



Autumn 2020

PlumbHeat

Ice, Ice... maybe?

Making the right decisions
about insulating pipes



Taking AIM

The latest updates
to the guidelines
on RPZ valves



Staying alert

How to avoid the
dangers of mental
and physical fatigue

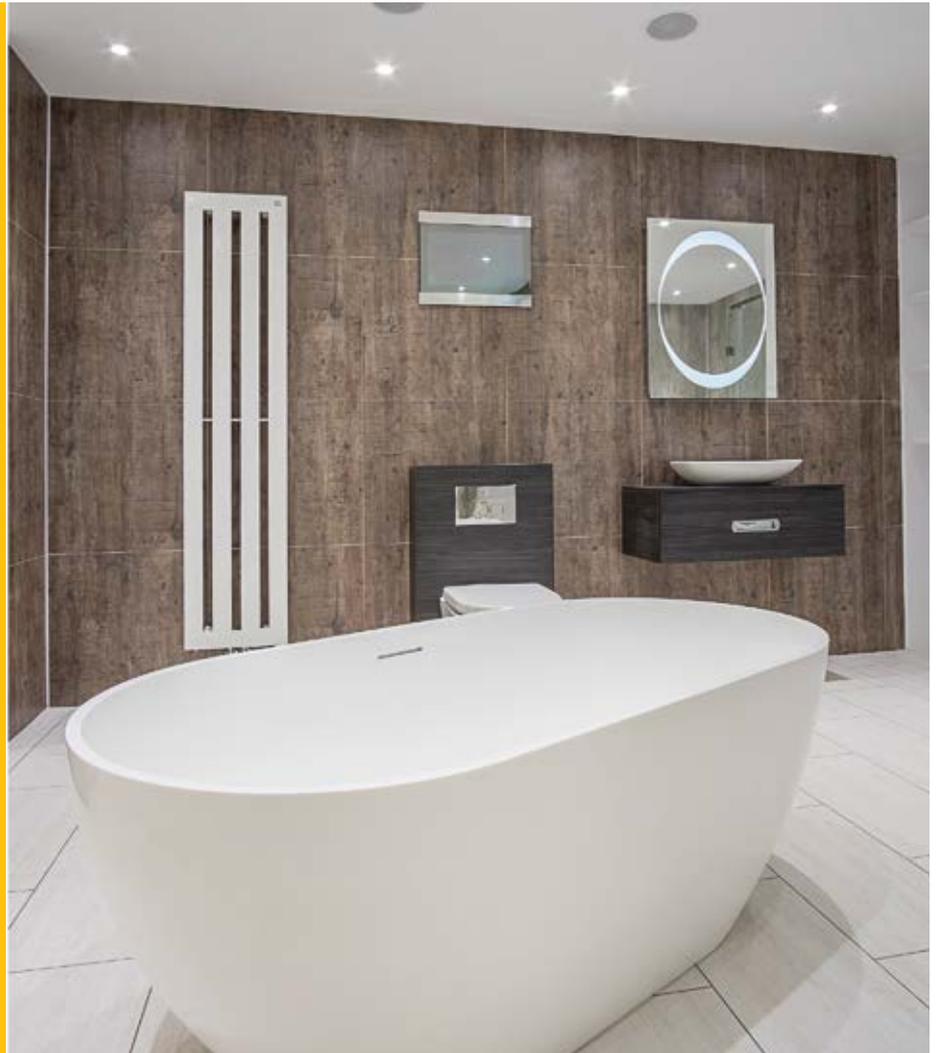


Well protected

Our guide to getting
the right PPE to keep
everyone safe at work



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Plumbing and heating association



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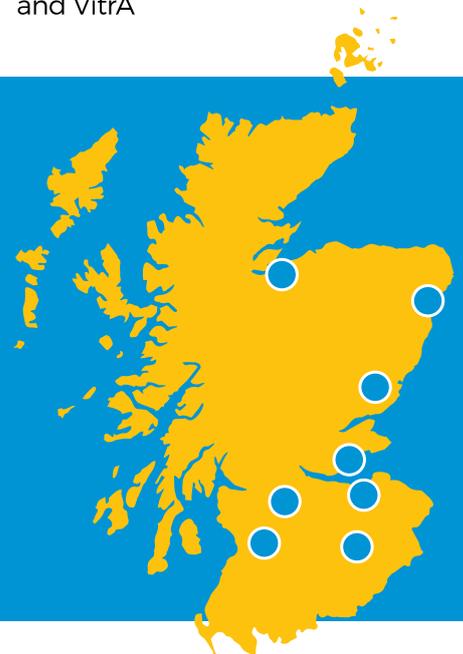
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Comment

FROM FIONA HODGSON, CHIEF EXECUTIVE, SNIPEF

Preparing for a perfect storm

It is now eight months since Covid-19 was first detected in Scotland and Northern Ireland. Like so many other countries, we faced the first wave and lockdown was hard. This meant that most businesses in our sector were unable to operate and became reliant on government finance to retain employees and maintain a viable business.

Just when we thought the virus was under control, lockdown had eased and our sector was getting back to some kind of normal, we are now faced with a second wave threatening not only our health but also our economy, employment and prosperity.

BREXIT

The UK's transition period after Brexit comes to an end on 31 December 2020 and as well as not knowing whether we will be walking away with a trade deal, we also wait for further clarification over the Northern Ireland protocol. What will be the implications for the construction sector?

Historically, we are a sector which has relied on foreign migrant labour for skilled and non-skilled roles. With a retiring workforce and a downturn in apprentice numbers following the financial crisis, our industry was already facing a skills shortage. Without the free movement of people, this position may deteriorate further, pushing up the price of labour and therefore the cost of work.

Reports suggest that the pandemic will lead to high levels of unemployment and those affected could be upskilled or retrained. However, retraining takes time – an average plumber takes four years to complete an apprenticeship.

While a significant proportion of SNIPEF members report that they are experiencing an upturn in work, especially from the domestic market, they are cautious about bringing on an apprentice as they are unsure how long the demand will last. Following lockdown and various travel restrictions, many consumers

would appear to have additional finance and are choosing to spend their "holiday fund" on home improvements. Employers looking to expand their workforce with already qualified operatives are not finding this easy due to a lack of supply and this is likely to drive up labour costs.

At the same time, with more than half the supply of building materials imported from the EU, the sector is likely to experience higher costs and material shortages. It is vital, therefore, that businesses know exactly where their products come from and work with suppliers to understand the implications of a no-trade deal for them so that time and costs can be factored into future contracts.

GREEN AGENDA

If all this wasn't enough, we need to factor in climate change. The green agenda and energy efficiency are at the top of the agenda for both devolved and Westminster governments and with increased

legislation coming in to regulate energy efficiency, providers and suppliers

are being forced to think differently. SNIPEF is actively involved with both the Scottish Government and Department for the Economy in Northern Ireland to ensure that energy efficient solutions in plumbing and heating are only installed by those competent to do so. In some cases, this will involve upskilling the current workforce, many of whom need to be convinced that there is a real demand from consumers before they commit to investing in this area. While government incentives will help, it is not yet clear whether they will go far enough.

SNIPEF reviewed the SVQ qualification in



Fiona Hodgson,
Chief Executive,
SNIPEF

“While government incentives will help, it is not yet clear whether they will go far enough”



We recognise that there are likely to be significant challenges ahead but there are also significant opportunities, and we must grab them with both hands

plumbing and heating during the year and has ensured that, moving forward, all apprentices will be exposed to some renewable technologies during their qualification as well as having an option to specialise in low carbon technologies in their final year. We will likely see more apprentices choosing this option rather than the more traditional gas route.

During the height of the pandemic with colleges closed, apprentices, like many of us, had to find a new way of working and the colleges rose to the challenge by providing online training for the theoretical elements of the course. Working collaboratively with key colleges, we were able to produce online assessments for apprentices, limiting the practical elements of training until colleges reopened. This was a huge task to undertake in a short timescale and we are indebted to the commitment from all those colleges involved. As well as enhancing their digital skills, apprentices have embraced a new way of working and one which can be used with increased flexibility in the future.

COMPETENCE AND COMPLIANCE

The draft Building Safety Bill was published in July and while the provisions will apply

in England, some of the changes will also apply to the devolved nations. The Bill aims to strengthen the whole regulatory system for building safety and learn lessons from the Grenfell Tower fire and remedy the systematic issues identified by Dame Judith Hackitt in her review.

The Bill is currently being considered by a parliamentary committee and there are some fears that this, together with the Internal Markets Bill, could undermine Scottish Building Regulations. While there are different views on this matter, what is clear is that our industry is likely to face increased regulation in terms of competence and compliance post-Grenfell as well as a cultural change. As a trade body, we welcome anything that raises the standard of quality in our sector but strongly believe that competency needs to be regulated or, at the very least, policed. For too long, the “white van man” has been allowed to operate alongside the “professionals” and this needs to stop.

So, it looks like the making of a perfect storm for 2021. We recognise that there are likely to be significant challenges ahead but there are also significant opportunities, and we must grab them with both hands. ■



**CICV
Forum**

Read more
on the Covid
response
/ Page 14

Learning lessons for the future from technology

In this difficult time of living through a pandemic, I am pleased to know that many of our members have been able to get back to work and are busy with their current workloads. Remember, it is important to stick to government guidance to both protect yourself and help prevent the spread of the virus among your colleagues, customers, friends and family. We encourage health and safety to remain a priority due to the uncertainty that Covid-19 brings.

We know things can change very quickly and it is good to prepare for potential setbacks due to the pandemic. The construction industry must work together with the government to provide clear guidance during this time. I encourage you to visit the SNIPEF website regularly for updated Covid advice, guidance and support.

One positive I have noticed during this pandemic is the increased use of technology, especially when it comes to helping apprentices. With distanced learning now being used more, apprentices must be given all the tools that they need to succeed.

I am impressed with how SNIPEF has helped create theoretical assessments which apprentices can complete from the safety of their own home.

SNIPEF has a total of 807 apprentices currently in training at 18 colleges across every part of Scotland and it is a focus for the SNIPEF training team to ensure that they are continuing to engage with their learning

“ We know things can change very quickly and it is good to prepare for potential setbacks due to the pandemic”

programmes throughout the pandemic.

We need to encourage more young people to take up plumbing and heating apprenticeships and this may be a tool that is used more in the future and may be a selling point to those interested in the industry, especially those in more rural towns that are not near colleges.

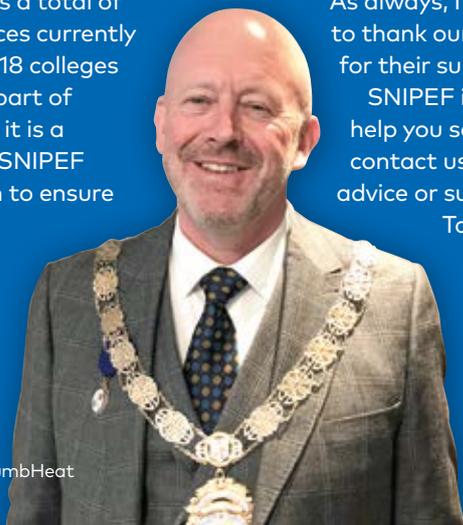
Another selling point may be the introduction of more exposure to renewable technologies in their learning. This will help equip future workers with energy-efficient changes that are due to come in the future.

With Brexit now looming, I recommend that members check how this will affect their businesses. We don't know what changes this means for the construction industry, but it is best to get as prepared as possible. Some businesses may rely on our relationship with the rest of the EU for workers and materials.

As always, I would like to thank our members for their support.

SNIPEF is here to help you so please contact us if you need advice or support.

Take care.



Neil Hadden, SNIPEF President

News

LATEST FROM AROUND THE FEDERATION

💡 INDUSTRY NEWS

The Scottish Construction Leadership Forum (CLF) has recently published its plan for the sector's recovery from the impact of coronavirus.

The CLF is a collaborative initiative of Construction Scotland and the Scottish Government which was established in March 2019 to develop and implement an action plan of improvement ideas aligned with government policies and the Construction Scotland Industry Strategy.

It has now turned its focus to recovery from the coronavirus pandemic.

The forum's vision is to make fair work and quality jobs available to a skilled and diverse workforce that provides quality products for customers. In addition to building an industry that thrives on being low carbon and socially responsible, CLF intends to ensure productive, safe and digitally-enabled work environments that are also profitable.

The CLF's Restart and Recovery Forum has identified five key areas to focus on:

- Pipelines and commercials – focusing on establishing a pipeline of work and addressing issues such as expected under-pricing of work
- Skills and workforce – supporting employment, fairness of work and those who may become unemployed
- Transformation – transforming working practices to maintain and enhance worker safety while enabling productivity in the Covid-19 working environment
- Supply chain resilience and capability –

💡 GRADING CARDS

Reminder: Changes to the

December 2020 is your final opportunity to renew your SNIJIB/CSCS card before 'grandfather rights' are phased out. From 1 January 2021, evidence of recognised qualifications will be an essential requirement in order to renew SNIJIB/CSCS cards.

Following updates to the Construction Leadership Council's criteria, plumbing occupational qualifications will soon be necessary in order to obtain the recognised CSCS logo. Evidence of having

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The latest news and advice on the Covid pandemic and where to get help / [Page 14](#)

+ Sign-off success
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+ Bank on it
Len Bunton and Rudi Klein on why project bank accounts are so important / [Page 28](#)

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Scotland's construction recovery plan revealed

confidence building through clear pipelines of investment and measures to encourage development and activity

- Industry data and insight – clearer construction pipeline information and better data sets.

SNIPEF, as part of the CICV Forum, provided some information for the plan and is working with others to align to the recovery plan and make sure that progress is being made. The recovery plan can be viewed here: www.constructionforum.scot/recovery-plan

GREEN ENERGY

SNIPEF plays part in heat pump sector discussions

SNIPEF Technical and Skills Manager Martyn Raine attended the first meeting of an independent expert group exploring the potential of a heat pump sector deal for Scotland in October.

Chaired by Mike Thornton from the Energy Saving Trust, the group will report back to the Scottish Government next year.

We are excited to be part of this group and to help shape the heat pump sector deal.

It is important to us at SNIPEF that we play a role in decarbonising domestic heat and help with the green agenda. We will keep our members updated on any progress in the future.

SNIJIB grading card scheme are fast approaching

attained SVQ level 2 or 3, or City and Guilds Craft Certificate in Plumbing must be submitted for all applications and renewals. This new requirement will apply to all Graded Plumber, Advanced Plumber, and Technician Plumber cards.

Those who were previously able to qualify under the historic 'grandfather rights' will no longer be able to do so from January. After this, these individuals will need to achieve and submit plumbing occupational qualifications before the

expiry of their current card if they wish to renew.

The last opportunity to renew a grading card using 'grandfather rights' will be December 2020. Currently, grading cards have a lifespan of five years, making 2025 the expiry date for any cards renewed

before the end of the year. SNIJIB will now request copies of all qualifications in preparation for the changes to come into effect in 2021.

If you have any questions or concerns, please get in touch with the SNIJIB team at info@snijib.org or by calling **0131 524 1225**.

APPROVED CERTIFIER

With certification becoming increasingly important in the construction industry, SNIPEF has been advised by the Scottish Government that it has been reappointed to run the Approved Certifier of Construction scheme for Drainage, Heating and Plumbing for six more years.

The scheme, which was initially introduced as part of the 2003 Building (Scotland) Act, allows for certain categories of work which are subject to a building warrant to be carried out and self-certified by an approved certifier.

Categories of work include above and below ground drainage, gas, oil, solid fuel installations and renewables. It also means work certified under the scheme does not require a building control officer to be in attendance and, as a result, can dramatically increase the speed of a project.

SNIPEF is just one of the providers appointed by the Scottish Government to run an approved certifier of construction scheme. The schemes were supported by Kevin Stewart, the Scottish Government Minister for Local Government, Housing, and Planning, when he wrote to the 32 local authorities to highlight the potential of certification.



Scheme role's a certified success

SNIPEF to run ACCS for another six years

He said: "Although certification is an optional method for compliance, certificates of design support the earliest approval of warrants by removing the need for verifiers to check

compliance in these areas.

"The use of certificates of construction would also have significant value at this time where there is a need and requirement to actively manage the number of

SAFETY CAMPAIGN

Celebrating 10 years of Gas Safe

SNIPEF was pleased to back this year's Gas Safety Week, which ran from 14 to 20 September, to help raise awareness of the importance of gas safety and taking care of your gas appliances.

The tenth annual Gas Safety Week saw organisations from across the UK work together to

raise awareness of the dangers of poorly maintained gas appliances, which can cause gas leaks, fires, explosions and carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning.

Unfortunately, there were no in-person events due to the pandemic, but during the week SNIPEF reminded our members



“ Certification has multiple benefits, including improved efficiency and productivity and increased peace of mind, with the highest standards upheld”

people on site to reduce the transmission of Covid-19.

“As electrical, drainage, heating and plumbing work can be certified by qualified building professionals, their increased use will reduce the need for building standards inspections visits.”

The reappointment decision was made on 11 September by the Scottish Government’s Building Standards Division (BSD) after a lengthy application process involving intensive data and documentation submission followed by review by a BSD appointed certification panel.

Fiona Hodgson, Chief Executive of SNIPEF, said: “This is a very pleasing development and endorses the high-quality services we have been providing over the past 11 years.

“Certification has multiple benefits, including improved efficiency and productivity and increased peace of mind, with the highest standards upheld.

“Along with other scheme providers, SNIPEF has been working with the Scottish Government over the summer

to address issues raised by the ongoing coronavirus outbreak and create positive outcomes for certification.

“The issue of certification sits high on the sector’s agenda and building standards services are key to ensuring that construction schemes can help raise standards throughout the industry and deliver new buildings and improved facilities.”

The BSD manages the Certification Register, which is the only authoritative source for approved bodies and certifiers.

Members of the scheme appear on this register, which is used by clients and local authorities.

To become an approved certifier, an individual must be a member of an approved scheme and meet rigorous standards agreed with the BSD. They must also be able to demonstrate an in-depth knowledge and understanding of building regulations.

For further information on ACCS, see www.snipef.org/contractors/certification-schemes/accs



Spotlight on standards in Quality Plumber Week

Quality Plumber Week ran from 5-11 October this year and to celebrate, SNIPEF encouraged members on social media to post their greatest work. We were sent some excellent photos, including images of plant rooms from Aberdeenshire, one featuring two air source heat pumps.

The event was organised by APHC to bring the industry together to debate important issues and shine a spotlight on the work that quality plumbing and heating contractors carry out daily. Supporting this event gave us a way to celebrate our highly skilled plumbing and heating operatives, something we always strive to do.

Self-certifying work can bring a host of benefits

ty Week



and customers of the small things they can do to keep themselves safe around gas. Our social media campaign across Facebook and Twitter shared gas safety tips and information for both members and customers:

- Check your gas appliances every year. Also, help your loved ones by ensuring that they have their appliances checked and serviced regularly.
- Check/prove your engineer

is Gas Safe registered by asking for or showing cards

- Check for warning signs that could indicate your (or others’) appliances are not working correctly
- Know the six main symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning – headaches, dizziness, breathlessness, nausea, collapse and loss of consciousness.
- Install an audible carbon monoxide alarm and make sure you know where it is located.

CHARITY

Run for it

SNIFE staff member Lesley O'Hara has completed a running challenge for Maggie's Centre in Edinburgh. Her goal was to run 50 miles in August, and she completed it in just two weeks. She smashed her original target of £150 and managed to raise a whopping £620.

Lesley decided to take on the challenge as she knows first-hand the amazing work that Maggie's Centre does, as do many at SNIFE. Maggie's offers the best possible support, for free, to anyone with cancer. They help people take back control when cancer turns life upside down, by helping to provide professional support for anything from treatment side effects to money worries.

Keeping her followers up to date on Facebook, Lesley's progress posts provided some cheery relief during Covid. A big well done to Lesley.

Lesley raised more than four times as much as she'd hoped by taking on the charity running challenge



It's important to know how the change will affect your business

VAT RULES

Reverse charge VAT delayed until March

The introduction of reverse charge VAT is being postponed for a further five months to 1 March 2021.

HMRC is bringing in domestic reverse charge VAT on supplies of construction services in order to combat fraud in the sector. It was originally proposed to start on 1 October 2019 but was given a one-year extension following concerns that businesses were not ready to implement the changes.

The move has now been pushed back a further five months to give businesses extra time to overcome the impact on them of the coronavirus pandemic.

If your business is registered with the Construction Industry Scheme (CIS), reverse VAT will affect you.

This is a new way of collecting VAT from businesses that provide construction services within the scope of the CIS in an attempt to ensure that the Government is recovering the correct amount of VAT from the construction sector.

The domestic reverse charge VAT will mean that the responsibility of paying for VAT on construction supplies will fall on the UK customer rather than the UK supplier.

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO:

- HMRC has stated that it will use a robust compliance strategy, so it is essential to ensure you are prepared ahead of March. Your accounting systems need to be updated so that they can deal with VAT and all staff dealing with these accounts must be familiarised with the changes. Resources explaining how the charge works and when to use it can be found at www.gov.uk/guidance/vat-domestic-reverse-charge-for-building-and-construction-services
- Many businesses will have their cash flow impacted as they will no longer be receiving VAT payments from customers. Some companies will therefore have to assess how the change will affect them and make any necessary adjustments to accommodate it.
- End users and intermediary suppliers are exempt from the reverse VAT charge, provided they declare their status as such in writing to their supplier or building contractor. This ensures that all parties are clear on who is responsible for the VAT.

💡 LIVING WAGE

SNIEF's support for paying real Living Wage

SNIEF is proud to have become an accredited Living Wage employer.

Our commitment – announced during this year's Living Wage Week – will see all our staff receive a minimum hourly wage of £9.50. This rate is higher than the statutory minimum of £8.72 per hour for workers over 25 which was introduced in April 2020. The real Living Wage is an hourly rate set independently and updated annually. It is calculated according to the real costs of living.

SNIEF HR Manager Stephanie Lowe said: "We are committed to supporting our staff and making sure they are earning a fair pay.

"Our members also put the needs of their staff at the forefront by paying the Plumbing Industry Wage Rates, which are higher than the Living



Wage." Peter Kelly, Director of the Poverty Alliance, described the real Living Wage as one of the "key tools to help make an impact on levels of in-work poverty".

He added: "We are delighted that SNIEF has become an accredited Living Wage employer.

"The coronavirus pandemic has

shown us all just how important the Living Wage is for employers and for society and we congratulate SNIEF on joining the network of more than 1,800 Scottish employers who believe in going beyond the government minimum."

Lynn Anderson, from Living Wage Scotland, also welcomed the announcement of our commitment on fair pay.

She said: "We are a movement of employers who together want to go further than the government minimum to make sure that everyone can earn a decent standard of living and that families have what they need to thrive. Our network includes lots of smaller employers as well as larger and iconic Scottish employers like SSE, Standard Life Aberdeen, Barrs, Brewdog, DC Thomson and many more.

"Employers like SNIEF are helping to set the standard for business in Britain by making sure that workers have what they need to get by, and we hope to see many more employers following their example."



Legionella Risk to Re-opening Businesses

During the COVID-19 pandemic many businesses, schools and colleges have been closed. Water services may have been left at a standstill and become stagnant, increasing the risk of Legionella developing in the systems.

Many businesses may not be aware of these potential risks.

Plumbing and Heating Engineers

Why not undertake the BPEC Legionella Cold Water Risk Assessment and Disinfection Training Programme and you could identify these risks, carry out risk assessments and offer courses of action for control and prevention.

Find out more on BPEC's website at www.bpec.org.uk

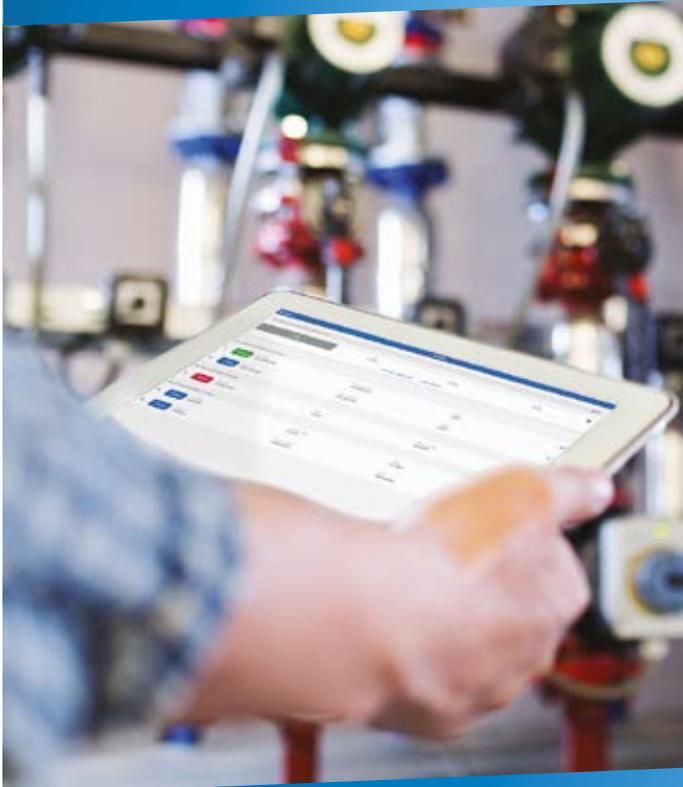
Are you a training centre interested in offering this course?

Please contact BPEC for further information. Centre approval can be undertaken remotely.



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★ BREXIT BULLETIN



Fears over supplies of gas parts

The Builders Merchants Federation (BMF) has published a **Product Availability Survey Analysis** which highlights any potential construction product, input material or component shortages given the impending end of the Brexit implementation period on 31 December.

The survey, which was requested by the Construction Leadership Council, was sent to all BMF supplier members and 42 replied. One of the

key findings showed that respondents anticipated supply issues with gas parts and bathroom fittings. Other results from the survey included:

- 64% of respondents anticipate there would be no supply issues for imported products after 31 December 2020
- 65% think there will be no supply issues after 31 December 2020 for any raw materials or components
- 78% are not expecting

💡 INSTALLERSOTLAND

Installer festival moves online

SNIEPF has supported the InstallerSCOTLAND/NI Festival, a virtual industry gathering held in October and presented by Installer.

Over the three-day event, InstallerSCOTLAND/NI Festival offered a lively programme of webinars and online sessions covering a whole range of subjects, but specifically for Scottish and Northern Irish installers.

SNIEPF's Technical and

Skills Manager, Martyn Raine, hosted a presentation introducing the Building Standards Certification Scheme. The session provided a useful overview and prepared attendees for further training.

It looked at the Approved Certifier of Construction Scheme (ACCS) which allows qualified plumbers (Approved Certifiers of Construction) to self-certify drainage, plumbing and heating work which is subject to a building warrant.

Other events included a session on future-proofing heating businesses in Scotland and Northern Ireland with OFTEC and the

any supply issues for replacement parts required for the operation of their factories after 31 December

● 55% revealed they plan to stockpile products in advance of 31 December 2020. Natural cement, ventilation equipment and Spanish roofing were products suppliers advised they would stockpile. The stockpiling of supply period ranged from two weeks to six months

● 59% of people who replied believe other issues may impact production, a few comments that were raised were a second Covid wave, concerns over delays of components at borders and shipping and logistics.

For more Brexit information from BMF, visit www.bmf.org.uk/BMF/Policy__Public_Affairs/BMF-Brexit-Hub.aspx

Make sure you're ready

With Brexit looming, the UK Government has created a Brexit Readiness List to inform you about any upcoming changes which may affect your business, family and personal circumstances. All you have to do is answer a few questions to get a personalised list of actions. Visit www.gov.uk/transition to access your personalised list.

The Construction Leadership Council also has a useful dedicated news page for Brexit updates. View it at www.constructionleadershipcouncil.co.uk

Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS), a Q&A with Graham Plumbers' Merchant and two sessions hosted by Installer talking with operatives about the parts of the job they want to flush away forever.

It was fantastic to see that Installer could still host events during this uncertain time. The increased use of digital technology allows for more people to attend events without having to travel and this festival was able to bring both Scottish and Northern Irish businesses together.

While the plumbing and heating industry across the UK shares many traits, it was great to see how



Installer provided tailored content for firms working in both Scotland and Northern Ireland.

SNIPEF will be part of a further roundtable discussion on the future of heating in Scotland on 16 November.

For more information and to view the introduction to the Building Standards Certification Scheme session, please visit www.installeronline.co.uk



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Supportive service

Although SNIPEF staff are still working from home, we are as committed as ever to providing members with excellent service while keeping you up to date with the latest guidance and being on hand for support and advice during this uncertain time.

We have moved some of our training courses online, helping our members save time and money. We hope this will help you take part in more training.

Our technical team has also been looking into developing online training modules which members can use to show they are Covid aware and to increase levels of confidence for those bringing our members into their homes to undertake domestic works.

The SNIPEF human resources team has been working hard to help members with any staffing issues they are having at the moment, as well as providing updated guidance on the changing financial support provided by both the UK and Scottish Government.

The training team is focused on making sure that apprentices, colleges and employees are getting the support they need to help apprentices continue with both their theory and practical work.

The new website launched by the SNIPEF membership and marketing team has been well received, and members can access a range of Covid-19 support including government updates, employment guidance, financial support and much more.

We're here to help your business keep going throughout these tough times

Here to help

SNIPEF will continue to provide essential help to all our members throughout the Covid-19 pandemic

by delivering information and guidance and being on hand to help with any issues members are experiencing.

We have a dedicated team

who are committed to continuing the best possible service we can. There is a specific Covid-19 section on our website – www.snipef.org – that

features updates, helpful advice and guidance. We encourage you to check this daily along with our social media channels. If you have any queries

or need any help, please contact us on **0131 556 0600** or membership@snipef.org



Commercial and employment webinars

SNIEF members have been given the opportunity to educate themselves on multiple commercial topics through the latest webinars from the Construction Industry Coronavirus (CICV) Forum.

The free webinars are to help industry professionals improve their contractual and commercial awareness on construction projects. The six sessions are hosted every two weeks by leading industry experts. The topics covered so far have been: Project bank accounts, changing the culture, getting paid on time, notice and time extension and suspension and termination. You can watch them again at cicvforum.co.uk/webinars

The final webinar will be held on 24 November and covers conflict avoidance.

Fiona Hodgson, CEO of SNIEF and Chair of the Forum's Commercial sub-group, said: "Since March, the CICV Forum has helped countless professionals across Scotland and beyond with a wealth of information.

"This new development is yet another way in which the industry is coming together to help each other and assist in the rebuilding of the industry."

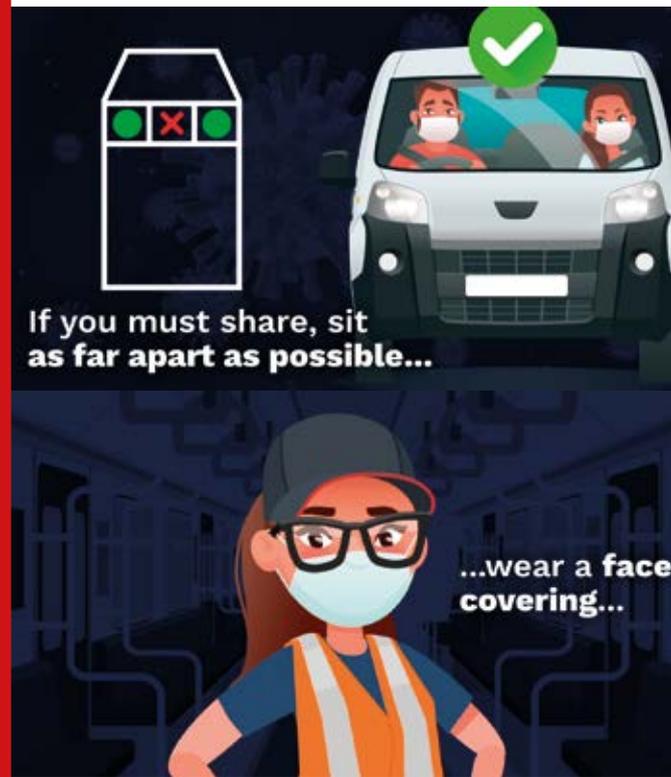
Fiona added: "One of the most commonly asked questions we are currently

“ We’re listening to what people need and responding with clear and relevant advice that will help Scotland’s businesses”

hearing is, 'How can we improve cash flow and get paid on time?'. It's clear there's a demand for more commercial information, so like everything the Forum does, we're listening to what people need and responding with clear and relevant advice that will help Scotland's businesses."

The Forum also hosted two employment webinars to advise and answer questions on redundancy, restructuring and other urgent employment issues. The first webinar focused on redundancy and restructuring while the second webinar, which featured SNIEF's Industrial Relations Manager, Stephanie Lowe, focused on the government's Job Support Scheme.

To view previous webinars and register for future webinars please visit cicvforum.co.uk/webinars



Staying safe on your way to work

As part of the CICV Forum, we have contributed to a new 'Stay safe while travelling' animation, which offers advice on how workers can travel to work safely.

The video explains practical measures contractors can follow to protect themselves and help prevent the spread of the virus among colleagues, customers, friends and family. It emphasises the Forum's focus on collaboration and co-operation to help the industry get through the Covid-19 pandemic.

The video reminds workers that Covid-19 is still a serious threat and encourages you to travel alone where possible.

If you must travel with others, follow advice such as:

- Sit as far away as possible and wear a face covering
- Avoid eating, drinking or vaping
- Clean all touchable surfaces and dispose of cleaning items properly
- Keep windows partially open and don't use air conditioning
- Keep personal items separate
- Wash your hand when exiting the vehicle
- Always try to share with the same people on each journey.

If you have to take public transport:

- Wash your hand before and after travel
- Avoid rush hour if possible
- Wear a face covering
- Keep two metres apart from others
- Use contactless payment if you can.

You can watch our previous webinars online by visiting the CICV Forum's website



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Meet a member

In our latest profile, we get to know one of our associate members, **Iain Morrison**, Domestic Area Sales Manager for Scotland at Pegler

HI IAIN, TELL US ABOUT YOUR COMPANY

The company originally traded as Pegler Ltd and Yorkshire Fittings Ltd and was established in the 1890s. We are one of the world's leading manufacturers of advanced plumbing, heating and engineering products.

WHAT IS YOUR ROLE?

I predominantly work with housebuilders, local authorities, contractors, merchants and housing associations.

HOW DID YOU GET STARTED IN THE INDUSTRY?

My previous working life was in financial sales. I became interested in the industry purely based on Pegler's reputation. If you have the people skills for a sales role, then having world-class products is a huge bonus.



QUICK FACTS

NAME: Pegler
BASED: Doncaster
WEBSITE:
www.pegler.yorkshire.co.uk

Iain's quick-fire questions

COFFEE OR TEA? Coffee, way too much coffee

SWEET OR SAVOURY?
Sweet

FAVOURITE FILM
Hacksaw Ridge

LAST THING YOU READ?
Emails... so many emails

WHICH SUPERPOWER WOULD YOU CHOOSE TO HAVE? Probably invisibility

MORNING PERSON OR NIGHT OWL? Bit of both

FAVOURITE HOLIDAY DESTINATION? Mexico

DREAM CAR? 1965 AC Cobra

WHAT IS YOUR FUNNIEST PLUMBING MOMENT?

Watching someone fill a bucket under a sink while trying to clear a blockage, only for them to immediately pour the contents of the bucket back down the plughole and all over the floor.

WHAT ARE YOUR AMBITIONS FOR THE FUTURE?

Keep helping customers move to 'heat free' installations.

WHAT WOULD YOU CHANGE ABOUT THE INDUSTRY?

Pricing structures could be simplified. I'd like more transparency in the sector.

WHAT'S THE BEST THING ABOUT BEING A SNIPEF ASSOCIATE MEMBER?

Interacting with other members is great, and I enjoy helping to provide solutions. I miss the social events during this unprecedented period. ■

NEW MEMBERS

- R G Gibb Plumbing & Heating
- J & R MacLeod Plumbing & Heating Ltd
- Qmech Scotland Limited
- Evolved Energy Services Ltd
- B I Electrical Ltd
- B B Plumbing Ltd
- A I M Plumbing, Heating & Electrical
- MacTavish Plumbing & Heating Services
- N R M Plumbing

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and reward
our installers

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We're not just any rad. We're Stelrad.



QUALITY PRODUCTS | EXTENSIVE RANGE | VALUE FOR MONEY | EASY INSTALLATION



Andy's update

By Andy Furnevel,
Membership Officer,
SNIPEF

We catch up with SNIPEF Membership Officer Andy Furnevel and find out what he's been up to recently

It's been great to hear from many SNIPEF members telling me how busy they have been since the Covid restrictions were lifted on the industry.

It's a relief to know that so many of you have been in constant work and I hope this continues for the future. I do know that there may be some companies who don't feel the same and I encourage them to get in touch if they need any help or advice. We may all still face tougher times and our support is available to you.

I'VE FOUND MY CALLING

If you have called the main SNIPEF telephone number recently the chances are you will have been welcomed by yours truly. I volunteered to be on the front line for all incoming calls for the organisation in October having taken calls for a couple of weeks in September. As much as I enjoy answering the phones and providing exceptional customer service, I can't wait to be back on the road attending trade events and meeting up with existing members and firms who have expressed an interest in becoming members.

I've been able to help with a wide range of enquiries (with the support of my colleagues when required) and I've also been able to help members of the public find professional plumbers. SNIPEF licensed members are the only plumbers that are approved and recommended

by Scottish Water and Northern Ireland Water through the WaterSafe Scheme.

NEED A PLUMBER

One of the calls I received in September was from a lady who was experiencing a horrendous issue with the toilets backing up and overflowing in her home. This had been an ongoing issue for several weeks, and I can only imagine how bad it must have been. I was able to contact two SNIPEF members in the area who I knew quite well having met with them both and brought them into membership a few years ago. One of the members was able to carry out an investigation of the drainage system and clear the blockage. A report was then submitted to Scottish Water who would then be able to carry out further repairs to the drainage system in the street. It was fantastic customer care from one of our members.

GET IN TOUCH

Remember you can follow me on Twitter [@SNIPEFandy](#) where I will announce my plans and if you would like a membership update or have any questions then please call me on **07801 741 346** or email andy.furnevel@snipef.org Stay safe and see you soon. ■



Pipe insulation plays a major role in keeping systems safe and efficient. **Martyn Raine** reveals how to make the right decision on when you need to fit it and where to turn for information

In the pipeline

Pipe insulation is a major component of every building and the services within that building, providing thermal protection throughout the life of the system. It is a significant factor in keeping building services efficient in their operation but also provides essential safety benefits to the systems, especially cold and hot water systems.

When installing most plumbing systems, the plumber will be required to identify if pipe insulation is going to be required. The requirement for insulation will be determined by a whole host of factors of the situation and a plumber is required to consider these factors in making the decision. This article will identify some key sources of information that can be used and how to make the correct decision.

The Water Supply (Water Fittings) (Scotland) Byelaws 2014 & The Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations (Northern Ireland), (referred to as the Water Regulations in this article) are to be considered when working on any water system that is connected to the public water network. The WRAS *Water Regulations Guide* provides technical detail that will allow compliance with the water regulations to be achieved and is applicable in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

WATER REGULATIONS GUIDE

All water fittings within the building but outside the thermal envelope, or water fittings that are outside the building, must be insulated to protect against freezing. A building's thermal

envelope is typically the internal sides of all the external walls (including separating walls), the ground floor constructional finish (the concrete screed surface/timber flooring surface) and the ceilings of the uppermost floor. If in any doubt you should consult the designer of the building. So, locations like roof spaces, in suspended floors, floating floors, behind drylining on external walls, etc will require thermal protection as they are outside the thermal envelope and unheated areas.

ENERGY CONSERVATION OF HOT WATER

All secondary hot water pipework is required to be insulated; this reduces undesired heat losses on the return to the hot water storage. The water regs guide provides guidance on the maximum permissible length of uninsulated hot water pipework.

| Pipe diameter(mm) | Max length in metres |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|
| 12 | 20 |
| Over 12 up to and including 22 | 12 |
| Over 22 up to and including 28 | 8 |
| Over 28 | 3 |

PRESSURE RELIEF PIPEWORK

If this pipe is coming from an unvented hot water cylinder, then the first metre is required to be insulated. If this pipework passes through a location that is not heated it should also be insulated which will protect the pipework from freezing if the PRV were activated. This includes sealed central heating systems.

ne

BUILDING STANDARDS SCOTLAND 6.4 – INSULATION OF PIPES, DUCTS AND VESSELS

Every building must be designed and constructed in such a way that temperature loss from heated pipes, ducts and vessels, and temperature gain to cooling pipes and ducts, is resisted. The standard refers to the Building Service Compliance Guide. This document replicates UK guidance and allows a UK standardisation to be achieved. It is guidance for new systems and replacement, in whole or in part, of existing systems.

NEW BUILD (DOMESTIC)

The Building Service Compliance Guide (Scotland and Northern Ireland) states: (i) Primary circulation pipes for heating circuits should be insulated wherever they pass outside the heated living space or through voids which communicate with and are ventilated from unheated spaces; (ii) Primary circulation pipes for domestic hot water circuits should be insulated throughout their length; (iii) All pipes connected to hot water storage vessels, including the vent pipe, should be insulated for at least 1m. Consideration should also be made for exposed pipework that could pose a risk of burning if someone were to touch a hot pipe. If secondary circulation is used, all pipes kept hot by that circulation should be insulated.



By Martyn Raine,
Technical and
Skills Manager,
SNIPEF

BUILDING CONVERSIONS

In a new build, full compliance is expected as there is access to all pipework to install insulation. If it is a conversion of a building (for example an office block to dwellings, or large townhouse to several individual flats) then the insulation should meet the requirements of the building standard (as is reasonably practicable) and be no worse than it was before the work. It may be the case that access to some existing pipework is not cost-effective so is unachievable.

EXISTING SYSTEMS

Whenever a boiler or hot water storage vessel is replaced in an existing system, any pipes that are exposed as part of the work or are otherwise accessible should be insulated as recommended above, or to some lesser standard where practical constraints dictate.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

As with any decision, the plumber needs to be fully aware of any other factors that may affect the plumbing system. For example, you need to consider environmental influences such as the building location, some areas of the country will be exposed to more extreme weather conditions or buildings that may be infrequently used, such as village halls or youth hostels. Further guidance on the specification of pipe insulation can be found in BS 5422 and installation standards can be found in BS 5970. ■

Useful reference material

- Building Services Compliance Guide Northern Ireland/Scotland
- WRAS Water Regulations Guide
- Domestic Heating Design Guide

SNIPEF's Martyn Raine explores how to cut the risks and avoid potential pitfalls when you're certifying work carried out by a third party

Successful sign-off

The Approved Certifier of Construction scheme is a popular scheme for plumbers to join. It allows plumbing work that is subject to a building warrant to be signed off with no need for the local authority (verifier) to attend a site.

Many members of the scheme tend to only certify work carried out themselves or by their colleagues and employees who they have worked alongside on the project.

However, the scheme also allows a certifier to certify the work of third-party operatives. This means that work carried out by a third-party who is not employed by the certifier's business (approved body) can be certified.

As with any certification activity, there are risks and processes and measures are required to be implemented to mitigate that risk. Third-party certification is likely to increase risk and the potential for mistakes during certification.

HOW IT WORKS

Here are some examples of how the certification scheme can work:

- **Situation A: Certification of your own work.** This is probably the most common practice in the scheme. This is when the work is certified by the person who carried out all the plumbing works. There is low risk as the certifier is present throughout.

- **Situation B: The certifier carries out certification work of the plumbers that are employed in the same business (approved body).** There is moderate risk, the certifier is employed by the business which also employs the operative so they already have a working relationship and a common understanding of the works being carried out.

- **Situation C: The certifier carries out certification of work by a person who is not employed or under the supervision of the certifiers business.** There is higher risk, as it is highly likely there is no working relationship between the businesses or the employees of the businesses, the operative is working for another business and there is probably not a contract in place between the certifier or the third-party.



By Martyn Raine, Technical and Skills Manager, SNIPEF

Example: Below-ground drainage

Below-ground drainage is a common type of work that falls into the certification scheme for plumbers. If you are the plumber and certifier carrying out this work, it is relatively straightforward as you are there throughout the installation, thereby being present at all the

key stages of the installation. If it is third-party work carried out by either your team or an operative who is not part of your business, then the risk is naturally higher.

As with any work, there are key fundamental stages, and below-ground drainage is no different. As a certifier, you

“ If you are aware that you will be required to sign off any third-party work, ensure you engage with the relevant person in control of the project”

Both situations B and C create higher risks for certification as the certifier is not actually carrying out the installation work.

With any third-party certification activity, it is vitally important that the certifier establishes some key facts that will support the certification process. The certifier may be required to identify key times/factors where they need to be present to check and inspect the work. The certifier should also ensure the

must be satisfied that the work complies with building regulations and is installed correctly. It would be good practice to monitor the installation, thus ensuring the third-party is carrying out work to industry standards, for example, bedding, gradients,

connections, pressure test, etc. The backfilling is also key and materials, compacting process, and final test are all key factors the certifier should consider.

Please note this is an example and may not suit all situations. Each situation must be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

people carrying out the work are competent to do so. In all, the certifier should supervise and oversee any work they will be required to certify.

In theory, this all sounds straightforward, but putting this into practice may prove to be challenging. The certifier is required to identify and carry out a process that does not pose any risk to the certification process.

PROTECTING YOURSELF

If a certifier is asked to certify works carried out by a third-party and the certifier has not been involved with planning or supervision in any way, it may prove impossible to safely certify that work. With the below-ground drainage example on the left, there may have been faults with the drainage, but now it has been covered over, the certifier cannot confirm the work complies with building regulations.

If the certifier completes a certificate and they have not taken adequate steps to ensure compliance, they may be deemed to have signed a certificate of construction recklessly.

As with all certification activities, all factors need to be considered. If you are aware that you will be required to sign off any third-party work, ensure you engage with the relevant person in control of the project so you can implement a suitable procedure to ensure you minimise the risk to yourself as a certifier.

For more information, go to bit.ly/34Zzoqs ■

AIMing at improve

Paul Millard, Technical Manager at the Water Regulations Advisory Scheme, discusses the recent update to the Approved Installation Method for RPZ valves and what the changes mean for you

The Approved Installation Method for Type BA devices (RPZ valves) has been updated

to Issue 2 of AIM 08-01. These changes come after a comprehensive review by the water industry, culminating in the new publication in January 2020. This means we are now part-way through a 12-month transition period running alongside Issue 1, which is to be withdrawn on 7 January 2021.

RPZ valves play an important role in protecting people from the risk of the contamination from plumbing systems. The AIM has been updated to ensure that commissioning and testing is carried out consistently to a suitable standard. It details the standards for commissioning and compliance testing RPZ valves, ensuring all test equipment is calibrated and improving how tests are reported.

During the transition period, training providers will have time to understand and adopt the changes, while commissioners and testers can access the necessary update training.

But what are the main points to be aware of?

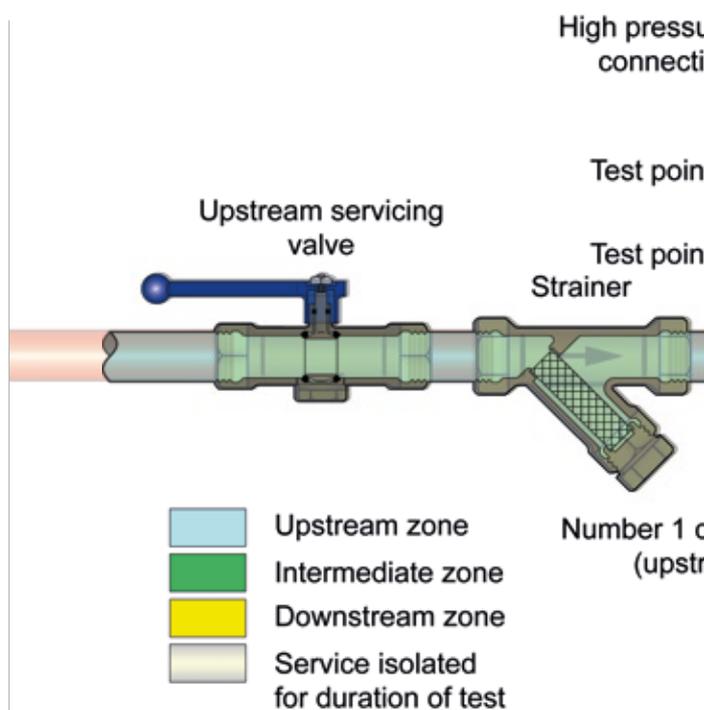
NOTIFICATION

Recognising the important role of advanced notification

for RPZ valves, the WaterSafe board agreed that approved contractors should not automatically be exempt from advanced notification. Approved contractor schemes duly updated their terms and conditions so there is now a universal approach to notify for all who propose to install RPZ valves. This ensures RPZ valves are suitable for the proposed application, before purchase, as they can often be expensive. An important part of the notification to highlight is the consent notice issued by the Water Company, as this contains important information and conditions which need to be followed closely.

There have, however, been changes to the installation requirements. For example, the maximum height of an RPZ valve is 1.5m, measured from the floor to the top of the valve. This should ensure it can be easily accessed for testing. There must also be clearance underneath the valve to maintain air gap protection (at least 0.3m) for the relief port.

In the interest of safety, RPZ valves must not be installed above electrical equipment. This is because there is a relief port which, when required, automatically discharges water to protect the upstream system. Water and electricity are never a good mix, but it

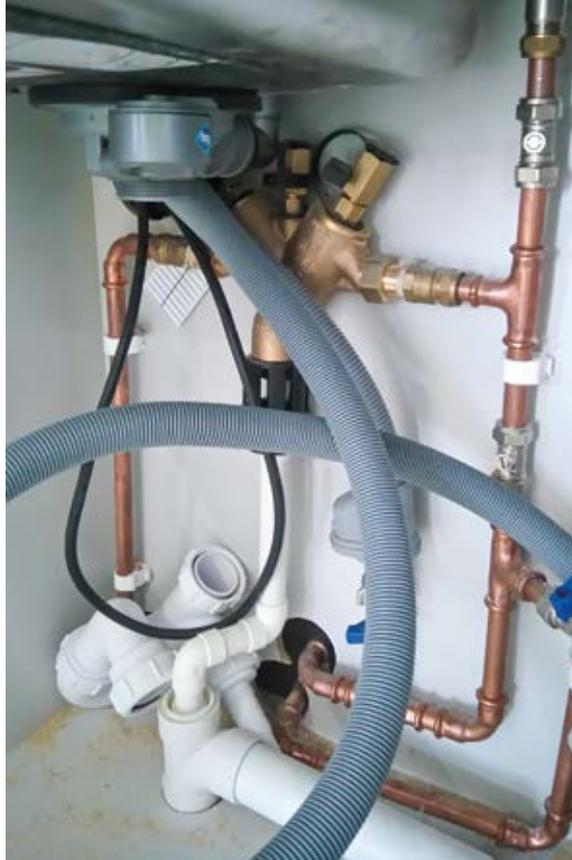


RPZ testing assembly

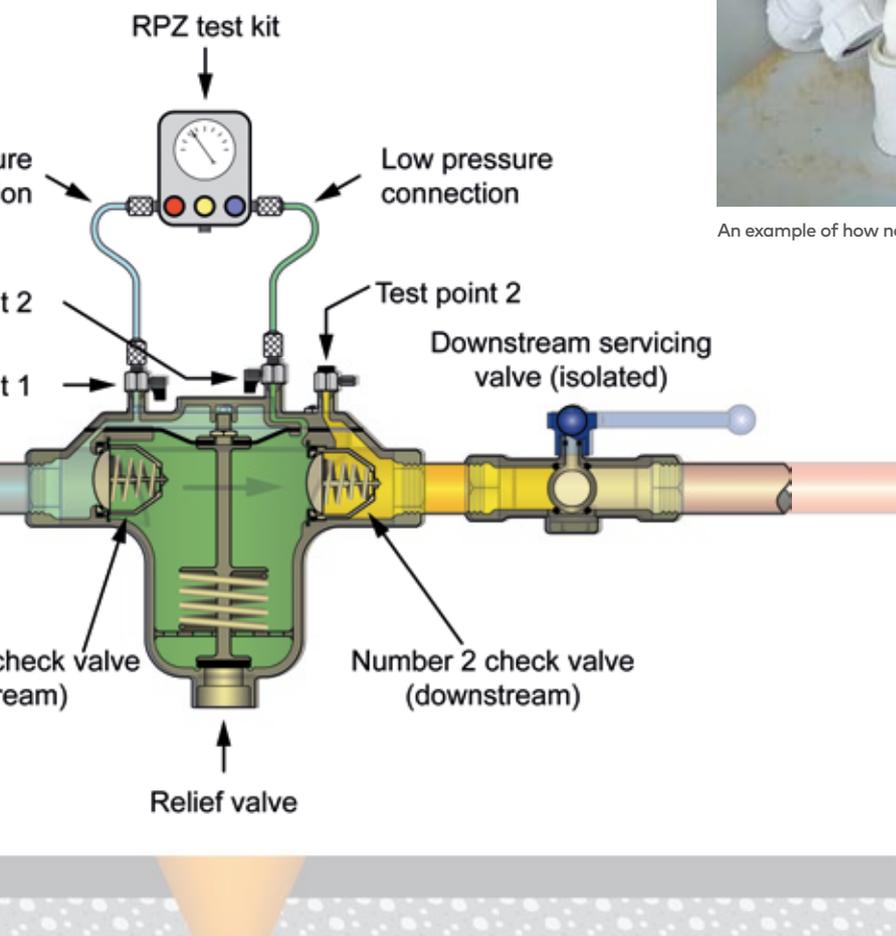
is surprising how often valves are found above electrical equipment. Cabinets must be free draining when RPZ valves are installed, so the air gap to the relief port can be maintained. The new AIM clarifies that RPZ valves that were already lawfully installed will still be valid, but they will need to continue to undergo regular tests to ensure they remain compliant.

In addition, the updated AIM now includes information on commissioning and a field

ment



An example of how not to install an RPZ valve



test for compliance testing. It is important to note that whilst these terms are new, the physical testing remains the same. Any commissioning or testing must only be completed by a competent person, for example, a trained and recognised RPZ Valve Tester, after it has been installed.

A clearer explanation has been provided for the roles and responsibility for managing RPZ valves, in particular with regards to reporting and what should happen if the

RPZ valve fails the compliance testing. Where there is a failure which cannot be immediately repaired, water companies will need to be consulted and agree the remedial actions. This will ensure consumers can continue to be protected.

TIME FOR TRAINING

As the end of the transition period draws closer, it is important for RPZ testers to make sure they get the updated training, which is being offered for free by the water industry

through WRAS. While WRAS has been making efforts to contact all registered testers since the start of the year, 30% have still not registered for the training. If you fall into this group, it is important to make contact as soon as possible, check your details are up to date and sign up for training.

Failure to do this before the deadline means testers will not be recognised beyond 7 January and will have to sit a full training course based on Issue 2 of the Approved Installation Method. You'll need to act quickly, as time is running out and the training is coming to a close in November. There are only a few training sessions left – contact WRAS immediately for details.

WRAS is also recommending relevant parties use this time to read and understand the new AIM and make contact with their water company if they do have any questions before the transition period ends.

For more information visit the WRAS website, where you can register for training, find out more about the changes and view the conversion training guide: www.wras.co.uk/plumbing_professionals/rpz_testers/issue-2-update

Round-up of latest WaterSafe activities and events

+ For more information and advice about how you can benefit from WaterSafe membership, please visit www.watersafe.org.uk



Choosing the best

WaterSafe's latest survey* has revealed the top three qualities that homeowners in Scotland and Northern Ireland value most when hiring a plumber:

- 92% of respondents in Scotland and 82% in Northern Ireland chose 'Qualified in plumbing'
- 83% in Scotland and 75% in Northern Ireland picked 'Trustworthy'
- 47% in Scotland and 45% in Northern Ireland said 'Has knowledge of keeping your water safe'.

WaterSafe is supported by all UK water companies, including Scottish Water and Northern Ireland Water – who only recommend WaterSafe registered businesses to customers. Around three quarters of homeowners in Scotland and Northern Ireland said they felt more confident about using a plumber who was on a list promoted by their local water company.

Find out how qualified plumbers who are SNIPEF members and have a recognised water fittings certificate are eligible to join WaterSafe for free at www.snipef.org or www.watersafe.org.uk/howtojoin

*From a UK-wide survey of 2,000 homeowners, 2019

Don't gamble on safety

Private water supplies in Scotland are more likely to fail stringent quality tests, warns the UK plumber approval body WaterSafe

WaterSafe is highlighting the risk to public health as figures from the Drinking Water Quality Regulator show more than 10% of tests on privately owned and operated water networks failed to meet drinking water standards in the latest published results.

This is an increase on 6.5% last year and 125 times the rate of failures in public drinking water supplied by Scottish Water, which continues to be among the safest in the world.

Local authorities are responsible for regulating private water supplies. Each year the Drinking Water Quality Regulator, which regulates public supplies, publishes a report on private supplies based on the authorities' findings. These findings have prompted WaterSafe and the Drinking Water Quality Regulator to urge private water supply owners and operators not to take any chances when it comes to protecting their networks – and customers – from potential contamination.

About 200,000 people in Scotland receive their drinking water from private water supplies, which supply homes,

as well as schools, community halls, hotels, caravan parks, B&Bs and other businesses. Water samples failed due to a number of reasons, including poor water quality at the source, insufficient treatment of the water or poor or no maintenance of the plumbing and treatment systems.

Julie Spinks, Director of WaterSafe, said: "This report shows a worrying proportion of the samples taken have been deemed unsafe. Our message to those who own and operate these networks and sources of water is very clear – always employ a qualified plumber, such as WaterSafe approved, as they are properly trained and competent in the water regulations which govern public water supplies."

Sue Petch, the Drinking Water Quality Regulator, added: "It is vital that these supplies are improved so that people using them have a safe and reliable supply of drinking water."

The annual Drinking Water Quality Report for public and private water supplies can be read at www.dwqr.scot/information/annual-report ■

Honouring our rising stars

Nominations for the Scottish Apprenticeship Awards 2020 are now open to celebrate the talent of tomorrow



It has been a tough year for apprentices who have had to navigate their way through a global pandemic which may have caused their studies or training to be disturbed. That means it's more important than ever to celebrate their hard work, and what better way to do that than by nominating them for a Scottish Apprenticeship Award?

The awards recognise the resilience and hard work of Foundation, Modern and Graduate Apprentices in a year that's been like no other. They will also shine a spotlight on those employers, providers and individuals who champion apprenticeships. The categories for 2020 are:

- Apprentice Ambassador of the Year
- Foundation Apprentice of the Year
- Modern Apprentice of the Year – SCQF Level 5
- Modern Apprentice of the Year – SCQF Level 6+
- Graduate Apprentice of the Year
- Apprentice Instructor of the Year
- SME Employer of the Year
- Large Employer of the Year
- Innovation in Learning Provision.

It's never been more important to recognise the success of our dedicated apprentices, the commitment of their employers and the innovation shown by learning providers. Nominations close at noon

on Wednesday 25 November 2020 and winners will be revealed during Scottish Apprenticeship Week, which takes place from 1-5 March 2021.

TOP TIPS FOR COMPLETING YOUR NOMINATION:

- Make every word count as each question has a word limit
- Include real examples to demonstrate the positive impact of your apprentice, employer or provider
- Don't cut and paste sections – the judge will be able to tell
- Avoid using confusing technical or industry jargon
- Give yourself enough time to complete your entry
- Make sure you nominate in the correct category; your nomination will be disqualified if you don't
- Check all your details are correct, including category, framework and date of completion of the apprenticeship
- When proofreading the nomination, ask yourself if you answered each part of the question
- Remember to save and submit your application.

For more information on the awards and how to make a nomination, please visit www.apprenticeships.scot/events/awards ■

Adopt an Apprentice

The Scottish Government has introduced the Adopt an Apprentice programme, which offers financial support to employers that take on apprentices who have been made redundant as a result of the pandemic.

The incentive helps cover the wage and recruitment costs of taking on an apprentice who has been made redundant from another employer. The financial support is £5,000 for taking on a Modern or Graduate Apprentice for all sectors. It should be used to support an apprentice with employment for a minimum of 12 months.

The Scottish Government has put the future workforce at the heart of rebuilding and renewing the economy. Minister for Business, Fair Work and Skills Jamie Hepburn said: "Apprenticeships are not only valuable for those undertaking them, they are also a key way for all employers to invest in their workforce, and provide the skills the economy needs both now and in the future, especially as we focus on restarting and growing Scotland's economy from coronavirus."

Find out more at about the grant at www.apprenticeships.scot/for-employers/adopt-an-apprentice



After a long campaign for their introduction, project bank accounts are now up and running. Two industry experts explain how the Scottish Government is increasing its efforts to ensure they benefit every firm in the supply chain

Forging str

Almost four years ago, the Scottish Government mandated the use of project bank accounts (PBAs) for all public bodies in receipt of government funding, and also advised other bodies such as local authorities to follow suit.

When launching the policy, the Scottish Government was adamant that all sub-contractors and sub-sub-contractors must benefit from the use of PBAs.

All sub-contractors had to be paid through a PBA if the value of their works was at least 1% of the value of the main contract works. Where sub-contractors were excluded, they were still able

to request that their payments were made through the PBA. This new policy applied to all building projects of more than £4 million but last year this was reduced to £2 million.

BENEFITS FOR SUB-CONTRACTORS

PBAs offer sub-contractors two major benefits. The first is faster and regular payments. PBAs avoid the need for payments to cascade down through the

different layers of contracting. Instead, everybody is paid simultaneously from the same 'pot' within 12-15 days.

The second benefit is that sub-contractors' monies are ring-fenced, so once they're in the PBA they're protected in the event of the main contractor's insolvency.

Monies are held in trust which means that they can't be raided by the main contractor's insolvency practitioner. The monies



By Len Bunton
FRICS FCI Arb,
HON FRIAS
SEC Group
Scotland



By Rudi Klein,
Barrister and
SEC Group CEO

Advice online

Rudi and Len delivered a webinar about PBAs on behalf of the CICV Forum on 15 September. To watch it again, please go to bit.ly/PBA-webinar and download the presentation at www.cicvforum.co.uk/useful-links

longer links



in the PBA are held by the client and main contractor as joint account holders on behalf of the beneficiary sub-contractors.

PROBLEMS WITH PBAS

To date, the experiences of sub-contractors on PBA projects have been very positive. After Carillion collapsed in January 2018, Highways England, the largest user of PBAs down south, reported that sub-contractors on their projects had not lost any money.

But not all has been plain sailing. Some sub-contractors, while enthusiastic about PBAs, have reported that they don't receive information about

More about PBAs

PBAs aren't complicated and shouldn't be feared – they merely offer certainty of payment timing and give you protection in the event of a contractor's insolvency.

To read more about the process, please visit the Useful Links section of the CICV Forum website at www.cicvforum.co.uk where you'll find a dedicated section on PBAs.

Among the material is a link to a particularly helpful Scottish Government publication, *Implementation of Project Bank Accounts* – you won't find clearer guidance anywhere.

whether a PBA has been set up on their projects. Others are aware but for one reason or another have not been included within the PBA arrangements.

Main contractors have often given the excuse that some or all of their sub-contractors don't wish to

be a part of the PBA. Even where they are beneficiaries of the PBA, firms are not always made aware when their payments have been deposited in it.

TIGHTENING THE RULES

The Scottish Government is keen to ensure that the PBA



➤ 'net' in Scotland is cast as widely as possible to include more small firms, and in August it issued updated guidance for the public sector.

This means that where PBAs are implemented, they must be available to and accessible by all sub-contractors and sub-sub-contractors. All commissioning bodies, i.e. public sector construction procurers, must maintain a record of the PBA status of every sub-contractor and sub-sub-contractor and the reasons for any firm declining to join the PBA.

Furthermore, "the main contractor must include PBA provisions in all invitations to tender for sub-contracted work and require sub-contractors to do likewise in all prospective sub-sub-contracts".

Main contractors must be able to provide evidence that PBA relevant information has been sent to all sub-contractors on the project.

The Scottish Government's model PBA contract provisions already require main contractors to give written reasons to clients for excluding a sub-contractor from the PBA.

They are also required to obtain a written explanation from sub-contractors declining to join the PBA and to make this available to the client.

A PBA template notice is shown on this page, which clients must now send to main contractors for circulation to all sub-contractors on the project.

PBA template notice

Project Bank Accounts (PBAs) are Scottish Government policy. They assure that sub-contractors get paid promptly for work done and that those payments are ring-fenced if the main contractor ceases trading. This is a notice to firms concerning the PBA operating on the following construction project.*

Sub-contractors employed by the main contractor must join the PBA where their sub-contract value is at least 1% of the value of the contract awarded to the main contractor. There are very limited potential exemptions and it is generally presumed that sub-contractors will join the PBA. The main contractor and main contract award value for this project are as follows:*

Sub-contractors with lower value sub-contracts and any firm on this project employed by a sub-contractor can ask to join the PBA by contacting the employer in the first instance. Firms who are advised against or denied their opportunity to contact the employer should immediately contact the employer, as follows:*

Employer name:

Email address:

Telephone number:

A sub-contractor or sub-sub-contractor on this project must sign the additional party agreement in order to join the PBA. The additional party agreement must be provided by the main contractor to any sub-contractor it wishes to employ; and by any sub-contractor to any sub-sub-contractor it wishes to employ. Where the additional party agreement is not provided, please contact the employer.

No fees or charges in connection with joining the PBA may be levied on this project. A sub-contractor's or sub-sub-contractor's work in progress on site will be valued by the firm which contracted it to work on this project. Payment will be received directly from the PBA a day or two after the employer deposits it. All participating firms, including the main contractor, will receive payment from the PBA at the same time.

* to be completed by the commissioning body before sending to the main contractor

TELL US YOUR EXPERIENCES

Have you been in, or are involved in, a PBA? Have you been on a PBA project where you weren't invited to join it? If you have been involved in a PBA, did you receive information regarding your

payment amounts going into it and the dates when they were deposited? SNIPEF would like to hear feedback about your experience of PBAs. Please email us at contact@snipef.org with your feedback. ■

Case study: Scotland's Rural College

Claire Lorimer, Procurement Contract Manager at Scotland's Rural College (SRUC), was responsible for procuring the main contractor for the Avian Innovation and Skills Centre at SRUC's Bush Estate in Midlothian.

A PBA was successfully

used for the delivery of the £5 million facility, and Claire was very positive about the benefits that it brought to the supply chain.

She said: "In view of the potential consequences and impact on sub-contractors if a main contractor were to go into

liquidation or withhold payments, SRUC was keen to embed the PBA into the terms and conditions for this project.

"In doing so, it minimised potential risk, while providing confidence of timely payments to both the main contractor and

sub-contractors. This balanced the interest of all within the construction supply chain ensuring consistent cashflows and established fair and transparent payment practices. Once set up, the PBA was easily managed and administered."

THE CORRECT WAY TO PROTECT



With the coronavirus pandemic showing no signs of disappearing, the British Safety Industry Federation gives its advice on finding the right PPE and making sure you use it safely

Personal protective equipment (PPE) has been a hot topic over the last few months as the shortages and difficulties in procuring products have been felt across all industries that would regularly use them for

protecting their workforce.

In particular, respiratory protective equipment (RPE) has seen a huge increase in demand, not just in the workplace but also as a means for protection by the

general public. With face masks and face coverings being made compulsory in large amounts of society, it is vital that the right products are sourced for the situations they will be used within.

COMPLIANCE IS KEY

This increase in demand for RPE has been seen as an opportunity by some to move into the sales of these life-saving products. This may be their first attempt at selling any kind of PPE and the knowledge of the products may not be as it should.

The marketplace has been flooded with non-compliant and fake products originating from sellers that have no experience with this highly regulated industry. The concern is that someone buying RPE will not know what they are looking for and purchase an item that will not actually end up protecting them. In the normal world you would look to the supplier to advise, but with PPE being available from so many new sources, the expertise from the seller has been compromised.

It is also vital to stress that tight-fitting RPE must be fit tested by a competent fit tester. Having a fit test will ensure that the sourced mask fits the wearer and therefore

A Registered Safety Supplier Scheme member:

- Formally declares and commits to selling only certified PPE and safety products that perform to claims made
- Submits their products to random independent scheme testing
- Commits to having their customer-facing staff educated and accredited in the Safe Supply Course
- Maintains a quality policy for their company
- Holds necessary authorisation for service provision
- As a Federation member, trades honestly and ethically.

offers protection from the hazard. Fit testers who are accredited through the fit2fit scheme (www.fit2fit.org) will have experience of many different masks and using an accredited tester could help with mask selection as they may be able to identify non-compliant versions more easily than a first-time user of RPE.

Investigations have been launched into several products and the British Safety Industry Federation (BSIF) has reported well over 200 companies to Trading Standards for selling products that do not comply with the industry standards and therefore should not be being sold. There have even

Make sure you buy the right PPE for your protection

been links to organised crime relating to PPE offers and sales. One such investigation can be found at bit.ly/3IP5TOH

In this instance, PPE has been offered for sale with fake or non-compliant certification. Every item of PPE sold has to be produced to a certain standard. This is checked by a notified body or test house which then independently certifies that the item of PPE meets the standard and is therefore safe to use. That test house must have the ability to certify PPE, which in the case here it did not.

Where is the danger here? It is in the fact that the product appears to be compliant and can be trusted but actually it is not and could result in wearers of the products being exposed to hazards they believed they were protected against due to the product not performing as it should do.

With so many new users of PPE, it's safe to say that a lot will not have experience of purchasing these products, let alone using them, and so there is a real danger that exploitation could be taking place. The regulator for health and safety in the UK, the Health & Safety Executive (HSE), recently confiscated more than 1.5million face masks due to them being non-compliant. This is just an example of the ones that have been identified.

REGISTERED SAFETY SUPPLIER SCHEME

So, if you have now been told that you need to consider PPE

Who benefits:

- The purchasers and end users of safety products and PPE – with products that perform as they should
- The purchasers and users of safety products and PPE sourced from capable, value adding suppliers.



within the workplace, how can you be sure you can purchase equipment safely and know that the products you are purchasing will provide the expected protection? This is where the Registered Safety Supplier Scheme (RSSS) comes in.

BSIF has created the scheme to support the UK safety market. Companies displaying the scheme's logo have signed a binding declaration that the safety equipment and services they offer meet the appropriate standards, fully comply with the PPE regulations and are appropriately CE marked.

The mission of the scheme is to provide assurance to users that only compliant and correctly performing products are being supplied through a capable, educated, competent supply chain. The scheme provides a recognised route to enable a member to demonstrate compliance with due diligence – discharging the obligations of an economic operator under PPE Regulation (EU) 2016/425.

SUPPORT SAFETY

BSIF encourages the companies who purchase PPE to sign up to become a supporter of the scheme.



Supporters agree that they will always try to buy from a company that is a member of the scheme, meaning that they recognise the vital importance of sourcing PPE that does its job properly and can be relied upon. Companies that sign up to be supporters show their commitment to safety in the workplace and this is recognised by putting their logo on the scheme's website to highlight the commitment made.



The BSIF scheme helps you find a trusted supplier

To find a Registered Safety Supplier you can go to www.registeredsafetysupplier.scheme.co.uk and use the 'Suppliers' tab. This will give you a full list of the members of the scheme and will help you to source products from those that know what they are talking about and have years of experience within the PPE industry.

Remember, 'anyone can sell safety, but you shouldn't buy safety from just anyone.' ■

The obligations of a Registered Safety Supplier are:

- Completing a formal, binding declaration that all products will comply with the requirements of applicable legislation and that any specific product performance claims are genuine
- Having the capability to manage a product recall process and take other corrective actions and maintaining a quality policy which includes the BSIF prescribed statement
- For PPE, submitting to the testing of one product per year (randomly selected from their offering) to indicative performance clauses to any standards for which certification is claimed. This audit will include all relevant documentation
- For safety equipment outside of mainstream PPE, not regulated by publicly available standards, an audit of relevant documentation and assessment of claims will be made against one product/service for the published range each year
- For organisations authorised by manufacturers to service, calibrate and/or re-certify products, submitting an audit of the manufacturer's authorisation
- Proof of adequate liability insurance
- Commitment to educate and accredit customer-facing staff within the BSIF Safe Supply Qualification
- For distributors/importers of PPE, demonstration that they comply with the "Obligations and Responsibilities" required by (EU) 2016/425 through maintenance of the audited Compliance Protocol.

Clearing up the confusion



Rudi Klein examines the laws surrounding ambiguities in contracts and gives his advice on how to steer clear of potential problems

The reams of contract documentation – even for small non-domestic plumbing jobs – can be daunting to read. The documentation may have been put together by different people or by somebody who didn't pay too much attention to its content. It may not even be together in one neat pile. For example, you may be bound by the main contract conditions but these can only be read at the main contractor's offices between certain times and on certain dates.

Inevitably confusion is bound to result. The contents of the different documents, such as the specification and drawings, may be in conflict. This could also happen within a single document, especially where there are amendments to a standard form of contract; the amendments may conflict with a part of the standard contract that hasn't been altered.

Needless to say, the only way to minimise these problems is to spend time carefully reading the documentation. Investing time in this way will help avoid disputes that could arise in the future.

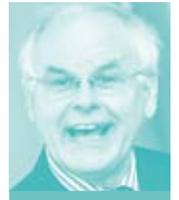
A CASE STUDY

Let's consider a very simple example. A firm has just won a contract to provide installation of plumbing systems as part of the refurbishment of a small office block. The sub-contract is the standard building sub-contract published

by the Scottish Building Contract Committee (SBCC) with, as is often the case, a schedule of amendments to the contract conditions. The documentation includes the main contract information schedule, giving details of the main contract works, and the Numbered Documents, which include a variety of documents such as those describing the works to be carried out, drawings, specifications, etc. Closer examination of the Numbered Documents reveals that the plumbing is to be installed only on the north side of the building, while the main contract information schedule refers to the installation of plumbing on both the north and east sides. How is such a discrepancy resolved?

ORDER OF PRECEDENCE CLAUSES

It is, of course, far better to resolve these issues as early as possible at pre-contract meetings. If the discrepancy has not been spotted, the next step is to look in the contract for what is called an *order of precedence* clause.



By Rudi Klein,
Barrister and
SEC Group CEO

“Needless to say, the only way to minimise these problems is to spend time carefully reading the documentation”

01

Read the contract documents carefully to ensure consistency

02

Raise any concerns as early as possible such as in pre-contract meetings

03

Disputes over discrepancies in documents are likely to be long-winded and costly

04

Beware of contract clauses placing the risk on you of poorly assembled documentation containing inconsistencies

The 2016 SBCC Standard Building Sub-Contract Conditions include an order of precedence clause. Provided it hasn't been amended, this makes clear that where there is a conflict between the main contract information schedule and the Numbered Documents, the former document is to prevail over the latter.

If there isn't an order of precedence clause, the law is that the contract documents have to be considered as a whole. This means that a court will attempt to reconcile discrepancies by considering all the documents together and all other evidence (such as any correspondence between the parties). In fact, this will be the approach of the courts even where there is an order of precedence clause.

In a recent English case, the court held that an order of precedence clause would only come into play when the discrepancy

amounted to an out and out conflict between the content of the relevant documents. This would be the case, for example, where one document stated that the plumbing must be installed within an area of X square metres while another stated that it must be installed within an area of Y square metres.

Some contracts, such as New Engineering Contracts (NEC), do not have order of precedence clauses. NEC believe that each contract document is as important as the other. However, conflicts between documents are to be resolved by an instruction from the project manager (or from the main contractor in the case of sub-contract documentation).

But beware of commonplace non-standard contract clauses which state that you have to take the risk of inconsistencies within contract documentation. This places the burden upon you of having to check all your documentation extremely carefully. ■



Waking up to the danger



Mental and physical tiredness can play a deadly role in accidents at work. The Scottish Occupational Road Safety Alliance discusses the risks of fatigue and how to keep yourself and others safe

Fatigue contributes significantly to accidents at work, at home, on the road and in other settings. It damages health and significantly reduces quality of life for those affected both directly and indirectly.

Extreme fatigue at work can result from the interplay of many factors, including shift patterns, physical workload, monotonous and unstimulating work, poor sleep hygiene, lifestyle factors, medical conditions and/or associated therapies and personal life challenges.

While excessive physical and mental fatigue can have many causes that are often interconnected, and workers need to address these as best they can, employers have legal

duties to assess and control tiredness in the workplace, taking reasonably practicable steps to reduce it and to mitigate its effects.

Fatigue can contribute to accidents and unplanned events by adversely affecting motivation, vigilance/monitoring, reaction times, sustained attention, visual tracking, logical reasoning and calculation, encoding and decoding of information, memory, communication, multi-tasking and complex decision-making.

Cumulative fatigue is a significant risk factor not only in front-line safety-critical work but also in many other tasks, which, if performed poorly, can result in latent safety problems.

While some workers may be seen as more susceptible to



excessive fatigue than others, the potential for exhaustion and tiredness to adversely affect individuals needs to be accepted as a widespread problem.

Those who suffer from extreme and prolonged mental and physical exhaustion are more likely to develop persistent insomnia, sleepiness, mood disturbance, relationship difficulties, substance abuse, absenteeism and disciplinary



“There is also a need to adequately control fatigue risks associated with work patterns”

Safer Shift Work

The Scottish Occupational Road Safety Alliance (ScORSA) recommends:

- ensuring that workers have the opportunity to have enough time between shifts to commute, wash, eat, socialise and carry out domestic duties, as well as sleep
- restricting consecutive night shifts to a maximum of two to three or two 12-hour shifts
- allowing at least two days off after the last night shift in a string of such shifts
- shifts should always be rotated forwards (early shifts changing to afternoons and afternoons changing to nights)
- long shifts should be avoided as should too much over-time
- quality breaks and scope for “power napping” should be provided (although the latter must be treated with caution to ensure it does not introduce additional risks). Scope for workers to self-select shift patterns which suit them best should always be considered.

There are a number of general steps which all organisations should take to address the problem of fatigue and exhaustion in the workplace:

- Fully consulting the workforce and their representatives about the organisation's overall approach and its programmes of work to address the problem of excessive fatigue
- Developing and communicating a policy that destigmatises fatigue, ensuring it is not wrongly described as indolence or laziness
- Delivering workplace awareness-raising about fatigue and its avoidance, including steps to improve and maintain good health and good sleep hygiene
- Training managers to raise their awareness and help them to develop the necessary interpersonal skills to engage with individuals about fatigue and the issues involved
- Taking account of fatigue in all risk assessment processes, particularly for safety critical work
- Reviewing fatigue as a possible causal factor in all accidents and incidents
- Considering any difficulties in travel to and from work which may contribute to fatigue
- Avoiding workers driving when dangerously tired, both when driving for work to and from work

- Engaging outside experts
- Ensuring appropriate occupational health support.

To find out more, visit www.scorsa.org.uk

SLEEPING
SLEEPING
SLEEPING

Exhaustion can pose a serious risk to workers, especially when they're behind the wheel

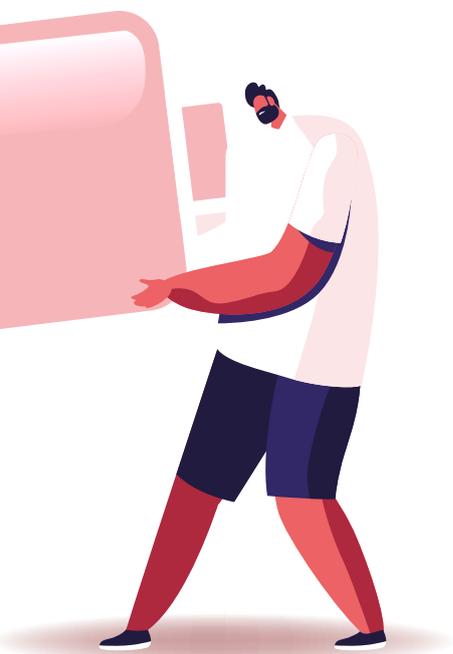
problems as well as long-term health detriments such as stomach upsets and cardiovascular disease.

To ensure that excessive physical and mental exhaustion is never ignored or stigmatised and is reduced and managed appropriately, organisations must ensure that they put in place appropriate systems, personnel and procedures to achieve these objectives. These

include removing or controlling the risk of fatigue by organising and planning the number of hours employees work and how these hours are scheduled, and not simply by observing the requirements of the Working Time Regulations 1998 (as amended).

There is also a need to adequately control fatigue risks associated with work patterns which, while legally compliant, may still be fatiguing and hence increase the risk of fatigue-related error, incidents, accidents and possibly ill-health.

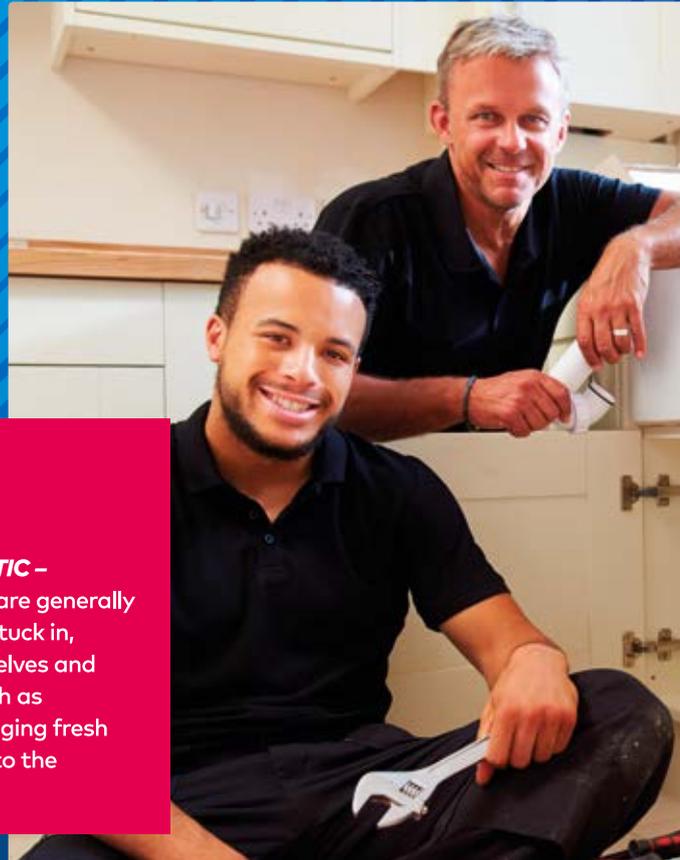
As with occupational stress, assessment of fatigue in the workforce requires the adoption of appropriate techniques. The purpose must be to identify problems and trends and to pinpoint specific tasks, shifts, work patterns or demographic factors where fatigue is an issue and to devise effective primary and secondary interventions. ■



Are you looking to take on an apprentice plumber in Scotland?



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ProZone

6 pages of in-depth and insider knowledge from the UK's premier plumbing and heating professionals



FERNOX
MAKES WATER WORK

43

Cleaning up
Fernox's fast-acting new Power Cleaner F8 can tackle the toughest jobs

Tried and trusted

Get a 25-year warranty on Fibo's entire range of waterproof kitchen and bathroom panels
/ Page 40

Carbon challenge

Why renewable liquid fuels could be the sustainable alternative for off-grid rural homes
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Virtual visit

Take a whirlwind tour of Roman's manufacturing site with the shower company's new video
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Winter wrapped up

Keep warm whatever the weather in Snickers' great range of windproof workwear jackets
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Shop smart

Pick up PipeSnug and FlueSnug at Toolstation's website and in its stores across the country
/ Page 44

Appy days

Stelrad's augmented reality app makes specifying radiators even easier than before
/ Page 45

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Following significant product development, waterproof bathroom and kitchen wall panel manufacturer, Fibo, has increased its product warranty to an industry leading 25-years across its entire range, underpinning the quality and performance of its panels as a true alternative to tiling.

An industry first, Fibo's leading 25-year guarantee applies to its entire range of precision-engineered waterproof wall panels - a true alternative to tiling - and certifies that its wall panel and kitchen boards will not delaminate, stain, fade or crack as a result of defects of its materials or manufacturing methods.

The announcement comes following stringent testing and approvals to meet the strict criteria required for Scandinavian wet room approval, further strengthening its ongoing commitment to quality and innovation.

Designed and manufactured in Norway – the home of wood technology and Scandinavian styling, Fibo's wall panel system, when correctly installed with an appropriate sealant, is 100% waterproof. Made using high quality plywood core panels, bonded with high pressure laminates, the panels are installed with a discrete, patented tongue and groove locking system, 'Aqualock', that ensures a secure and virtually invisible joint between panels that can withstand both direct water spray and large temperature fluctuations, completely replacing the need for tiles.

Scott Beattie, Managing Director at Fibo commented: "We are thrilled to be the only manufacturer of wall panels in the UK to offer a warranty of this kind so that our customers can continue to purchase with confidence and peace of mind. Fibo's continued commitment to product innovation and manufacturing means our products are simple and quick to install, and are now backed with an industry leading warranty, so the question really is; 'Why tile?'"



Fibo's bathroom and kitchen panels come with 25-year warranty

Trust Fibo for 25 years of performance

Entire range backed by industry-leading warranty



There's no need for tiles with Fibo's Aqualock system between panels



The company already boasts PEFC certification – a set of standards that promotes sustainable forest management, and its panels are Class 2 Spread

of Flame certification tested according to BS 476-7: 1987, as a minimum, with selected panels in the Fibo range, Class 1 fire rated.

Fibo's 25-year warranty is available as standard on purchases of all new panels from 1st September 2020 and stipulates that products must be installed in accordance with Fibo's installation instructions and cared for in accordance with Fibo's instructions for "Cleaning and Maintenance". ■

To find out more about the Fibo range of kitchen and bathroom waterproof wall panel systems, visit www.fibo.co.uk

Renewable liquid fuels help solve off-grid decarbonisation challenge

Decarbonising heat from off gas grid homes is a complex challenge but one that has been identified as an early policy priority.

Rural properties tend to be older and less well insulated so many are unsuited to heat pumps – the technology favoured by governments for off-grid homes – without significant investment. This is in addition to the high installation costs of heat pumps.

Consumers, particularly those in rural areas where incomes and savings tend to be lower and fuel poverty deeper, need low carbon heating solutions they can afford to practically implement.

This is why OFTEC, alongside its industry partners, is pushing the deployment of renewable



Rural households need practical, affordable low carbon heating solutions

liquid fuels such as hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO) as the most cost effective solution for many oil-heated homes.

Trials in Europe confirm UK testing which shows HVO offers a simple, sustainable alternative to kerosene with relatively minor modifications required to heating systems. Crucially, independent evaluation proves that HVO run

in a high efficiency condensing boiler offers the greatest carbon saving potential of all low carbon solutions on the market today.

HVO is available across the UK and Ireland and global supply is increasing fast. With the right policy support, industry could meet the heating requirements of many rural homes within the net zero timeframes.

As a member of the local government heat working group in Northern Ireland and the Scottish Decarbonisation Advisory Group, OFTEC continues to positively engage with decision makers to secure a place for renewable liquid fuels in future heat policy – and a fair, affordable transition to net zero for oil heated homes. ■

By OFTEC CEO
Paul Rose



To find out more about OFTEC's work, please visit www.oftec.org

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Roman's new video takes you on a tour of the company's manufacturing site

An insight into Roman

Europe's leading shower designer and manufacturer, Roman, has released a new video offering a whirlwind tour of its factory.

Founded in 1985, Roman has been designing and manufacturing showering solutions for over 35 years and is the UK's largest shower manufacturer. Its headquarters are located in County Durham and include three factories for shower enclosures, solid surface moulding and solid surface fabrication on a 400,000sq ft site.

As a responsible British designer and manufacturer of showering products, Roman carries out three main tests to ensure all products conform to the CE Marking BS EN14428 Standard, offering the ultimate in quality, precision and craftsmanship.

Roman also operates

a strict environmental policy and is constantly working with suppliers to maximise the use of recycled materials. All aluminium and packaging is manufactured using 100% recycled material. The principles of the circular economy are embedded in all the design and purchasing policies.

David Osborne, Managing Director of Roman, said: "In light of the vastly reduced travel in the UK currently, it is a great time to be launching our latest video and virtual tour. Nothing can replace the value of a real factory tour to understand our design and manufacturing capabilities, but the video certainly helps to communicate the scale and key processes very well".



Outdoor work's a breeze with Snickers

Snickers Workwear jackets are known for delivering performance and comfort – integral features of their new windproof jackets.

Stylish looks and market-leading GORE® Windstopper® and stretch Cordura® fabric technology make this jacket a must for winter on-site or outdoor leisurewear.

This great-looking jacket has a fleece-lined interior for warmth and climate control fabric to keep your body warm or comfortably cool. With a water-repellent fabric, it can be worn on its own or combined



with Snickers' mid and base layer garments. With street-smart designs, all Snickers Workwear jackets are packed with features that focus on freedom of movement as well as innovative fabrics for long-lasting protection. ■

For more information on Snickers Workwear Jackets, call 01484 854788, email sales@hultaforsgroup.co.uk or go to www.snickersworkwear.co.uk



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Fernox's new Power Cleaner F8 can take on even the dirtiest central heating systems

Power through problems with Fernox's F8

New fast-acting cleaner can take on even the dirtiest central heating systems

Fernox Power Cleaner F8 is a new citric acid-based cleaner designed to remove corrosion, scale and other debris in heavily contaminated, sludged central heating systems; maintaining optimum efficiency and reducing the risk of breakdown. It includes a high concentration of active ingredients, meaning one bottle can tackle the dirtiest systems in 97% of homes.

Ideal for retrofit scenarios and boiler swap outs, when existing systems need to be thoroughly cleaned, Power Cleaner F8 can accelerate and aid the cleaning process. Suitable for use with manual, magnetic or

powerflushing cleaners alike, this high-strength cleaner is non-foaming, which means installers require significantly less time on site to remove residual cleaner from the system. Its pH neutral formulation also means that, despite its superior capability to take out sludge and scale from system water, no follow-up neutraliser product is required.

Just one 500ml bottle can treat central heating systems up to 130 litres or 250m² of an underfloor heating system – making one bottle suitable for use in even larger systems.

Power Cleaner F8 is a powerful pH neutral cleaner with a non-

toxic formula compatible with all metals and materials commonly used in central heating systems and is developed for use with Fernox market-leading inhibitor products, ensuring the best results are achieved quickly.

Richard Crisp, Head of Chemistry at Fernox, said: "We are constantly striving to make sure our product range is comprehensive and offers installers the best choice of high-performance, quality products.

"We want to ensure that each type of system cleaning is even easier and faster for installers to complete using the new Power Cleaner F8. This pH neutral cleaner is a powerful and fast-acting chemical solution due to the inclusion of a neutralised citric acid in the formulation, which can be used on older, problem systems.

"Power Cleaner F8 sits alongside the universal Fernox Cleaner F3, for new and lightly sludged systems, and DS40 Descaler and Cleaner, which is ideal for use against limescaled systems that require an acid-based cleaner and neutraliser to restore efficiency." ■

To find out more about Fernox and its range of water treatment products visit www.fernox.com

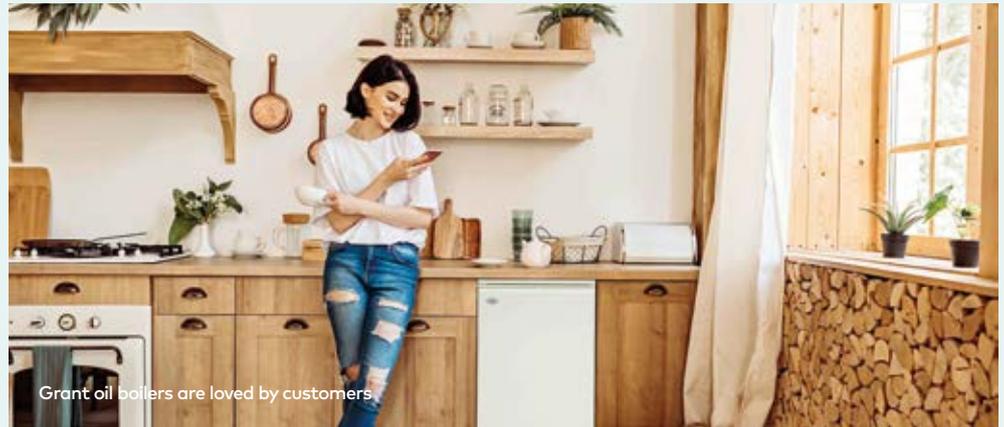


Five-star reviews for Grant oil boilers

Grant UK's oil boilers have received five-star feedback on Trustpilot from homeowners and installers. The high-quality build and performance of the Vortex and VortexBlue ranges make them incredibly popular choices for installers and their customers and the feedback on Trustpilot shows just how highly regarded they are.

Grant oil boilers are available in internal, external, floor standing, wall hung and combi models with outputs ranging from 12kW up to 70kW. The Vortex boilers all feature the latest low NO_x burner technology with the VortexBlue models incorporating Riello's RDB BLU ultra-low NO_x compact blue flame burner.

Comments from consumers include "excellent, quiet and efficient," "very reliable system and very reliable customer



support," and "best oil boiler on the market by far". Across the ranges, each boiler has been designed to be installer friendly and straightforward to maintain and service, while also delivering reliable, efficient heating for homeowners.

"We are delighted with this feedback," says Anna Wakefield,

Head of Marketing for Grant UK. "With extended five and 10-year guarantees available through our G1 installer network and extensive customer and technical support, we will focus on maintaining our commitment to outstanding service. We can't thank our customers enough for taking the time to share their views." ■



For more details, please visit www.grantuk.com

PipeSnug and FlueSnug now available in Toolstation

PipeSnug, the pipe seal that replaces the need to 'make good' around pipes where they exit the wall, is now available in Toolstation. With more than 400 branches nationwide, open seven days a week, wherever you need a PipeSnug, then the chances are there will be a Toolstation close at hand. The PipeSnug range will be available in Toolstation stores and on its website.

"We are delighted that Toolstation is stocking all sizes of PipeSnug, and of course our 100mm FlueSnug," said Alex Lever, Director of PipeSnug. "This partnership with Toolstation is another important step as we make PipeSnug available to as



many installers as possible."

Toolstation is one of Britain's fastest growing suppliers of over 20,000 trade quality tools, accessories and building

For more details on PipeSnug visit: www.pipesnug.co.uk
For more details on Toolstation visit www.toolstation.com

supplies to the trade, home improvers and self-builders. Contactless click and collect is available in store from as little as five minutes, with free next business day delivery on orders over £25.

Removing any need for messy pointing, PipeSnug products can be installed in less than five seconds. FlueSnug allows installers to quickly access the flue for any service or maintenance requirements, without the need to remove existing brickwork, mortar or sealant. ■

**PIPE
SNUG**
No point pointing 

Low Surface Temperature radiators join Stelrad's BIM range

New augmented reality app launched too

Stelrad is stepping up its BIM involvement and broadening the range of products available. The firm has released a new app to help those specifying Stelrad radiators to envisage them in a real-life setting. The augmented reality app is free to download from Apple and Android app stores. And Stelrad has also added more of its sector-leading radiator products for domestic and commercial buildings to incorporate in designs.

Stelrad Radiators has embraced BIM since 2014 and has continually added to the number of its radiator products on BIMStore ready for architects, engineers and contractors to integrate into future projects. That investment has continued with further additions to the portfolio of BIM products, with the whole range of the UK's best-selling Low Surface Temperature radiators being added. This includes the latest design release, including its LST Standard Deco and LST i Plus Deco – both featuring its popular Deco horizontal lined fascia to make the casings for the radiators even more aesthetically pleasing.

Stelrad's LST range is being widely specified for a host of end uses, including healthcare establishments, care homes, sheltered housing, schools, and nurseries – anywhere where safe heating is essential and vulnerable individuals may be present.

In addition to the LST range, the Softline Column design radiators have also been added to the range.

As a result of the BIM activity Stelrad has put in place, specifying Stelrad radiators has never been easier. Architects and building designers simply select the product they want to use from BIMStore, 'drag it' into their design document and 'drop it' in place. It allows those planning a project to visualise and utilise the

radiators at the planning stage and they can remain in the project workflow throughout its lifetime, from planning to design and into construction and operations.

Stelrad's radiator products will be hosted at www.bimstore.co.uk and www.stelrad.com and are available for subscribers to download and utilise in projects.

Architects have been providing CGIs for years to give an impression of how buildings will look but to be able to utilise accurate 3D images of real products that provide an extremely accurate rendering of how that building will really appear, offers huge benefits to them and to the building's owners and funders. It's now possible to visualise a building, that hasn't moved off the 'drawing board', in its final state – and to switch finishes in real time, to include specified products that are on the system.

This is an exciting move for Stelrad and the firm looks forward to expanding the range



Low temperature options are perfect for settings such as healthcare and schools

of options available still further in the months ahead. Full details of the products featuring on www.bimstore.co.uk along with the wider range of products for domestic and commercial use can be found at www.stelrad.com or you can call for further information on **0844 543 6200** or email marketing@stelrad.com ■

You can follow Stelrad on Twitter @Stelrad or on Facebook at www.facebook.com/StelradLimited



Stelrad's radiators provide stylish heating solutions

The new normal?

That's just the Maincor normal!

As we start to come out of lockdown, many businesses are having to change the way they operate to meet the new safety guidelines.

At Maincor, our commitment to service and support means it's business as usual. We've always believed in delivering our systems in the safest and most convenient way possible.

- ✓ Online quotation and design service, with no hard copies to worry about
- ✓ Pipe is boxed hot under controlled conditions for extra hygiene
- ✓ The installer is the first person to handle the pipe after leaving the factory
- ✓ Direct to site delivery, eliminating double handling
- ✓ Online training & site assistance via video conferencing
- ✓ Site visits, strictly risk assessed

So there's no real change for us. We'll continue to build on the past to deliver the future.

For more information on our pipe systems, email enquiries@maincor.co.uk or call us on **01455 555930**

MAINCOR



Underfloor Heating



Radiator Heating



Plumbing



Pre-Insulated Pipe

www.maincor.co.uk