

APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING TRUST

DECEMBER 2005 NEWSLETTER

*Best Wishes for Christmas and 2006
From Trustees and the Team at the Trust*

Christmas and New Year Close Down

The Trust's Office will close down from Friday 23 December 2005 until Monday 16 January 2006. During this period John Berridge, the General Manager, will be available on 0274 769 304 to deal with any emergency employment matter.

Apprentices' Pay

- **Your pay on Wednesday 21 December will be your last one for the year.** It will be for the week of Wednesday 14 to Tuesday 20 December plus the 4 Statutory Holidays for 25 & 26 December and 1 & 2 January.
- **Your Holiday Pay will then be paid on Thursday 22 December.** If you took any Annual Leave during the year then you will receive only what Holiday Pay you have remaining.
- **Your first pay in 2006 will be on Wednesday 18 January.** It will be for the period from Wednesday 21 December to Tuesday 17 January inclusive. Please ensure all your weekly timesheets are each signed off and faxed through for the work you do over this period.

Please note these pay days and plan your holiday finances!

Area Coordinator South Auckland: Lorraine Williams



Lorraine Williams has been appointed to replace Mark Grantham as Area Coordinator - South Auckland. She will commence her new role on Monday 16 January 2006. Lorraine is presently the Programme Administrator for Building Services at Unitec, and is well known to most Trust apprentices and host employers.

Graduation

As previously advised the Trust's 2005 Graduation, Annual Awards and Prizegiving Ceremony was deferred until early 2006 so the last Level 3 classes in 2005 could conclude their studies.

The confirmed date is now Friday 10 February 2006, and the venue is the Functions Centre, North Harbour Stadium in Albany. The function will begin at 7:30 pm, with dinner and presentations from 8:00 pm onwards.

Guest speaker is Hon. Jim Anderton, Associate Minister of Tertiary Education.

Nominations for the various Awards and Prizes are now being sought. Invitations to those eligible to attend will be mailed in the near future.

Time Sheets & Host Employers Sign Off

The Trust's Rules regarding Time sheets are very clear; they are printed on each timesheet and are contained in the House Rules for Apprentices.

Apprentices are required to obtain their host employer's sign off on each timesheet before they fax it to the Trust. They then give the top copy to their host employer as a record of the hours claimed (and later invoiced to the host employer). The apprentice retains the second copy as their record.

A number of recent instances of fraud involving time sheets have meant the Trust is now insisting **ALL** timesheets be signed by the host employer.

In a small number of cases apprentices have been variously claiming more hours than the number actually worked, not getting their host employer to sign their time sheet, not providing their host employer with a copy of their time sheet and even altering the hours after the host employer has signed their time sheet.

Such fraud is unacceptable, and the actions of these few apprentices have meant that as of now the existing rules will be strictly applied.

Trust Apprentices - Your individual time sheets will NOT be accepted for payment unless and until they are demonstrably signed as "Agreed and Approved" by your host employer. You will NOT be paid until they are signed.

Unsigned timesheets will NOT be accepted, Phoned in hours will NOT be accepted

The Trust's disciplinary procedures will be commenced with any persistent offenders who do not comply with the Rules regarding Timesheets and Payment of Wages.

The BOC Gasfitters Scholarship

Mark Tancell of Epsom was the first Trust apprentice awarded a BOC Gasfitters Scholarship; he took up his Scholarship in November.

No More Trust Fees

Until November this year all Trust apprentices paid fees of \$1,200 to the Trust at the start of each of their Level 1, 2 and 3 training. The Trust meanwhile paid each apprentice's Unitec enrolment fees at each of these Levels.

Since 1 November this year Trust apprentices no longer pay Trust fees, and instead pay their own enrolment fees direct to Unitec. These changes mean:

- a. Apprentices no longer put their Level 2 and 3 fees on their Tool Account;
- b. Those who did so before November 2005 will continue to pay these off by way of weekly deductions from their wages.
- c. New and existing apprentices enrolling at Unitec after 1 November 2005 are invoiced by Unitec and pay their enrolment fees direct to Unitec. They are eligible to take out a Student Loan to pay for their enrolment fees.
- d. The Trust's Tool Account facility remains for any apprentice who chooses to pay for their tools by weekly deductions from their wages.

Backflow Training

Part of your Trust training program is a 4 day Backflow Course. This is a separate course, and not part of your National Certificates in Plumbing and Gasfitting. Attendance is compulsory, and Backflow is undertaken at Level 3.

Completion of Backflow means you can become IQP qualified after meeting some further practical requirements. Trust fees are no longer charged but Backflow will continue to be provided free of charge by the Trust.

Limited Electrical Certificate

Another part of your Trust training program is the training that leads to this Certificate, and is also separate from your National Certificates in Plumbing and Gasfitting. It is presently undertaken only by some Level 3 apprentices; others choose not to do it because of other Level 3 training commitments.

This training will now be offered free of charge to all Level 3 apprentices. Any Trust apprentice who decides not to do it during Level 3 and who subsequently graduates from the Trust in both plumbing and gasfitting will receive a voucher.

This will entitle them to undertake this training free, provided they do so within 12 months of completing their National Certificates in Plumbing and Gasfitting.

“Completing” Correspondence for Wage Increases

In September 2004 the Trust advised completion of correspondence modules would be mandatory from 1 January 2005. From that date you have needed to complete not only each Q block course but also all relevant correspondence modules to be eligible for an increase in wage level.

This requirement emphasised the importance of completing the theory component of your plumbing and gasfitting apprenticeship, as well as the benefits to you as you train and then go on to achieve registration.

The response to this has been very positive. Over the last 12 months there have been ever increasing numbers of correspondence assignments completed and sent in for marking. That however has caused a backlog in marking and returning completed assignments. Many of you have expressed concern over the delays, and more especially the delay in getting your subsequent wage increase.

In October the Trust decided that once your Area Coordinator had received from you all the assignments required to be completed for a wage increase, the Trust would consider you as having completed the completion of correspondence criterion for wage increase purposes.

**Any delay in having correspondence marked & returned
will not now delay your wage increase!**

For example - if you complete all Level 1 correspondence before your 1Q block course, you will be eligible for the Level 2 wages agreed by your host employer as soon as Unitec confirm in writing you have completed your 1Q block course.

If you have already completed 1Q, then as soon as your Area Coordinator receives all your Level 1 assignments you will be eligible for Level 2 wages

Similar arrangements also now apply at Levels 2 and 3. However at Level 2 you must complete all correspondence at both Levels 1 and Level 2, and at Level 3 you must complete all correspondence at all of Levels 1, 2 and 3, to be eligible for any increase in wage level.

The Apprentices Tool Box

Over the past few months John Berridge, the *General Manager*, has been meeting you before the start of your Saturday OSH courses in Auckland. These 15 minute sessions are so he can meet up with you and your group for a question and answer session.

In recent weeks two issues have come up that are of general interest to all apprentices and their host employers:

1. Accumulating Sick Leave

Under the Holidays Act 2003 employees are now entitled to accumulate any unused sick Leave, and carry it forward to their next leave year.

Once you have completed 6 months employment with the Trust you have an entitlement of 5 days Sick Leave for the next year. If you have any unused Sick Leave 12 months later, these days can be carried forward at the same time as you get your next annual entitlement of 5 days, and so on.

The maximum number of days Sick Leave that you can carry forward is 15 days; this would give you an entitlement of 20 days Sick Leave that next year.

2. Unitec Enrolment Forms

Section 45 of the Unitec Enrolment form is where you fill in the courses you will be taking. The names of these courses are however not usually known.

Unitec have asked that Trust apprentices simply enter the words "National Certificates in Plumbing and Gasfitting" and add "Level 1", "Level 2" or "Level 3" as appropriate. Drainlayers should specify "National Certificate in Drainlaying"

Kudos

A number of apprentices deserve special mention for recent achievements

Michael McLaren who is with F B Hall in Hamilton has been commended for his work leading a special project in that firm.

The following are also commended by the Unitec tutors marking correspondence for their recent high quality assignments:

Levi Alexander
Blake Cowan

Maximilian Wordsworth
Mathew Miles

Each of the above individuals has received a BRANZ Guide to Plumbing and Gasfitting to acknowledge their efforts.

2006 Block Course Calendar

A copy of the Block Course Calendar for 2006 has just been mailed out to each Trust apprentice and host employer. Don't forget to diary your block courses, and check they don't clash with any other commitments.

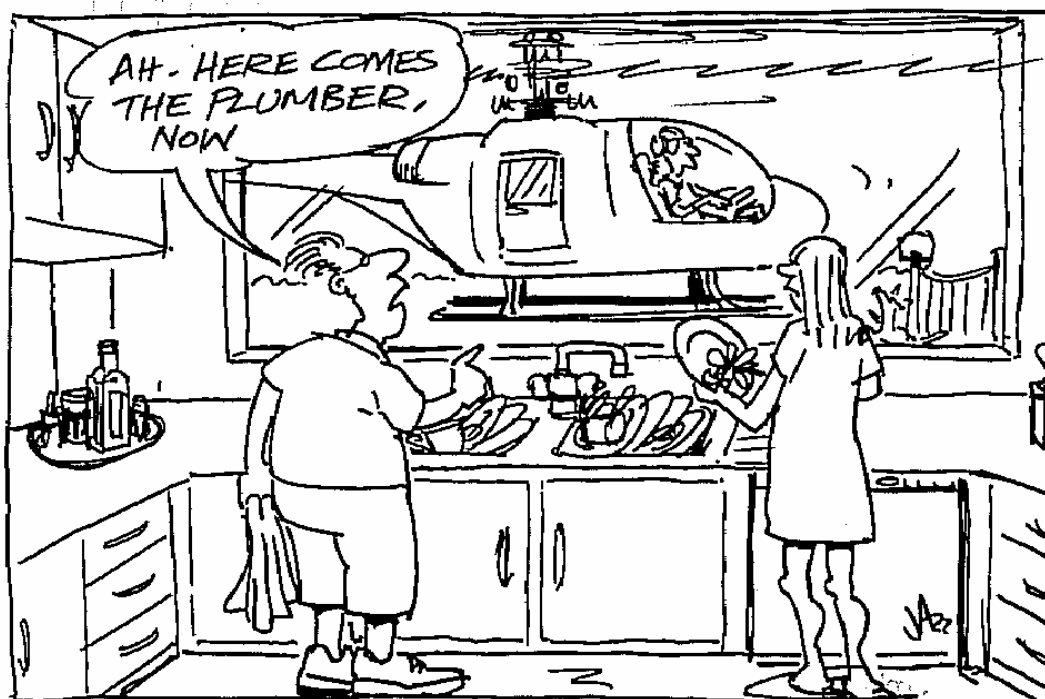
So Why Did You Choose to Become a Plumber?

The latest North & South magazine's lead article is about on the Trades being a preferred career choice in today's world of work. Its title is "Tradesmen - the New Elite"

Not all apprentices the Trust employs stay and complete their apprenticeship. For many who do resign and leave that decision is one that they may later regret.

If you ever have doubts about your present career choice, and all the hard work and long hours it involves at relatively low pay, then read this North and South article. That should persuade you NOT to do something you will later regret.

From the NZ Listener in April 2004:



*Have an enjoyable and safe Christmas
and New Year Holiday!*