



INFORMATION SHEET

BUILDING SERVICES

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BUILDING PRODUCTS - ARE YOU GETTING WHAT YOU PAID FOR?

This information sheet has been prepared by HIA to provide members with general advice about ways that you can protect your business and ensure that the building materials and products that you order and receive on site complying with the relevant building laws and standards and they are fit for purpose.

Why should you care?

Building a house involves a huge number of building materials and products. They all need to be 'fit for purpose' and safe to use.

All buildings, including houses, need to comply with the Building Code of Australia (BCA). Hence the BCA is essentially your guide to building a home that is 'fit for purpose'. Your choice of building materials will be checked as part of getting a building approval and during construction by the building surveyor.

Making sure you buy the right products that meet the requirements of the BCA will help you to:

- ensure you are fulfilling your legal obligations by complying with building regulations;
- maintain a safe building for workers and future occupants;
- minimise rectification work where material failure can occur; and
- minimise potential litigation claims arising from the use of non-conforming products.

If you don't comply you put your livelihood at risk and you put the home owner at risk. Most importantly, it protects your reputation and your business!

10 Tips to making sure you get what you paid for?

1. Make sure you know what standards the products you buy should meet
2. Make sure your supplier understands what products you want and what standards they must meet
3. Purchase products from reputable manufacturers and suppliers that you can develop a long term relationship with and that provide after sales support and replacement guarantees
4. Purchase products from companies that participate in industry accreditation programs.
5. Check new products before you purchase them and obtain documentary evidence that all products meet relevant standards before you buy.
6. Check the authenticity of any documentary evidence when you receive it.
7. Check the goods when they arrive on site to ensure there has been no product substitution.
8. Discuss the use of any client supplied products before work starts and get evidence they comply.
9. Discuss any supply and install contracts with your subcontractors to make sure they are using compliant products.
10. If you don't receive proof, then don't accept the product!

Where can you get more information on product conformance?

- Australian Building Codes Board – BCA, Codemark and WaterMark <http://www.abcb.gov.au>
- National Association of Testing Authorities (NATA) – www.nata.com.au
- JAS-ANZ (register for certified organisations and accredited bodies) - www.jas-anz.com.au
- Australian Window Association <http://www.awa.org.au/index.htm>
- Australian Certification Authority for Reinforcing Steels <http://www.steelcertification.com/>
- Engineered Woods Products Association of Australasia <http://www.ewp.asn.au/>
- Australian Steel Institute (structural steel) <http://buildwithstandards.com.au>

DISCLAIMER - The above is intended to provide general information in summary form. The contents do not constitute specific advice and should not be relied upon as such. Formal specific advice should be sought by members with respect to particular matters before taking action.

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