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Certificates of Compliance Explained.

The seller is generally responsible for providing the buyer of their property with Valid Certificates of Compliance. Some of these certificates have been a requirement for many years already, but some new ones have been added more recently.

Originally the required certificates included only the **Beetle & Electrical**, but we have since seen the addition of **Water Installation (Plumbing) & Gas** and most recently **Electric Fence**.

This means that all properties will normally require a minimum of two certificates and in some cases as many as five in order to effect a change of ownership. The certificates are required by different governing bodies, each for their own reasons:

Safety: Electrical, Gas and Electric Fence inspections.

Water preservation & conservation: Water Installation.

Protection of investment: Beetle Inspection.

Each of the certificates requires that the property is inspected by a suitably qualified inspector, electrician or plumber etc. who is also registered with the relevant authority or governing body. As inspectors we are obliged to enforce the regulations to the best of our ability, knowledge and experience, it is not simply a case of "our opinion". Our work is regularly checked by the authorities and we are held accountable if we have erred. We shall endeavor to add some clarity to the individual inspections, what's involved from a technical point of view and what is involved in the overall certification process.

Electrical Inspections.

The Electrical Inspection is by far the most complicated of the five involving not just an entire book of regulations, SANS10142-1, but also includes the occupational health and safety act, and of course these regulations change from time to time.

The first thing to know is that this certificate covers the electrical "**installation**" from the point where the mains supply cable enters the premises, generally the top of the Mains Switch to the point of consumption, generally described as a plug socket or where the wires connect to a fixed appliance.

The certificate does **NOT include appliances** fixed or free standing, only the correctness of how these devices are connected to the installation. Fixed appliances include things like, stove, geyser, pool & pond pumps, aircon units, garage and gate motors, pool lights etc.

The electrical regulations are primarily concerned with the correctness and safety of your electrical Installation and that everything that forms part of the installation is in good working order.



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The basic items that the electrician will check.

- The mains board, correct connections, correct cable sizes, correct circuit breakers and labelling, Earth leakage operation. That all items and covers are properly secured.
- Check that all plugs and switches work correctly with no worn contacts, are wired correctly, secure, and if metal are correctly earthed.
- All fixed appliances, including lights that have exposed metal need to be earthed correctly.
- Ensure that all fixed appliances have been connected to the installation by approved means, which varies depending on the type of appliance and the current it draws.
- We do an insulation test and take an earth spike reading.
- Check all wiring to ensure it's correctly rated and the correct type for its application.
- Each room must have at least one working light, and the correct type for the room it is in, enclosed light fittings in bathrooms.
- We check to make sure that no electrical points, switches or lights are in illegal positions, not too close to shower, bath, pools etc.
- We need to ensure that all devices in the installation are correctly rated, installed and of approved types.
- Even temporary installations, which have been installed in a manner that would imply they are permanent, need to comply with regulations. You cannot extend the lead on a fixed appliance to the nearest plug point you must extend the plug circuit to the appliance.

Beetle Inspections.

The Beetle inspections are unique in the fact that there is no one overall regulation regarding what is required. It is governed purely by the "Beetle Clause" in your specific deed of sale, and these clauses can vary dramatically in what they call for. So read this clause carefully and make sure you understand the implications thereof. Are specific beetles specified?

Does it refer to main dwelling or the whole property, which could include fences, gates, Wendy Houses etc.?

The important phrase in a Beetle Certificate is:

"A **visual** inspection of **accessible** portions of the property for **active** infestation"

- **Visual**, it is an inspection that is performed by the naked eye, looking for signs or evidence of active infestation, flight holes and frass (fine wood powder) left by the beetle when they eventually exit the timber.
- **Accessible**: If the timber is not accessible we cannot check it. It would simply be impractical for us to have to remove ceilings to get to roof timbers, fitted carpets to get to floor boards etc. The logistics and costs involved would be prohibitive.
- **Active**: Most wood destroying beetle have a certain life cycle, the eggs are laid in the timber where the larvae can live for years before eventually exiting and leaving the tell-tale flight holes and frass, if these signs are not yet evident we have no way of knowing that there is larvae in the wood, and in some cases these flight holes may be old indicating that the larvae have all left the wood and there is no further active infestation.



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Water Installation.

Certificate of Compliance for Water Installations is the official name NOT plumbing certificate as it has become known. This certificate was introduced by the City of Cape Town for the purpose of preserving and conserving our precious water supply. It actually has very little to do with the general state of your overall plumbing.

There are only seven points that the plumber is required to check.

- The hot water cylinder complies with SANS 10252 and 10254.
- The water meter registers.
- There are no water leaks on the property.
- Water pipes and terminal fittings are correctly fixed in position.
- No storm water is discharged into the sewerage system.
- There is no cross connection between the potable supply and any grey water or groundwater system which may be installed.
- The Private isolating valve is in place and functioning properly, A Stop tap must be installed at the Water meter on the owners side, even if there is a Stop tap at the geyser.

Potential buyers need to be aware of the limits of this certificate and do their normal due diligence when viewing properties. Check water pressure, hot and cold, poor water pressure could be a low pressure geyser on hot water or poor supply on cold water. Check that all drains are free flowing; blocked drains are a normal maintenance issue. We will make sure that all taps and fittings are properly secured and do not leak in the OFF position, but we do not replace taps or fittings simply because they are physically broken or in poor condition.

Gas Inspections.

INSPECTION OF GAS PIPELINE INSTALLATIONS

We perform inspections of LP gas pipeline installations in order to certify their compliance with the SABS Regulations for LP gas installations (SANS 10087 – 1:2008). A Certificate of Conformity will be issued for those installations that fully comply. An inspection comprises of the following aspects:

- Cylinder storage to comply with safety zones.
- SABS approved piping used and installed in the correct manner.
- The installation of isolation and emergency valves.
- Adequate ventilation at cylinder and inside rooms.
- If SABS approved appliances are connected to the reticulation system.
- A pressure leak test to establish the system continuity.



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Electric Fence Inspections.

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ELECTRIFIED FENCING (SANS 60335-2-76 - South Africa):

Wall Height: Minimum wall height of private property to be secured - 1.5 metres.

Brackets: Upright brackets may be used without any height restriction.

Angled brackets: Brackets can be angled at no more than 45 degrees out and are to be installed on the inside of the boundary wall.

Neighbours: It is not permissible to angle brackets into a neighbour's property without their knowledge or consent.

Hazard: Electrified fences are to be installed and operated so that they cause no electrical hazard or entanglement to persons or animals.

Barbed wire or razor wire: These shall not be electrified by an energiser.

Warning Signs: Electric fencing installed along a public road or pathway shall be securely identified with YELLOW WARNING SIGNS (100 x 200 cm) at intervals not exceeding 10 metres. All gates and access points to have warning signs.

Electrified Gates: To be capable of being opened/closed without the person receiving a shock.

These are just some of the more basic regulations concerning domestic installations.

Certification Process.

We trust we have answered many of your questions and hopefully given you a better understanding and appreciation of the purpose behind these inspections.

What is the process when requiring these certificates?

You, or your agent or even your transferring attorney can request that we perform these inspections for you.

Downloadable Request Forms and direct online requests are available on our website www.techno-group.co.za and click on the "inspections" menu button.

Once we receive the request we will contact the seller, who is generally responsible for the costs involved, to get their permission and make the necessary arrangement to perform the inspections. Unfortunately we receive no government sponsorship and the seller bears the cost of the inspections.

The inspection fees are a consultation fee and are due and payable irrespective of the outcome of our inspection. We do offer a discount for immediate settlement on these fees; alternatively we can send an invoice to your transferring attorney who will settle the account on transfer from the proceeds of your sale.

The inspections have two possible outcomes, everything is clear and within regulation, if this is the case we will issue the certificates at no additional cost above the inspection fees. Should the installation not be clear or within regulation we will issue you a report, with a quote on the necessary rectifications.

At this point you may decide to accept our quotation after which we will affect the necessary rectifications and issue the certificate OR You may decide to rather not accept our quotation and make use of another company to affect the repairs AND issue you your certificate. (We cannot issue certificates on the work of others as it is also a guarantee of workmanship and material) If you do decide to make use of another company please ensure that they are qualified and capable of issuing you with a certificate, they may also charge you an inspection fee, leaving you liable for two inspection fees.