



Building Newsflash

FALLS TO A FLOOR WASTE

Purpose

To clarify recent amendments to the Australian Standard AS 3740 – 2004, Waterproofing of wet areas within residential buildings, in relation to floor wastes. The amended Standard was called up by the Building Code of Australia (BCA) on 1 May 2004.

One of the main reasons for amending AS 3740 was to address leaking showers in residential buildings, which cause deterioration of building elements.

Legislation

BCA Volume 1

F1.7 Water proofing of wet areas in buildings

(b) water proofing of wet areas in a building must comply with the relevant parts of AS 3740.

F1.11 Provision of floor wastes

In a Class 2 or 3 or Class 4 part, the floor of each bathroom and laundry located at any level above a sole-occupancy unit or public space must be graded to permit drainage to a floor waste.

BCA Volume 2

3.8.1.0 Performance requirement P2.4.1 is satisfied for wet areas in Class 1 and 10 buildings if they are waterproofed in accordance with AS 3740 – Waterproofing of wet areas within residential buildings.

AS 3740-2004

Clause 1.5.8 Floor waste – a graded inlet within a graded floor intended to drain the floor surface.

Clause 5.9 Wet area floors - where there is a waste, the floor finish shall be constructed so that water flows to the waste, without ponding.

Interpretation

Q. Must I install a floor waste in bathroom or laundry floors in residential buildings?

A. Floor wastes are not required to be installed in Class 1 and 10 buildings. Floor wastes are only required in Class 2 or 3 buildings or Class 4 parts, where the floor of a bathroom or laundry is located at any level above another sole-occupancy unit or public space.

Q. If a floor waste gully is installed in a bathroom or laundry, must the floor be graded to the gully?

A. Not for Class 1 and 10 buildings. Where a number of fixtures (e.g. bath, basin, shower) discharge to a floor waste gully, the floor waste acts as a fixture trap and provides a water seal between the fixtures and the sanitary plumbing.

The floor waste gully is therefore not intended to drain the floor surface and does not meet the definition of a "floor waste" in clause 1.5.8 of AS 3740. This means that a bathroom or laundry floor with a floor waste gully in a Class 1 or 10 building is not required to be graded to fall to the floor waste gully.

If a floor in a bathroom or laundry in a Class 2, 3 or 4 building is above another sole occupancy unit or public space, the BCA requires a floor waste to be installed to prevent spilled water entering the space below which is under separate ownership. In this case the floor must be graded to the required floor waste.

However, there are benefits in grading a bathroom or laundry floor to a non-required floor waste and an owner or builder can elect to exceed the BCA in this respect.

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