

# STREET SIDE OF THE WATER METER

**FRANK IAPOZZUTO** DISCUSSES WHAT YOU NEED TO BE AWARE OF WHEN IT COMES TO INSTALLING WATERMARK CERTIFIED PLUMBING PRODUCTS THAT SATISFY VARIOUS WATER AUTHORITY GUIDELINES.

**Y**ou may have finally scored your first job with a Water Authority, perhaps laying some pipe, installing property service connection valves, branch or gravity sewer repairs and you are keen to use plumbing products that have served you well for many years.

Well in theory that sounds like a pretty trusty plan, however each Water Authority has a set of procurement guidelines that specify what product they prefer. As we all know, on the residential side of the water meter all plumbing is required not only to be installed in accordance with AS/NZS 3500, but use WaterMark certified product.

Using WaterMark certified plumbing products not only ensures that you are using a quality and controlled component in your installation but should a WaterMark product cause flood damage due to the product being found faulty, your insurance company should gladly indemnify you from any costs associated with repairs.

Although WaterMark is a sound and trusted scheme, Water Authorities can operate with a different set of guidelines and care should be taken before embarking on any projects. There is no hard and fast rule of what product is accepted and it is strongly advised that you seek clarification from each Water Authority you endeavour to do work for.

Due to the rugged and varying conditions that product can see within a Water Authorities' jurisdiction, WaterMark product is often not necessarily accepted. Some Water Authorities run prolonged field trials with certain product in an attempt to validate performance and longevity before a product is nominated with a technical specification. In other instances, which is ever more growing amongst Water Authorities is to use the services offered by Water Services Association of Australia [WSAA].

WSAA offers manufacturers and distributors a product appraisal which assesses a products' quality even if the product carries or does not carry WaterMark certification. By a Water Authority using and trusting in the expertise of WSAA they can confidently specify and approve a particular product for an application. So don't be too alarmed if you see the acronym WSAA in any tender documentations, as all they are specifying is a type of product approval process that is being recognised by the Water Authority.

At this point it is really up to you to ask your suppliers if the product they are offering such as a Gibault or a ductile iron fitting carries WSAA appraisal or WaterMark certification. Alternatively, you can identify brands and products that have WSAA appraisal by visiting their WSAA website.



## SO WHAT DOES THIS ALL MEAN?

Essentially, before submitting a quote to a Water Authority, carefully comb through all of the technical specification and identify what criteria has been stipulated in order to submit a conforming bid. Does the Water Authority specify Australian Standard numbers? Are certification schemes such as WaterMark and WSAA referenced? If so, you will need to offer product that meets compliance as once you have backfilled over the product it may be too costly to replace, particularly if you have installed volumes.

If you feel the documentation provided from the Water Authority is vague and you don't seem to be able to get a straight answer from the project engineer, then I would strongly advise to clearly specify on your quote or tender what product you have nominated, brand, type and certification for each component. If you are the successful contractor, this will quickly eliminate any confusion or potential wrong doing down the track as your job has been clearly identified, approved and signed off. ■

*Prove Standards & Engineering offers multi-disciplinary engineering and testing services. Its expertise is completely driven around the Water Industry including product testing for certification, WELS registrations, WSAA approvals, infrastructure services, and extensive services for solar hot water testing.*

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