



# CONTRACTOR NEWSLETTER

August 2014

### Latest News

Hello again. We have a bumper issue this time with some exciting news to share. Please take the time to read this newsletter as some issues may affect you or your business.

### Spring/Summer Lawn Maintenance

#### ATTENTION ALL GARDENERS!

PLH is currently reviewing all contracts for gardening/lawn maintenance. You will all be contacted shortly with our new proposal.

### Contractor Forum

Due to the success of the first contractor forum in June 2012 we have decided to run another. As we are nearly half way through our 2012-17 contracts we thought it would be a good opportunity to advise of some changes and reinforce some others. We will notify you all when we are closer to arranging a time and venue. Check your inboxes.

### Window locks

In November 2013, the NSW Government introduced changes to Residential Tenancies Act and Regulations 2010 to minimise the risk of children falling from unlocked upper floor windows.

As the properties that PLH manages are owned by Housing NSW, it is now a requirement that **ALL** windows must be capable of being locked in a closed position to improve safety and provide safe ventilating

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points at 50mm and 100 mm from the closed position.

Any contractor that is installing window locks or notices that existing ones are not compliant, should call the office immediately for further instructions.

### New IT platform

From 1 July 2014, PLH has been operating with a new IT platform; a more fully integrated system. You may have noticed that our work orders, quotes and receipts are different in format.

There are 2 major differences. The first major and more obvious difference is the mini risk assessment on the work orders. This must be completed. This is part of our commitment to WHS and indicates to us that you have taken the necessary precautions to complete the task required.

TAKE 5 RISK ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST	DATE ON SITE	22/01/14
Stop & Think through the task – Do you have the skills and knowledge, correct PPE, tools and equipment are in good working order to complete the task?	Y / N	
Assess for any hazards, will the task involve – placing you or others at risk (personal, mechanical, electrical, gravitational, environmental)? If yes, what was the risk:	Y / N	
Have you assessed the risk?	Low / Medium / High	
Have you eliminated or controlled the risk so that you may continue to work safely?	Y / N	
Has the job been completed safely? If no, why:	Y / N	

If you currently provide a risk assessment with your invoice, it is not necessary for you to complete and send the work order with your invoice.

Some contractors have already asked for a copy of the extract to be included at the bottom of their invoices, if you would like a copy just let us know. This is acceptable. You may also continue to send the work order separate to your invoice.

The other difference is the new time frames. There are 6 timeframe categories:

- 1. 1 day
  - 2. 3 days
  - 3. 5 days
- } URGENT
- 4. 14 days
  - 5. 21 days
  - 6. 28 days
- } ROUTINE

We have split the urgent and routine categories into a further 3 categories to reflect an appropriate time frame for attendance.

Can you please take the time to check that the details on the work order and your remittance are correct. If you have another email address for your payment remittances please advise our Accounts department.

### Risk

Pacific Link has alerted you in the past of incidents within complexes or tenants who have become more volatile than usual. As part of our commitment to your safety and well being we will continue to disclose this information. With our new IT platform, security alerts are either numbered 1 or 2.

- 1. *Security Alert 1* – proceed with caution
- 2. *Security Alert 2* – must be accompanied with another person or staff member (2 person visit).

If you have been advised of a security risk, please do not take it lightly and proceed as required until further notice.

### Specifications

Our multi-traders are already familiar with the schedule of rates issued by Housing NSW which we frequently use when issuing scope of works. These are linked with specifications and standards as set out by Housing NSW. However Pacific Link has also been developing its own specifications that will standardise whitegoods and other items for all our tradepersons to use and install. This

information will be explained further at our Contractor Forum.

## Home Warranty Insurance

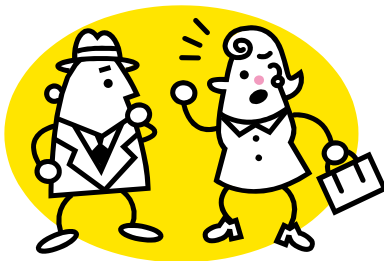
The properties that Pacific Link Housing manager are owned by Land and Housing Corporation, with the exception of 1 property and the new ones we are developing. Generally any work for the State is exempt from HWI. We have been advised that any work that Pacific Link arranges that is valued over \$20,000 the contractor should seek HWI.

If any contractor is interested in working with high value contracts they should seek the required coverage and advise the office.

## Contractor Conduct and tenant interaction

There have been some incidents where contractors, and sub-contractors, have not acted in an appropriate manner. We manage various properties for tenants and on behalf of other organisations whose clients who are escaping familial hardship. Section A.5 of our contract relates to Language and General Behaviour. Please note the following:

- *Bad language must not be used in the presence or hearing of any tenant, visitor, guest or employee of the Principal.*
- *Loud and boisterous behaviour (without bad language) can be threatening and offensive to others, especially the elderly and infirm, and those suffering an illness.*
- *Ensure that personal behaviour does not interrupt nor threaten the general enjoyment by tenants of their home and surrounding environment.*
- *Do not be judgemental nor belittle a tenant for any reason by attitude, tone of voice or action.*



Pacific Link encourages all contractors and subcontractors to be more sensitive of tenants/clients when attending to repairs. Please ensure this information is relayed to all your employees.

It has also been noted that some contractors are commenting to tenants and making derogatory or non essential comments on the work of others who may have serviced the property previously. While you are on site, could all contractors please refrain from commenting on other contractor's workmanship. It would be in everyone's best interest if contractors could address the task at hand and not involve the tenants, unless seeking clarification on the problem.

If there are any issues on quality of work from previous contractors please notify the office and discuss the matter with an Asset staff member.

## Contractor Scheduling

Contractors should be aware that we are regulated to complete vacant works within 14-28 days that includes obtaining quotes. To ensure we meet our KPI, it is expected that contractors provide realistic time frames.

If you can not complete the work within the required timeframe, please advise us ASAP otherwise penalty fines will be imposed.

## Quality Control

As a general rule, any of the following could be subject to quality control by Asset staff:

1. Scope of works issued.
2. Substantial cost by a single contractor.
3. Random choice.

These quality inspections are to ensure that the work has been completed as requested and completed satisfactorily. To avoid call backs or delays in payment processing, please ensure that all work specified on work orders has been completed, regardless if you have undertaken the work or a subcontractor.

More importantly if you have been called back to attend to an issue please advise the office that the job has now been completed.

### On-site cleaning

We have noticed that contractors are leaving their rubbish in tenant's bins. Under no circumstances is rubbish – green or material – to be dumped in the tenant's bins. It is your responsibility to remove all your building and green waste from site. This applies to vacant and tenanted properties.

**Please ensure that all employees and sub-contractors are made aware of this requirement.**

### Fair Trading ALERT: Electrical Recall

Fair Trading have advised of a public recall and prohibition on the use of Infinity Cable sold exclusively through Masters Hardware. Refer to the following website for further information:



[http://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au/ftw/About\\_us/News](http://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au/ftw/About_us/News)

[and\\_events/Media\\_releases/2013\\_media\\_releases/20131009\\_recall\\_infinity\\_electrical\\_cable.page?DC\\_Sext.ref=HomePageClick:ScamandAlerts](http://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au/ftw/About_us/News/and_events/Media_releases/2013_media_releases/20131009_recall_infinity_electrical_cable.page?DC_Sext.ref=HomePageClick:ScamandAlerts)

### Fair Trading ALERT: Online Gateway

Fair Trading have advised of a free seminar for plumbers, drainers and builders to encourage you to get up-to-speed with the new MyInspections gateway.

It is a free information seminar that will familiarise yourself with the new online system, designed to make paying plumbing and drainage inspection fees and submitting forms easier. MyInspections will replace transactions through QuickCheck agents (such as paying for a plumbing and drainage audit inspection), which will no longer be available after 31 December 2014.

For more information or to book a seminar

contact Fair Trading's Plumbing Inspection and Assurance Service by emailing [piasstragey@finance.nsw.gov.au](mailto:piasstragey@finance.nsw.gov.au)

### Asbestos

Pacific Link Housing is in the process of finalising a policy on asbestos handling and developing an asbestos register. When completed, this will be available on our website.

All contractors should note that the majority of our housing stock is 30+ years old; therefore it should be assumed that asbestos will be present in some shape or form. It is expected that any repairs/removal of asbestos is handled in the correct manner and in accordance with the Act. If in doubt please contact us for clarification and further direction, we take this matter very seriously and would like to ensure in all cases that the safest work practices are followed.

Just a reminder that if you are removing any damaged asbestos you will be required to provide evidence that it has been disposed of correctly; this also applies to sub contractors handling asbestos for you. A copy of the receipt where the asbestos has been disposed must accompany your invoice.

### Lock up

Please ensure that when you have finished for the day or need to leave a property that all doors are secured, including the screen doors. Recent inspections we have noticed that security doors have been left unlocked. Please ensure all sub-contractors are aware.

If a property is on a lock box, under no circumstances are the keys to be taken home because you are attending again the next day. During the day if you leave the property (even if you are going to get lunch) ensure the key is put back into the lock box.

## Lock boxes

If any trade is leaving keys in the lock box, please ensure that they are not on tags or rings – they must be left loose. They have on occasion, blocked the clear button from opening the box.

## Licensing

Pacific Link is conducting random checks on contractor licenses. Please ensure that your license is not only up to date but that you also hold the correct class of license for the work you are undertaking. If your license details have changed in any way please advise our office immediately to update your details.

Don't forget if you have anything to contribute please send us an email. Thanks and until next time...

The editor  
Assets