



水務署
Water Supplies Department

總部 Headquarters

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30 September 2024

Distribution: To all Licensed Plumbers and Authorized Persons

Dear Sirs,

WSD Circular Letter No. 8/2024

New General Acceptance (GA) System for Plumbing Materials Comply with Enhanced Technical Requirements

Currently, the standards and technical requirements of plumbing materials are prescribed in the Waterworks Regulations (WWR) by reference to a particular prescribed specification. Lead content of plumbing materials is an essential parameter under close monitoring. In this connection, instead of merely basing on the compliance with the chemical composition specified in the prescribed specification, we draw on the prevailing regulatory regime overseas and introduce metal leaching test as one of the technical requirements to directly assess their effect on drinking water quality for construction of fresh water inside service. Furthermore, we impose an upper limit on the lead content of metallic plumbing materials to 3.5% in the wake of advancement in plumbing material technology as well as balancing market supply situation. These new material requirements not only strengthen drinking water safety at large, but also widen the choice of compliant plumbing materials for use by the plumbing industry.

Enhanced Technical Requirements

2. This Circular Letter promulgates the new material requirements for plumbing materials intended for use in fresh water inside service together with the streamlined testing requirement for plumbing materials intended for use in flushing water inside service and fire

service in Enhanced Technical Requirements¹ (Part B of “Technical Requirements for Plumbing Works in Buildings”) for GA 2.0.

New General Acceptance (GA) System

3. The Water Supplies Department (WSD) has a General Acceptance system (GA 1.0) in place to pre-approve plumbing materials used in plumbing projects. To facilitate the plumbing industry to choose and use plumbing materials compliant with the new material requirements, a new General Acceptance system (GA 2.0) will be implemented to pre-approve plumbing materials compliant with the Enhanced Technical Requirements for GA 2.0 for use in fresh water and flushing water inside service and fire service.

4. For fresh water inside service, all new plumbing materials compliant with the new material requirements with respect to leaching test and the maximum lead content in the Enhanced Technical Requirements (i.e., those not currently registered under the existing GA 1.0 system) are required to apply for GA 2.0. Renewal of all existing GA 1.0 applications is also required to apply for GA 2.0, except pipe fittings, valves and strainers manufactured by bronze with lead content more than 3.5%. Unlike plumbing materials manufactured by other alloys, bronze material in compliance with the Enhanced Technical Requirements is currently falling short of alternatives. To facilitate phasing out of these plumbing materials with lead content more than 3.5%, renewal of these plumbing materials under GA 1.0 shall be accepted with conditions.

5. For flushing water inside service and fire service, all applications of plumbing materials compliant with the streamlined testing requirements in the Enhanced Technical Requirements for use in flushing water inside service and fire service are required to apply for GA 2.0. For avoidance of doubt, the current Part B of “Technical Requirements for Plumbing Works in Buildings” is applicable to approved plumbing products and GA application under GA 1.0.

6. For easy identification, a prefix letter “Z” will be added to GA numbers under GA 2.0, e.g. “ZC20250001”.

¹ Enhanced “Technical Requirements” for GA 2.0 is accessible at the following link or QR code to the Water Supplies Department’s webpage:
<https://www.wsd.gov.hk/en/plumbing-engineering/requirements-for-plumbing-installation/technical-requirements-for-plumbing-works-in-bldgs/index.html>



7. For application procedures, required documents and validity period of all applications under GA 2.0 and renewal applications under GA 1.0 for plumbing materials mentioned in paragraph 4. Please refer to the attached **Annex I** for details.

Effective Date and Grace Period

8. Enhanced Technical Requirements and GA 2.0 shall be effective on **30 September 2024**. To accommodate potential plumbing materials undergoing testing, a 6-month grace period shall be allowed for new and renewal applications under GA 1.0. Except those renewal applications for items mentioned in paragraph 4, all applications received on or after **1 April 2025** are required to apply for GA 2.0.

Enquiry

9. Should you have any enquiry, please contact our Mechanical Engineer/Material Control at telephone no. 2294 2656.

Yours faithfully,

(Original Signed)

(CHAN Chi Yuen, Stanley)
for Water Authority

Encl.
(with Chinese translation)

c.c.

Housing Department (Attn: SM/QM)

Buildings Department

Architectural Services Department

Fire Services Department

The Hong Kong Housing Society

The Hong Kong Institute of Architects

The Hong Kong Institution of Engineers

The Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors

The Chartered Institute of Plumbing and Heating Engineering – Hong Kong Branch

Hong Kong Plumbing and Sanitary Ware Trade Association Ltd.

Hong Kong Licensed Plumbing Professionals Association Ltd.

Hong Kong Water Works Professionals Association Ltd.

The Hong Kong Institution of Plumbing and Drainage Ltd.

Plumbing Technology Student Association

The Association of Registered Fire Service Installation Contractors of Hong Kong Limited

Real Estate Developers Association of Hong Kong

Hong Kong Institute of Vocational Education

Hong Kong Institute of Construction, Construction Industry Council
The Hong Kong Construction Association, Ltd.
Hong Kong General Building Contractors Association Ltd.
The Hong Kong Federation of Electrical & Mechanical Contractors Ltd.
Contractor's Authorised Signatory Association Ltd.
Registered Minor Works Contractor Signatory Association Ltd.
Hong Kong Registered Contractors Association Company Ltd.
Hong Kong Licensed Plumbers Union Limited
Hong Kong Metropolitan University Li Ka Shing School of Professional and Continuing Education
The Association of Electrical and Mechanical Engineering (Hong Kong) Ltd.
Pipeman Engineering (International) Limited
Hong Kong Institute of Water and Sanitation Safety

WSD 3318/15/81

Application for General Acceptance 2.0 (GA 2.0)

Background

The Water Supplies Department (WSD) has a General Acceptance (GA) system in place to pre-approve plumbing products used in plumbing projects. To obtain pre-approval status for their products, applicants are required to provide documents to show compliance with the statutory and other requirements imposed by the Water Authority (WA) as stated in Technical Requirements for Plumbing Works in Buildings (Technical Requirements). If the submission is accepted, the WSD will include the product in its pre-approved list. Contractors can use the product in plumbing projects before the expiry of the GA validity period of that product.

WSD issues General Acceptance (GA) Letter to the pipes and fittings required to be reported in Form WWO1149. For the items to be reported in WWO1149, please visit:

https://www.wsd.gov.hk/filemanager/en/share/pdf/pipes_and_fittings_to_be_reported_in_wwo1149_e.pdf

Please note that WSD will NOT issue general acceptance to the fitting not required to be reported in Form WWO1149.

Application Procedure & Required Documents

When you submit your GA 2.0 application, you are required to send us:-

- a) Covering letter signed by the applicant or stamped with the company chop;
- b) Signed application form:

Application form

https://www.wsd.gov.hk/filemanager/common/licensed_plumbers/Pipes_Fittings_Submission_Form.pdf

Appendix A to application form

https://www.wsd.gov.hk/filemanager/common/licensed_plumbers/appendix-a-ga.pdf

Appendix B to application form

https://www.wsd.gov.hk/filemanager/common/licensed_plumbers/appendix-b-ga-plus.pdf

Appendix D to application form

https://www.wsd.gov.hk/filemanager/common/licensed_plumbers/appendix-d-vls.pdf

- c) Relevant supporting document (5 options, please refer to Notes of application form); and
- d) Two identical copies of the catalogue/fact sheet ^{Note 1} of the pipes and fittings.

No application fee is required.

Accepted Supporting Document

Plumbing products complying with stipulated standards, tests and other requirements in Enhanced Technical Requirements for GA 2.0 are deemed to be accepted by producing certification or test reports confirming their compliance with the relevant stipulated standards in enhanced technical requirements from either:

- (a) the British Standards Institution Kitemark Certificate
- (b1) the U.K. Water Regulations Advisory Scheme (WRAS)
- (b2) Kiwa UK Water Regulation 4 Product Approval Scheme (KUKreg4)
- (b3) NSF REG4 Certification Scheme
- (c) accredited laboratories acceptable to this Authority

For (c), the laboratories accredited by the Hong Kong Laboratory Accreditation Scheme (HOKLAS) under the following sub-categories are acceptable:-

Category	Sub-category
Construction Materials	i) Metallic materials / Steels ii) Pipes and Fittings iii) Showers iv) Tapwares v) Valves

Please visit the website of HOKLAS for more information on the accredited laboratories under the aforementioned sub-categories at:

https://www.itc.gov.hk/en/quality/hkas/conformity_assessment_bodies/hoklas.htm

The accredited laboratories can give you advice on the testing requirements as soon as they have details of your pipes and fittings.

Submit the Application

a) E-Application System

<https://wsdeapplication.gov.hk/en/login>

Instructions to E-Application

<https://www.wsd.gov.hk/en/plumbing-engineering/pipes-and-fittings-to-be-used-in-inside-service-or/general-acceptance/instruction-to-eapp-ga/index.html>

b) In person or by post

Please send the application submission in person or by post to "Material Control Unit, Water Supplies Department" at the following address: Room 4705, 47/F, Immigration Tower, 7 Gloucester Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong. Please also mark "Application for General Acceptance of Pipes and Fittings for Plumbing Systems" on the envelope.

c) By E-mail

Applicants can also submit the application by E-mail to e_apply_ga@wsd.gov.hk. Applicant's attention is drawn that the original/certified true copy of Hong Kong laboratory test report(s) shall also be submitted for verification. Within one month upon receiving a confirmation email with reference number from the Water Supplies Department, please submit those document, together with a duly signed covering/company letter (quoting WSD reference number), by post/in person to "Material Control Unit of Water Supplies Department at Room 4705, 47/F, Immigration Tower, 7 Gloucester Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong".

Note

1. Catalogue/fact sheets shall explicitly provide the following information, preferable with the paper size not larger than A4 - name of the manufacturer, full address of the factory, brand and model reference, a description of fitting,

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size of the fitting inlet as well as body markings on the product. Images and sectional drawings of the fitting, body marking for identification and diagrams with dimensions indicated clearly for visualization are also required.

Please visit “Guideline of Submission” via the link:

https://www.wsd.gov.hk/filemanager/common/licensed_plumbers/guidelines_of_submission_ga_pipe_fittings_for_plumbing_system.pdf

2. Common Pitfalls in Application

Incomplete Application Form:

https://www.wsd.gov.hk/filemanager/common/licensed_plumbers/incomplete_application_form_sample.pdf

Report with Pitfalls:

https://www.wsd.gov.hk/filemanager/common/licensed_plumbers/report_with_pitfalls.pdf

The latest application procedures for GA 2.0 is also accessible at the following link in the Water Supplies Department’s webpage:

<https://www.wsd.gov.hk/en/plumbing-engineering/pipes-and-fittings-to-be-used-in-inside-service-or/general-acceptance/index.html>

Validity of GA Letter

1. To facilitate phasing out of plumbing products (pipe fittings, valves and strainers) manufactured by bronze with lead content more than 3.5%, validity periods for renewal of these plumbing products under GA 1.0 mentioned in paragraph 4 of this Circular Letter are as follows:

- (a) For renewal application under GA 1.0 received by 31 December 2024, the current practice of a maximum 5-year validity of GA letter shall be adopted. Renewal application shall only be accepted for GA letters expiring in 12 months; and
- (b) For renewal application under GA 1.0 received after 31 December 2024, the validity period shall last up to **31 December 2027** under all circumstances.

2. Validity periods for different scenarios under GA 1.0 and 2.0 are as follows:

- (a) For new application under GA 2.0 system, a fixed validity of 5 years counted from the issue date of GA letter shall be granted and the tests required shall be completed within 12 months¹;
- (b) For renewal application from expiring GA 2.0, a fixed validity of 5 years counted from the expiry date of GA letter to be renewed shall be granted. Renewal application shall only be accepted for GA letters expiring in 12 months and the tests required shall be completed within 12 months² before expiry of the GA letter;

¹ Please note that the certificates issued by certification bodies such as WRAS and Kitemark shall remain valid at the time of GA approval. Test reports for polymeric material issued by laboratories accredited by HOKLAS shall be within five years at the time of GA approval. In both cases, the GA applicants are required to declare that they shall ensure new certificates and test reports shall be available when certificates expire or test reports become more than five years old. WSD shall reserve the right to request the GA applicants to provide updated certificates and test reports during the GA validity period.

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- (c) For renewal application from expiring GA 1.0 to GA 2.0 with full tests, a fixed validity of 5 years counted from the expiry date of GA letter to be renewed shall be granted. Renewal application shall only be accepted for GA letters expiring in 12 months and the tests required shall be completed within 12 months¹ before expiry of the GA letter;
- (d) Transition from existing valid GA 1.0 to GA 2.0 via top-up test to fulfil Enhanced Technical Requirements shall be accepted. Transition application shall only be processed if all models and sizes under the GA 1.0 are applied and the expiry date of the GA 2.0 shall be the same as the one in GA 1.0;
- (e) Except plumbing products manufactured by bronze for renewal under GA 1.0 mentioned in paragraph 1, all new and renewal applications under GA 1.0 received during the grace period mentioned in paragraph 8 of this Circular Letter, the validity period shall last up to **31 December 2026** in all circumstances; and
- (f) All issued GA letters under GA 1.0 except paragraph (e) shall be valid until their corresponding expiry dates, provided they are in compliance with Waterworks Ordinance and Regulations.