

## **WPC representative to work with WHO**

Recognising the need to promote safe water supply and sanitation in developing countries, the World Plumbing Council has appointed a liaison officer to collaborate with the World Health Organisation on a series of related projects. John McBride, who has worked with the Australian Plumbing Commission for the past ten years, will help to coordinate development of these projects which will start with a training package for plumbers to be used by educational institutions anywhere in the world.

The World Plumbing Council (WPC) is recognised by the World Health Organisation (WHO) as a 'Non-Governmental Organisation' and last year these two bodies jointly published a handbook, 'Health Aspects of Plumbing', which has been widely accepted as an international reference for safe plumbing practice. This document will provide the base information for the jointly-produced training package.

John McBride's role, which is being totally funded by the WPC, is planned to extend to work with WHO on the establishment of emergency-response criteria for major disasters, together with a roster of volunteer experts in the water supply and sanitation field.

John McBride was Manager of Industry Standards, Training and Information Services for the Australian Plumbing Industry Commission from 1997 to 2007. In this role he advised the Victoria state building and plumbing commissioner on both technical and policy matters in areas of plumbing safety, durability, and water and energy sustainability. He has also worked in an advisory capacity on the development of a plumbing code for East Timor, developed working papers for tsunami relief and has undertaken overseas studies of the regulatory models in France, the United Kingdom, Japan, Germany and the United States.

George Bliss, Chairman of the World Plumbing Council commented, "We have long felt that it is vitally important for the whole world to benefit from latest plumbing principles and standards. Our global community had a wake-up call a few years ago with the SARS outbreak that was traced to poor plumbing and could so easily have turned into a pandemic. If we want to help prevent something like that happening again, we have to help developing nations improve their knowledge of basic plumbing principles.

"Through our close links with WHO, we are now in a position to make a real contribution to the improvement of plumbing standards worldwide, and in John McBride we believe we have the right man to head up this initiative. His immense knowledge of international best practice in plumbing regulations and of plumbing education means he is ideally suited for this vital project."

Notes for editors:

The World Plumbing Council (WPC) was established in 1990 with its registered office in Switzerland and a Secretariat based at the Institute of Plumbing &

Heating Engineering in the United Kingdom. The Council's principal aim is "to unite the world plumbing industry to safeguard and protect the environment and the health of nations, for the benefit of all".

Membership of the WPC comprises some 120 organisations across the world, with each of the five continents represented. In addition to its work with WHO, it also enjoys close links with WorldSkills International and the International Council for Research and Innovation in Building and Construction (CIB).

In August this year, WHO published a report, International Spread of Disease Threatens Health, Economies and Security which includes reference to the threat of SARS and other diseases which could be spread by poor plumbing and sanitation. The full report can be found at [www.who.int/whr/2007/en/](http://www.who.int/whr/2007/en/)

In the United Kingdom, a recent outbreak of foot and mouth disease has now been traced back to poor plumbing practice. The government report on this incident is at [www.hse.gov.uk/news/archive/07aug/footandmouth.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/news/archive/07aug/footandmouth.htm)

Further information about this press release and the WPC can be obtained from:

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