

IBCI Newsletter

Volume 2 Issue 1

Autumn 2000

Special points of interest:

- The FAS Training Programme in Building Control/Building Regulations is currently being held at the Kingsley Hotel Conference Centre, Killarney Road, Cork. It started on Wednesday, 20 September, 2000. Details of this course and others are available from:

Kevin Sheridan/Edith Conway,
FAS Environmental Training Unit,
Baggot Street, Dublin 4.
Tel. (01) 6070500.

Further information is also available on the FAS website at: www.fas.ie.

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IBCI National Building Control Conference 2000

The fourth National Building Control Conference took place over two days at the Tullamore Court Hotel on the 27th and 28th April 2000. The midlands location was chosen on the grounds that it would be central and accessible from all parts of the country.

The conference proved to be very successful and the feedback from those attending was in general very positive. The council of the institute wish to thank the Department of the Environment and Local Government for their continued support for the conference and their help in providing and securing speakers.

As in keeping with the format of previous years, the first day was aimed

at local authority personnel and was entitled "Building Control: Enforcing Standards".

The conference was opened by Paddy Morrissey the chairman of the Building Regulations Advisory Body (BRAB).

Michael McCarthy of the DOE presented the first paper on building control enforcement. This was followed by an interesting insight into the Dutch building control system by Piet Paatgens from the Netherlands. The morning session concluded with a review of Parts L and M and the proposed changes to the technical guidance documents by Pat Minogue.

The afternoon session comprised a workshop organised by Ciaran

King, Energy Consultant on using of the Irish Energy Centre's computer software for calculating the heat energy rating for buildings.

The conference dinner was held that evening and was a most enjoyable social event. Music was laid on during the meal and one or two delegates also gave the group a song.

Day two was also open to people from the private sector and was entitled "Preventing Defects and Avoiding Enforcement". Papers included "Product acceptability" from Ian McPherson, "Designing out defects" from Alan Beggs from Belfast and "Building defects" from Conor Taaffe of Homebond.

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Minister Publishes Revised Part M

At the end of June, the Minister for the Environment and Local Government signed the Building Regulations (Amendment) regulations, 2000. The amendment extends the requirements of Part M to domestic dwellings and a

revised Technical Guidance Document M has been published to support the new provisions.

The amended regulations come into effect on 1st January, 2001. There are transitional arrangements, however,

to facilitate both private and local authority dwellings where the planning process has been completed by 31st December, 2000 and buildings granted fire safety certificates before 1st January, 2001.

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Minister Publishes Revised Part M

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The amended TGD M includes several provisions that apply to new dwellings to ensure they are visitable by people with disabilities.

- An accessible entrance to the site having a clear opening width of at least 800mm.
- A level or gently sloping approach of at least 900mm wide with preferred gradient of 1:20 (max. 1:12) from the entrance or a suitable parking spot.
- An entrance door of at least 775mm wide with a 15mm max. threshold height.
- Sufficiently wide corridors and doorways to facilitate access.

- Door handles and switch plates to be between 900mm and 1200mm above floor level.
- A wheelchair accessible WC cubicle at entry level.

The TGD recognises that certain site conditions may sometimes prevent these standards from being met. A lower standard will be acceptable in certain circumstances.

- Dwellings where the storey containing the accessible WC has a floor area less than 45 m² can have a smaller sized compartment allowing sideways transfer from a wheelchair without being able to close the cubicle

door.

- Steps suitable for ambulant disabled may be used for approach and entry to certain apartments or to dwellings on steeply sloping or very small sites.

Lifts are required for buildings having more than eight apartments (excluding those at ground level) or where there are more than two apartments at fourth floor level or higher. For other apartment buildings and dwellings in duplex developments with entry at other than ground level, stairs suitable for use by ambulant disabled are acceptable.

National Building Control Conference 2000

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The afternoon session began with Vincent Barrett who dealt with failures in commercial buildings. This was followed by Maria Melia who presented a paper entitled "General Problems in Fire Safety". The session concluded with a comprehensive overview of "The Liability of Building Designers" from Brian O'Connell.

The council of the institute would like to place on record their thanks to all those who presented papers and organised the workshop during the conference. They also wish to thank the management and staff of the Tullamore Court Hotel and the trade exhibitors for their support.

A great debt of thanks is also due to the conference committee under the direction of Tom Johnson who worked very hard to ensure that the conference was such a success. They have set a very high standard which will be hard to follow.

Details of next year's conference will be published in a later edition.

IBCI Council for 2000

The Council of the Institute was elected at the AGM held during the National Building Control Conference in Tullamore. Those elected were appointed to the various council positions at the first meeting in May.

The members of the Council were appointed to the following positions:

President: Johnny MacGettigan.

Vice-president: Tom Johnson

Treasurer: Angela Naughton

Membership Secretary: Maria Melia.

PRO & Publications Officer: Philip O'Brien.

Further Education Officer: Jim Madden.

Conference Secretary: Fineen

O' Driscoll.

Correspondence Secretary: Jim Briscoe.

Minutes Secretary: Joe Moynihan.

Correspondence should be sent to: IBCI, P.O. Box 3667, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4. Alternatively, you can email us at: ibcireland@hotmail.com

On site...

During recent site inspections, this writer has noticed that many tradesmen are notching and drilling joists for services at locations other than those recommended in the guidance. Designers and builders should impress upon tradesmen that notches and holes in joists and studs should not be made everywhere and anywhere.

The guidance given in IS 444 is relevant to both joists and studs and is based on the depth of the member and span length of the joist or height of the stud (L).

Notches should be located between 0.07L and 0.25L from the supports and should not be greater than 0.125 times the depth. The notch

width should not exceed 75mm and adjacent notches should be at least 150mm apart. Notches should only be made in the top of the joist.

Drilled holes should be located along the neutral axis and between 0.25L and 0.4L from the supports with diameters not greater than 0.25 times the depth. The distance between the centres of the holes should be greater than 3 diameters or 100mm, whichever is the greater.

As a general rule the distance between drilled holes and notches should be not less than the depth of the member.

These rules apply to simply supported sections with depths not greater than 250mm. Notches or holes drilled in joists or studs outside these parameters need to be specially designed.

If you have noticed any problems on site that you think deserve a mention, jot them down on a piece of paper and send it to:

IBCI Newsletter,
P.O. Box 3667,
Ballsbridge,
Dublin 4.

Electrical Safety and the Register of Electrical Contractors of Ireland

Formed in 1992 at the request of the Department of Energy, RECI is a self regulatory body for the electrical contracting industry in Ireland. The aims of RECI are to promote and protect the interests of the public so that they obtain an acceptable standard of workmanship and technical competence in the electrical contracting industry and to provide a high level of assistance to the industry to achieve this standard.

RECI monitors its registered contractors by frequently inspecting samples of their work. They also carry out inspections for non-registered contractors who require supply from the ESB. Completion certificates are returned to RECI by the ESB and are scanned on to a computer system. A copy of any completion certificate can be obtained if required at some future date. The certificate is a statement by the electrical contractor that the installation has been constructed and tested in accordance with the National Wiring

Rules. Every householder should have a completion certificate for their electrical installation and it should be available when a house is being sold to another person.

Consumer Confidence

RECI are anxious that all consumers, and especially the elderly, be confident that their electrical installations are constructed in a safe manner. If a client is not satisfied that the work of a RECI contractor is up to standard, they can contact the RECI office and arrangements will be made for an inspector to check the installation.

Qualifications for RECI membership

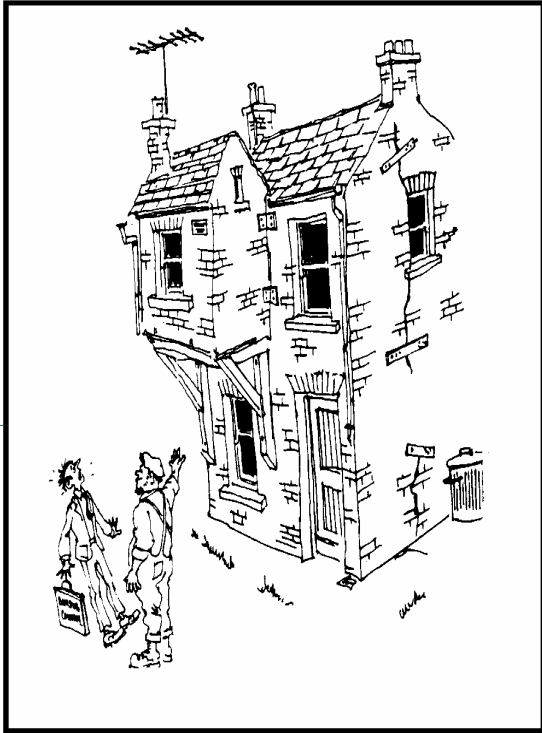
In order to qualify for membership of RECI, contractors must possess:

- Technical qualifications not less than those of an electrician.
- On-site responsibility for electrical installation work for not less than three years.
- Be engaged in the business of electrical contracting.

- Have public liability and employers liability insurance.
- Have their own test equipment and a copy of the wiring rules.

There are a number of electrical tests that must be carried out both before and after the supply has been connected. RECI insists that registered contractors have their own properly calibrated equipment to test every installation that they construct. An electrical installation does not comply with the National Wiring Rules unless all the specified tests have been carried out. When the tests have been done and satisfactory readings obtained the contractor will sign a completion certificate.

For further information contact the General Manager, Register of Electrical Contractors of Ireland, Unit 9 KCR Industrial Estate, Kimmage, Dublin 12. Tel: (01) 4929966 or visit the RECI web site at www.reci.ie.



You can email us at:

ibcireland@hotmail.com

Call for articles!

This is the second edition of the IBCI News. We are endeavouring to produce a publication that deals with building control issues and is both informative and helpful to our members. We hope that in time it will grow and improve in both presentation and content. Perhaps you can help us!

If you would like to contribute an article to the IBCI Newsletter, or if you would like to comment on anything contained in this issue, please write to:

**IBCI News,
P.O. Box 3667,
Ballsbridge,
Dublin 4.**

Or email us at:

ibcireland@hotmail.com

New EPA Wastewater Treatment Manual “Treatment Systems for Single Houses”

This manual has been prepared to provide guidance on the design, operation and maintenance of on-site wastewater treatment systems for a single house. The National Standards Authority of Ireland published standard recommendations in 1975 (revised in 1991) with the aim of achieving satisfactory practice in the design, construction and maintenance of septic tank drainage systems. This manual will assist planning authorities, developers, system manufacturers, system designers, system installers, system operators to deal with the complexities of on-site systems. Where reference in the document is made to proprietary equipment, this is intended as indicating equipment type and is not to be interpreted as endorsing or excluding any particular manufacturer or system.

Implementation is awaiting a Department of Environment ministerial directive withdrawing S.R. 6 :

1991 from **Section 2.1 of Technical Guidance Document H Building Control Regulations 1997**. The manual contains 5 chapters as follows:

Chapter 1 of this manual contains an introduction to wastewater treatment and the types of on-site treatment systems available for a single house.

Chapter 2 outlines the steps, which should be taken to characterise a site. Characterisation of a site is divided into a desk study followed by an on-site assessment. The on-site assessment is subdivided into a visual assessment, a trial hole and a percolation test. The significance of the information collected during the desk study and the on-site assessment is summarised at the end of this chapter.

Chapter 3 outlines a methodology for choosing the on-site treatment

system and the optimum discharge route.

Chapter 4 includes information on the design, construction and maintenance of a septic tank, soil percolation area, intermittent filters, constructed wetlands and polishing filters.

Chapter 5 includes information on mechanical aeration systems and polishing filters. A site characterisation form for use with this guidance manual is included in **Appendix A**. Details of the procedure to carry out a percolation test is included in **Appendix B**. Detailed assessment procedure to carry an evaluation of treatment systems in **Appendix C**. Detailed flow chart procedure: soil/subsoil classification chart : **Appendix D**. Details of types of indicator plants of drainage in **Appendix E**.

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