you get a quick appreciation of what you are working towards. As the build moves forwards, so does the site. One thing I've learnt is taking the time to adapt with the site, an example is instead of using a stepladder as internal stairs for the next couple of months, after 30 mins work, a basic ramp can be built, both faster and safer to use.

Finally a quick update on my apprenticeship, I'm now 15 months in, and have 23% signed off. That's a combined total for both theory and practical. Although I'm less than a quarter of the way through, I've been assured things pick up pace towards the end with more being signed off in a short period of time. Fingers crossed that is true.

Till next time, keep up the bookwork, and practicing what you have learnt.

by Stu Foster

Apprentice



Highlights

Best job: Standing frames

Worst job: Screwing down flooring

Favourite power tool: Trusty skilly

Favourite hand tool: Irwin Quick Grips

Apprentice tip: Get a copy of the plans to read



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Why the timber skeleton of a home is so important

Timber frames and trusses form the structural ‘skeleton’ of a building, the very framework upon which almost everything else hangs. This is why MiTek and the frame and truss industry have invested so heavily in advanced engineering technology to make sure each job is done right first time.

Over 30,000 dwellings were consented in 2017, and a high percentage of these were for one-off builds unlikely to be repeated. As it forms the crucial structural ‘skeleton’ of a building, frame and truss components have to be accurate to the millimetre.



To ensure high precision, today's frame and truss designs use advanced computer design techniques, automated manufacturing and innovative fixings to ensure uncompromising accuracy.

The crucial role of the detailer

Frame and truss fabricators employ detailers who turn architects' plans into on-site reality using purpose designed engineering software. They detail the timber roof truss and wall-framing designs from ridge beam to sub-floor for the offsite manufacturing process.



The MiTek training app covers off the background to the process in simple terms with clear visual explanations.



The detailer identifies the key structural elements using engineering software to calculate loads at various points in the structure, relative to local conditions. For example, structures will be subject to greater loads in different areas of the country depending on whether the location is in a high wind zone, an earthquake prone area or where roofs need to cope with the extra weight of snow.



Detailers also marry up durability and application of fixing solutions with regard to NZS3604:2011. The engineering properties, including the stiffness and strength of timber, are incorporated in the frames designed to NZS3604:2011.

Trusses are often specifically designed as alternative solutions with accompanying PSI and design statements.

All design actions are taken from New Zealand standards and applied to Building Importance Levels 1, 2 & 3.

The entire structure is viewed in terms of the Building Code clauses B1 & B2 for the timber 'skeleton' of the house and fixings. The roles of the designer, fabricator, detailer and building official are all integrated into the framing process to ensure it is correct in every aspect: structurally, practically and regulatory.

Accurate truss layouts must be submitted with Building Consent applications showing fixings, lintel sizing and slab thickening where live and dead loads may be structurally transferred onto the concrete pad in situ.

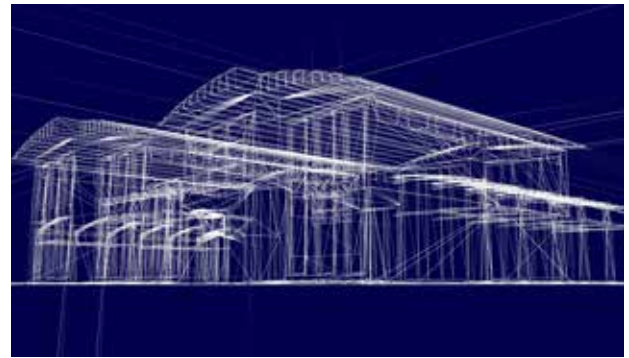


The MiTek NZ Training App and MiTek NZ Fixings Guide App are handy tools for anyone who wants to know what's what about timber framing connections.

Load paths will transfer through lintels and studs to floor plates, and slab thickening is considered part of the Building Consent application.

Detailers are continually looking to the future with software functionality for 3D Building Information Modelling (BIM) and the practical requirements of inspection and compliance.

In the context of building and compliance, the detailer closely examines all timber frames, trusses and connections to make sure that accurate truss layouts are submitted at the building consent application stage. Indeed, the detailers impact on good design and building should never be underestimated.



Coming up in Building Business:

- June: Part 4 – Framing matters - Truss engineering made easy.
- August: Part 5 – Truss, frame & connectors with modification.

Here's another tool you can take on-site

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CAVIUS

The two biggest cashflow mistakes tradies make

Want to know the two biggest mistakes I see tradies making when it comes to cashflow?

It's a familiar story and it goes like this:

1. A few people haven't paid you.
2. Now suppliers are expecting you to pay them their money.
3. Things are getting stressful.
4. You're starting to feel the pressure.

Every business goes through this. You're not alone.

Mistake 1: Giving too much credit for too long.

Credit can be dangerous and is one of the biggest downfalls for trades. Many have gone broke because their biggest client didn't pay them. Or at the very least have been stressed out with strangled cashflow at the end of the month looking for enough to pay staff, suppliers and the bank while waiting for overdue amounts to come in.

How much have you lost in money and time through late payers and bad debts?

The fix is to have strict credit terms, take deposits at the beginning of jobs, progress payments on big jobs, and be prepared to stop work if the account is not paid on time. Only when you are paid can you say the money is yours.

Mistake 2: Not billing everything out on time or at all.

Often, especially on complex jobs, bills are sent out months later. Some details are forgotten, so not everything is billed, or worse the job is not billed out at all. Get your team to record all details of jobs including extras (materials and labour) on the job. Then make sure you invoice everything on completion.

Pay special attention to cashflow when your tradie business is growing. If you aren't getting paid all you're due, you are going to feel the squeeze and it's not going to be pleasant. Poor cashflow is actually the main reason businesses fail. So be proactive. Don't try to wing it, ok?

by Daniel Fitzpatrick



NEED A HAND? Let's have a chat about how I can help. Go here: <https://nextleveltradie.youcanbook.me/>

Your Feedback

Is the LBP system working?

We published a story in the December issue of Building Business, based on an interview with LBP scheme registrar Paul Hobbs. We had quite a lot of feedback from builders who took issue with some of the things discussed.

Mark, Waikato

Once you've proved yourself as an LBP, that should be it. You shouldn't have to get these points all the time, you shouldn't have to waste time in the evenings which eats into your spare time and we don't get any of that these days.

Brett, Northland

Electricians have been licensed forever, and that's good and fine, but electricians sign off their own work. We don't. We still have to get everything signed off by council yet still take full responsibility for everything.

Aaron, Auckland

If they could do a warrant of fitness, that would make sense. Come along and vet one of the jobs we're doing, and they'll know straight away whether you're good or not. A builder's warrant of fitness, verified every three years or so. I think it would better than it is now.

Martin, Wairarapa

The overall thought behind it has validity, but in reality, it's better to belong to one of the existing schemes, Certified Builders or Master Builders, because you can apply to be one of those and they have mechanisms in place to be sure you're a bona fide, competent tradesperson.

If you have some thoughts on the LBP scheme, or feedback on any other articles in Building Business email your comments to: buildingbusiness@itm.co.nz



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Communities usually pull together when a natural disaster strikes, but without the right gear, volunteer helpers are pretty much helpless.

The Emergency Response Pod is ITM Picton's novel solution to the problem – a stand alone emergency resource module fully equipped to put 10 volunteers into action in the field immediately following a natural disaster or large scale emergency event.

"We've got nothing here in Picton, no civil defence gear, it's all in Blenheim. And the minute we lose the Wairau bridge, we're in trouble," says Picton ITM Trade Manager Greg Goodfellow.

"That bridge is vulnerable to a natural disaster, and it's the only route in or out of Picton. If it goes, we'd be totally isolated. Cyclone Gita, the Kaikoura earthquakes, everything's so raw to people here."

The Emergency Response Pod is Greg's brainchild, an idea that came about over a few beers with friends at the Picton Volunteer Fire Brigade and from informal discussions with Picton Police and local council.

"After the last earthquake, the police had five or six volunteers turn up to offer their help. But the police had to decline because they didn't have the appropriate safety gear and tools to equip them.

"Any of the emergency authorities, fire brigade, police, they have strict health and safety guidelines and they can't send anyone into a danger zone without proper equipment."

Overwhelming community response

"But now we've got everything we need – steel capped boots, hard hats, ear muffs, jackets, pants, nail guns, impact drivers, freeze dried food, reconnaissance drone, all stored in the pod. You name it, we've got it.

"Our suppliers and other businesses in the community have been amazing. Pretty much everyone wanted to help. The donations, the free gear, the electrical work, everything was donated so in effect the community has fully funded the idea."

Greg is especially grateful for the support of Marlborough Council's Nadine Taylor and "all the work she has been doing behind the scenes in an organisational sense to help manage the project's ongoing viability."



ITM Picton staff, from left, Aaron Waters, Robyn Brown, Pete Conquest, Greg Goodfellow, Karl Offord and Lyn Tyrer-Jones, outside the emergency pod.



Picton trade manager Greg Goodfellow in the emergency pod.

The Emergency Response Pod will be located right in the heart of Picton at the fire station and only a few minutes from the police station.

"It's the perfect spot for it," quips Greg, who reckons the Pod is an idea other communities could adopt, especially small towns in isolated areas.

Greg has been in discussions with the NZ Fire Service, who support the plan, and also with police and civil defence, to work out whether it's feasible to roll out a nationwide programme.

"It would be good to see it replicated in other places, because let's face it, we're living in a country that's prone to severe natural events, and we have to be prepared."

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- Western ITM Whenuapai 09 416 8164

WAIKATO/BAY OF PLENTY

- Acorn ITM Hamilton 07 856 6789
- Cambridge ITM 07 827 0953
- KKBS ITM Katikati 07 549 0689
- Matamata Post and Rails ITM 07 888 8189
- Mount ITM Mt Maunganui 07 928 4942
- Opatiki ITM 07 315 5984
- Otorohanga ITM 07 873 8079
- Rotoma ITM Rotorua 07 347 7023
- Tauranga ITM 07 541 1232
- Te Puna ITM 07 552 5770
- Thomsons ITM Hamilton 07 849 3674
- Thomsons ITM Whatawhata 07 829 8518

- Timmo's ITM Te Awamutu 07 871 7545
- Triangle ITM Tokoroa 07 886 6611
- Whakatane Timber & Hardware ITM 07 307 0031

COROMANDEL

- Kopu ITM 07 868 9829
- Barrier ITM Tryphena 09 429 0466
- Coromandel ITM 07 866 8848
- Pauanui ITM 07 864 8579

CENTRAL NORTH ISLAND

- Braithwaite ITM Taumarunui 07 895 6881
- Central ITM Feilding 06 323 3400
- Central ITM Marton 06 327 5458
- Hometown ITM Foxton 06 363 8049
- Manawatu ITM 06 356 9490
- New Plymouth ITM 06 758 8939
- Stratford ITM 06 765 7800
- Taupo ITM 07 378 9899
- Tumu ITM Dannevirke 06 374 4260
- Turangi ITM 07 386 5736
- Waitara ITM 06 754 8822

HAWKES BAY

- Tumu ITM Gisborne 06 868 9599
- Tumu ITM Hastings 06 873 0999
- Tumu ITM Havelock North 06 872 9600
- Tumu ITM Napier 06 872 6222
- Wairoa ITM 06 838 7332

WELLINGTON/WAIRARAPA

- Crighton ITM Greytown 06 304 7193
- Crighton ITM Levin 06 368 4057
- Crighton ITM Seaview 04 568 3896
- Parapine ITM Upper Hutt 04 527 6800
- Tawa ITM 04 232 5999
- Tumu ITM Masterton 06 370 6060

NELSON/MARLBOROUGH

- Blenheim ITM 03 578 3049
- Havelock ITM 03 574 1018
- Kaikoura ITM 03 319 5447
- Motueka ITM 03 528 7254
- Nelson ITM 03 548 5487
- Picton ITM 03 573 6888
- Takaka ITM 03 525 0005

CANTERBURY/WEST COAST

- Ashburton ITM 03 307 0412
- Basher's ITM Amberley 03 314 8311
- Darfield ITM 03 318 7474
- Dyers Road ITM Bromley 03 373 6049
- Geraldine ITM 03 693 9397
- Greymouth ITM 03 768 0441
- Hamptons ITM Waltham 03 374 3333
- Hillside ITM Hornby 03 349 9739
- Kaiaipo ITM 03 327 8829
- McMullan Timber ITM Hokitika 03 755 8519
- McVicar ITM Harewood 0800 191 674
- ProBuild ITM Rolleston 03 324 3300
- Rangiora ITM 03 313 4862
- Timaru ITM 03 688 8074
- Waimate ITM 03 689 7427

DUNEDIN/OTAGO/SOUTHLAND

- E H Ball ITM Invercargill 03 218 3787
- Fraser Hardware ITM Balclutha 03 418 0170
- Mosgiel ITM 03 489 8885
- Southbuild ITM Winton 03 236 6055
- Southern Lakes ITM Cromwell 03 445 0081
- Southern Lakes ITM Queenstown 03 451 1567

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