

Building and Plumbing Newsflash 608

Regular building inspections of awnings over public land

Purpose

The purpose of this newsflash is to remind property owners and occupiers of the importance of regular building inspections and building maintenance of awnings over public land and to highlight the responsibilities of building owners and Local Governments regarding compliance.

Background

The National Construction Code, subject to state variations, prescribes the technical requirements for new building work throughout Australia. Unless new building work occurs, a building is only required to meet the standards in force at the time of the most recent building approval.

Over time, structures such as shop front awnings deteriorate, posing a safety risk to the public. In recent years across Australia, there have been a number of awning collapses that have resulted in unnecessary injuries, and in some cases, death. These incidents were generally caused by the failure of structural elements that had deteriorated over time.

Building owners and occupiers are responsible for ensuring that buildings are properly maintained and do not pose a danger to others. It is important to regularly inspect and maintain buildings and structures to ensure early detection of damage or deterioration caused by factors such as termite attack, decay and moisture, coastal effects and loads on the structure.

Often structural elements that fail can be hidden from view but could have been detected by a thorough inspection by a suitably qualified building practitioner.

Suitably qualified industry professionals should undertake regular inspections and maintenance of awnings to prevent structural failures.

Enforcement

Under the *Building Act 1975* if the local government reasonably believes that an awning is dangerous or in a dilapidated condition and poses a safety risk to members of the public, it can take enforcement action, including requiring the structure to be repaired, secured or demolished.

Contact for further information

Building Policy
Department of Energy and Public Works
Email: BLP@epw.qld.gov.au

If you have not received this Newsflash directly from Building Legislation and Policy, you can subscribe via bcqnewsflash@qld.gov.au.

DISCLAIMER: The information contained in this Newsflash is provided by the Queensland Government, through the Department of Energy and Public Works ('the department') as an information source only. The information is general in nature and the department makes no statements, representations, or warranties about the accuracy, quality, reliability, adequacy or completeness of any information contained in this Newsflash. It is not to be relied on as a substitute for consulting the relevant legislation or for obtaining appropriate professional advice relevant to your particular circumstances. The department disclaims all responsibility and all liability (including without limitation, liability in negligence) for all expenses, losses, damages and costs (including consequential or indirect loss or damage or loss of profits) you might incur as a result of the information being inaccurate, inadequate or incomplete in any way, and for any reason.