Plumbers,
Gasfitters and
Drainlayers Board

# Resolving Problems Guide

The role of the Plumbers, Gasfitters, and Drainlayers Board (Board) is to protect public health and safety. Plumbing, gasfitting, and drainlaying work must be carried out by plumbers, gasfitters, and drainlayers (practitioners) who hold a current licence or authorisation.

If you are unsatisfied with plumbing, gasfitting, or drainlaying work, you can contact the Board to discuss your concerns.

When deciding to investigate a complaint, we consider:

- whether our governing legislation allows us to investigate
- the seriousness of the conduct
- the risk to public health and safety

If we cannot help with your concerns, for example because they fall outside what we can consider under the Act, this guide outlines some steps you can take to seek advice or resolution.



## Informal resolution

Issues can often be resolved informally by communicating directly with the parties involved about problems and reaching an agreement or compromise. Some things to consider:

- review the quotes, invoices, contracts and any written communication you have to date
- know your rights under the Consumer Guarantees Act, Fair Trading Act and under the Building Act's implied warranties. Consumer Protection have further information about this on their website. Under New Zealand law, you are covered for:
  - buildings and building materials — under the Building Act's implied warranties
  - services provided by tradespeople — under the Consumer Guarantees Act
  - misleading claims — under the Fair Trading Act.



## Seeking advice

When resolving a problem with a practitioner, you may wish to consider seeking advice about your rights. The following agencies may be able to assist.

### Consumer Protection

www.consumerprotection.govt.nz
Phone: 0508 426 678

Consumer Protection provides information to consumers about what to know and do before, during, and after purchasing a product or service. This includes outlining your consumer rights, tips for making smart purchase decisions, and how to deal with problems if they arise. Their website has specific information about home renovations and repairs.

### Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)

www.cab.org.nz
Phone: 0800 367 222

CAB is a free and independent service run by volunteers. CAB can advise you on your consumer rights and obligations, in person, by phone, or online. Their volunteers can act as intermediaries, assist with communication for people with English as a second language, and in some cases prepare claims for the Disputes Tribunal.

### Community Law Centre

www.communitylaw.org.nz

The Community Law Centre can assist with legal help and assistance. They can also help making a Disputes Tribunal claim.

## Billing and contractual disputes

The Act does not allow us to consider contractual or invoicing disputes and we cannot direct a practitioner to complete remedial work. If you are unable to resolve these issues through informal resolution, you should consider filing a case with the Disputes Tribunal.

### Disputes Tribunal

www.disputestribunal.govt.nz

The Disputes Tribunal can assist with settling disputes outside of court for small claims up to $30,000. Disputes can be about:

- whether a practitioner has done work properly
- the amount of money charged for work done
- loss caused by misleading advertising
- disputed debts.

As mentioned above, you can get help making a claim from Citizens Advice Bureau or your local Community Law Centre.

## Getting documents or certificates

If you need documents such as consents, producer statements, or gas certificates, here's where to go and who to contact.

### Council documents

Consents and producer statements (PS3's) are managed by your local Council not the Board. The Board cannot require a plumber, gasfitter, or drainlayer to provide them.

We recommend you contact your local council directly as they may have further advice on how you can obtain this documentation. If your contract requires them to provide this documentation, you can take this matter to the Disputes Tribunal (details above).

To find out more about producer statements, go to www.building.govt.nz/projects-and-consents/apply-for-building-consent/support-your-consent-application/producer-statements

### Gas certificates

A certifying gasfitter must provide a signed certificate to you within 20 working days of the gasfitting work and provide a copy upon request.

If the work is high-risk, you can search the Electricity and Gas High-Risk Database to check if the work has been lodged.
Energy Safety is the agency that regulates gas certificates and safety, you can contact them on 0800 030 040 or at www.energysafety.govt.nz.

## Workmanship guarantee

Master Plumbers
www.masterplumbers.org.nz
Master Plumbers is a membership organisation which ensures that all members undergo an ongoing quality assurance review of their business practices and have a certifying tradesperson on staff. All Master Plumbers must comply with a code of conduct as a fundamental condition of membership and follow a code of good practice.

If your plumber, gasfitter or drainlayer is a member of Master Plumbers, you may be covered under the 12 month residential Master Plumbers Guarantee.

You can read more about the 12 month residential guarantee at www.masterplumbers.org.nz. Master Plumbers are unable to assist with pricing disputes.

## Complaints about other trades

If you have a complaint about an individual carrying out other types of work, please see below the relevant regulatory bodies you can contact:

### Electrical Workers Registration Board

www.ewrb.govt.nz
You can make a complaint about any person or company that has carried out prescribed electrical work that you believe to be unsatisfactory.

### Licensed Building Practitioners (LBP)

www.lbp.govt.nz
You can make a complaint about a LBP that has carried out work that you believe to be unsatisfactory.

For more information on the Board's complaints and disciplinary process, please visit our website www.pgdb.co.nz or call us on 0800 743 262

**Your personal information**
See our Privacy Statement for information about how we collect, use, store and share your personal information. This includes when we collect information from others or verify it with third parties, and how you can access or correct your information.

