Extended transition to lead free plumbing products in Western Australia

⚠ Industry Bulletin 171 updated: March 2026

The Australian Building Codes Board (ABCB) has extended the transition period for the mandatory installation of lead free plumbing products.

The ABCB has confirmed that from 1 May 2026 manufacturers of WaterMarked copper alloy products will only be allowed to produce lead free WaterMarked plumbing products, where required by the National Construction Code.

The ABCB has also agreed to extend the time during which existing WaterMark certified copper alloy products, in contact with drinking water, can still be installed. These products can now be used until 30 April 2028. This means from 1 May 2028 all new WaterMarked copper alloy products in contact with drinking water must be lead free.

Lead free requirements can be found in the contents of this updated industry bulletin (IB), which supersedes the version of IB 171 published in July 2025.

The full ABCB update can be found here.

During the extended transition period, the installation of lead free WaterMark certified copper alloy products is encouraged although their use is not mandatory until 1 May 2028.

A transition period to lead free products commenced on 1 May 2023, to enable manufacturers and suppliers to develop and source products to meet the requirements.

The PCA defines lead free as:
Where a plumbing product or material in contact with drinking water has a weighted average lead content of not more than 0.25%.

Transitional requirements to lead free copper alloy products in contact with drinking water from 1 May 2028

In Western Australia, the Plumbers Licensing and Plumbing Standards Regulations 2000 adopts the PCA as the primary plumbing standards. Accordingly, clause A5G4(2) of the PCA will apply as follows:

- All new water supply plumbing work in contact with drinking water that is carried out on or after 1 May 2028, must be constructed using WaterMark certified lead free products.
- Products in existing water supply plumbing systems in contact with drinking water, that are installed or replaced on or after 1 May 2028 must be lead free.

Version one
Lead Free (Specification number) (Licence number)
Option for the marking of larger products and on packaging.
Version two
LF (Specification number) (Licence number)
Option for the marking of larger products.
Version three
WLF (Specification number) (Licence number)
Option for the marking of smaller products.
Version four
WLF (Specification number) (Licence number)
Option for the marking of etched products.

WaterMark certification of lead free copper alloy products

Products listed on the WaterMark Certification Scheme website require WaterMark certification.

This certification authorises the product for installation in plumbing or drainage systems and also outlines the products that must comply with the lead free requirements of clause A5G4(2) of the PCA. All products to be used in contact with drinking water that contain copper alloy must be marked with the lead free logo.

There are currently many lead free products available and licensed plumbers may wish to consider installing these products and reducing any stock of products with the current allowable percentages of lead, prior to 1 May 2028.

Normal and special WaterMark requirements for lead free plumbing products containing copper alloy are shown in the manual for the WaterMark Certification Scheme, see examples on the left of this page.

Important information and advice can be found on the ABCB website.

Products included

Products that contain copper alloy installed in contact with drinking water are captured under A5G4(2), for example:

- Copper alloy fittings
- Water heaters
- Valves (isolation, backflow and pressure limiting)

Products excluded

There are some WaterMark products containing copper alloy that are exempt from lead free requirements in drinking water services such as:

- Shower heads for bathing
- Appliances such as washing machines and dishwashers
- Emergency showers and eye washer

Products containing copper alloy used in the following systems are exempt from the new lead free requirements:

- Firefighting water services
- Non-drinking water systems
- Irrigation and reticulation systems

Note: Products installed in contact with drinking water that do not contain copper alloy are not required to be marked with the lead free logo. For example, stainless steel taps.

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