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Major initiatives

Local Government and Planning works together with councils,

stakeholders, clients and the community to deliver on our commitment of a better local government system and sustainable built environment for the people of Queensland.

Our major initiatives are located within the following areas:

- [Building and plumbing initiatives](#)
- [Local government initiatives](#)
- [Planning and development initiatives](#)

Building and plumbing initiatives

The following initiatives are administered by [Building Codes Queensland](#):

- [Tents and marquees - new approval process](#)
- [Fire safety standards - budget accommodation buildings](#)
- [Pool fencing laws](#)
- [Plumbing laws](#)

Tents and marquees - New approval process

Changes to the approval process for small to medium size tents and marquees under amendments to the *Standard Building Regulation 1993 (SBR)* and the *Queensland Development Code (QDC)* will apply from 2 April 2004.

Until now, any tent or marquee over 3 metres high required development approval. This meant approval was needed for many

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small to medium tents that did not pose a significant risk to public health and safety.

Industry and councils requested changes to reflect the real risks, clarify the issues that need to be considered in erecting tents and promote industry best practice without imposing onerous approval requirements on situations with low risks to public health and safety. From 2 April 2004 all new applications for approvals for tents and marquees will operate under the new laws.

The new laws establish 3 categories of tents:

1. Tents with a floor area not more than 100 m2 are Exempt Development under the SBR, and therefore do not require any development approval.
2. Tents with a floor area more than 100 m2 and less than 500 m2 that will remain in place less than 4 weeks are Self Assessable Development and must be assessed by the person erecting the tent against the technical standards in the QDC; [part 28 Tents](#) (PDF 48Kb). Any tent that can't comply with part 28 of the QDC is automatically in category 3, and requires development approval.
3. Tents that do not fall into categories 1 and 2 require a development approval from a council or private certifier. The certifier must assess the tent under the criteria set out in section 69 of the SBR, i.e. that it is safe for use, is structurally sound, provides for fire safety, and the health and amenity of persons who will use the structure before issuing a development approval (section 69 SBR). The criteria for assessing a tent under section 69 SBR have not been changed.

For further information on these changes see the [SBR amendment](#) and the [QDC part 28](#) from the afternoon of Friday 2 April 2004.

For further information, see [Building Newsflashes 2004](#).

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Fire safety standards - budget accommodation

There are new laws to improve the standard of fire safety in budget accommodation and other private residential services. The Department has strengthened fire safety legislation for budget accommodation in response to the Childers backpacker hostel fire in June 2000.

Under the new standards, which took effect from July 2003, operators of budget accommodation, built before 1 January 1992, are required to ensure hard wired smoke alarms and emergency lighting are installed and a fire safety management plan is in place. Budget accommodation includes backpacker hostels, hotels, boarding houses and supported accommodation.

The Queensland Fire and Rescue Service and local councils may do random inspections to check compliance with these laws.

To find out whether or not your building is compliant, contact your local council (a fee may be charged for this service). Council contact details can be found in our local government directory.

The Department will continue to work with these key stakeholders to ensure they are able to meet the second compliance deadline of 1 July 2005, which may require some structural changes in the larger buildings to provide safe evacuation routes.

You must comply with the new laws in order to register a residential service (deadlines apply). Funds may be available to some residential services to help meet registration requirements.

To assist owners of budget accommodation to comply with building fire safety standards, the Department has developed comprehensive guidelines advising of cost-effective methods to upgrade their buildings.

For further information on the requirements of these new laws, see Fire safety standards

- budget accommodation buildings

Pool fencing laws

From 1 November 2003, you can be fined if your outdoor swimming pool does not have a compliant fence.

The Department has strengthened the laws to help prevent child drownings and drowning related injuries in residential swimming pools.

To find out whether your swimming pool fence is compliant with the current legislation, contact your local council for an inspection. Council contact details can be found in our local government directory.

Councils and private certifiers are responsible for enforcing the State legislation and inspecting and certifying fencing for residential swimming pools.

Your local council will issue fines if you have not complied with the new pool fencing laws.

The Department is responsible for introducing the new pool fencing laws to help reduce swimming pool tragedies in Queensland.

For more information, visit www.poolfencing.qld.gov.au.

Plumbing laws

There are new laws to improve licensing requirements and better work approval processes for Queensland plumbers. The Department has introduced the plumbing and drainage laws to provide a modern legislative framework that replaces the *Sewerage and Water Supply Act 1949*.

The new *Plumbing and Drainage Act 2002* (PDA) commenced on 1 November 2003, together with the two plumbing regulations, the *Standard Plumbing and Drainage Regulation 2003* and the *Plumbing and Drainage Regulation 2003*.

The plumbing and drainage laws demonstrate the State Government's commitment to protecting the safety of Queenslanders.

The laws will help ensure that the work plumbers and drainers undertake in Queensland is of the highest possible standard. Under the laws:

- all plumbing and drainage work should be carried out by a licensed person,
- the approval process for plumbing and drainage work across Queensland has been standardised, with standard forms,
- councils are given greater powers to address below-standard work and are able to issue on-the-spot fines for people operating without a license,
- information on licensing rules, appeals and decisions by the Plumbers and Drainers Board and the right to appeal disciplinary action is improved,
- the Plumbers and Drainers Board is established,
- information to landowners on plumbing and drainage work is improved,
- plumbers and drainers can appeal against council decisions to the Building and Development Tribunals, and
- the existing technical standards for plumbing and drainage work are retained,

These laws apply to plumbing and drainage work in Queensland.

For further information, as well as fact sheets and standardised forms, see [Plumbing laws](#).

Local government initiatives

The following initiatives are administered by [Local Government Services](#):

- [2004 council elections](#)
- [Funding programs](#)
- [Local laws database](#)
- [Restricted dog laws](#)

2004 council elections

Queensland's 2004 council elections will be

held on Saturday 27 March in each of Queensland's 125 local governments. One Thousand one hundred and twenty-five councillors will be elected to represent their communities for the following four years.

The Department has two major roles in supporting this process. Firstly, we implement the findings of the Local Government Electoral and Boundaries Review Commission on any changes to local government electoral arrangements.

Secondly, we ensure local government electoral laws and practices reflect democratic principles and strike an appropriate balance between the needs of candidates, voters and election officials.

For further information, see 2004 council elections and the Local government section of this website.

Funding programs

The Department administers a range of funding programs that provide financial support to councils and other groups to help them enhance the quality of life for their communities. In 2003-04, around \$440 million is available through grants and subsidy programs.

This financial support assists councils in the provision of infrastructure and service, as well as in improving access to services through recognising differences in the economic circumstances of communities around the State.

For further information on the grants and subsidies available to councils, see Funding programs and the Local government section of this website.

Local laws database

Local laws are developed by councils to regulate activities in their community.

These laws are implemented to ensure the best possible health, safety, and quality of life within the community.

Local laws may cover a wide range of issues including noise, animals, signs and sewerage.

The Department administers a database of Local laws. You can search for your council's local laws on our [database](#).

For further information, see [Local laws](#).

Restricted dog laws

There are laws in Queensland setting minimum standards on how people keep restricted dogs.

One of the State-wide rules is that you must have a permit to keep a restricted dog.

The laws allow local councils to set even higher standards, including total bans on some dogs, through establishing their own local laws. To find out about restrictions in your area, search our [local laws database](#) or contact your [local council](#).

Your local council can issue penalties, including substantial fines, to people convicted of contravening the restrictions.

For more information about the breeds that are restricted by the State laws, see [Restricted dogs](#).

Planning and development initiatives

The following Planning and development initiatives are administered by [Planning Services](#):

- [Demographics - population statistics](#)
- [Integrated Planning Act \(IPA\) implementation](#)
- [Regional Planning Projects](#)

Demographics - population statistics

The Department provides statistical data and analysis on a range of population and housing information through our [Planning Information and Forecasting Unit\(PIFU\)](#).

This includes information about population dynamics and forecasts, residential dwelling activity and urban land supply in Queensland.

PIFU also offers consultancy services to help you understand the data as well as the impacts or opportunities it presents for your business. Fees may apply for these consultancy services.

For further information, see [Planning & housing stats](#) and the [Planning & development](#) section of this website.

Integrated Planning Act (IPA) Implementation

The *Integrated Planning Act 1997* (IPA) requires that all local governments in Queensland prepare a planning scheme to help guide growth and change in their areas by 30 June 2004.

The IPA is an innovative system for managing land use and development throughout Queensland. The implementation of IPA will refine the approval system for development applications. IPA will achieve this by integrating the approximately 60 separate approval systems into a single [Integrated Development System \(IDAS\)](#) that will be administered jointly by State and local Governments.

Overall, these reforms will create better-developed and planned communities as well as consistent, transparent and efficient planning laws across the State.

The Department, through [Planning Services](#), implements the IPA by:

- continuing the ongoing legislative program of bringing the different approval systems into IPA,
- implementing recommendations of the IPA operational review, and
- assisting the 125 Queensland councils to finalise their IPA planning schemes by 30 June 2004.

For more information on the *Integrated*

Planning Act 1997 (IPA) and planning schemes, see our dedicated [IPA website](#).

Regional planning projects

With many areas of Queensland experiencing rapid growth, our Department is committed to supporting a coordinated approach to regional development, to meet future priorities, needs and expectations for communities.

The Department coordinates a range of regional planning projects throughout Queensland. A coordination unit, maintained by Planning Services, supports the eight regional planning projects and ensures consistency across the State.

For further information, see [Regional planning projects](#).