

## Plumbing

### Definition

Plumbing is the piping, fixtures and appliances within a property, and also all of the work associated with the design, installation, removal, alteration or repair of piping, fixtures and appliances in connection with drinking water supply, non-drinking water supply and drainage systems, which flow in and out of buildings and between given connection points to points of use and/or disposal (World Plumbing Council Working Group 2008).

While some define plumbing as beginning at the property line, others define it more broadly. If a definition is provided within local regulation, then it should be the definition used (World Plumbing Council Working Group 2008).

### Explanation

Plumbing delivers safe public drinking water and sanitary waste water systems. It is well established that safe and durable plumbing systems underpin the continuing health and well-being of a community that is served. The scope of plumbing work, plumbing standards and regulatory approaches vary widely around the world. The common essentials are safe drinking water supply and reliable sanitary drainage systems. A broader meaning of plumbing in many jurisdictions may also include plumbing work as described below, including gas-fitting, medical gas-fitting, fire fighting water supply, storm water and roof drainage systems and mechanical services (that is the heating, cooling and ventilation systems of buildings) (World Plumbing Council Working Group 2008).

### Example

Broader meanings of plumbing in the indicated contexts include but are not limited to:

- Drinking water supplies or non-drinking water supplies: the installation, alteration or repair of any pipes, fittings, appliances or other items that directly or indirectly involve the supply of drinking water and non-drinking water, including fire services from a given connection point, or onsite supply source to a point of use within a property.
- Sanitary disposal system: the installation, alteration or repair of any drains, fittings, pipes, fixtures, appliances or other items involved in the collection, conveyance, disposal or treatment of sewage, trade waste or grey-water that is above ground.
- Drainage: the installation, alteration or repair of any below ground drains, pipes, fittings, appliances or other items involved in the collection, conveyance, disposal or reuse of sewage, trade waste or storm-water that is underground.
- Gas-fitting: the installation, alteration or repair of any pipes, appliances, flues, fittings, apparatus control or other items involved in the supply or use of gas. This includes gas-fitting work related to caravans, boats or recreational vehicles, but does not include

filling or refilling a gas storage container.

- Medical gases: the installation, alteration or repair of any pipes, fittings, or other items that directly or indirectly involve the supply of medical gases.

- Roof drainage systems: the installation, alteration or repair of any roof gutters, flashings, piping, sheeting, roof covering or other above ground items involved in the collection, conveyance, disposal, treatment, storage or reuse of rainwater.

- Mechanical services: the installation, alteration or repair of any valves, regulators, registers, pipes, ducts, flues, tanks, heating and cooling lines or surfaces, cooling towers, boilers, burners, solid fuel heaters, coils or other items involved in heating, cooling or ventilating a building by mechanical means (Plumbing Industry Commission 1998).

### **Reference for Definition**

Plumbing Industry Commission (1998) Victorian Plumbing Regulations 1998. Victoria, Australia.

### **Useful Links**