

The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Health, Aged Care and Sport Inquiry into Housing Related Mould

As a licensed builder in NSW for 40 years, I would like to give my informed opinion as to the main cause of mould in houses.

The common method of gutter installation, using high front gutter fixed with a spring clip method, does not comply with the Building Code of Australia with regard to roof storm water disposal.

This method of installation can force excess water - in a storm event - to overflow the back of the gutter onto the eaves lining and into the building wetting the building materials and insulation.

The wet building then allows mould to develop and the spores can enter the house affecting the people who occupy the house – becoming a dangerous health hazard.

Although the Building Code of Australia has specific guidelines with regard to installing roof gutters to comply and prevent water entering houses, no government body or building inspectors seem to care about enforcing the code.

Personally, when installing the commonly used high front gutter, I choose the easiest and most cost effective method of leaving a 10mm gap between the lower back of the gutter and the front of the fascia, which allows any water that overflows (and it always will in a severe storm) to safely spill over and fall on the ground outside the building.

Having observed the construction of other residential homes, I know there are a few building companies of integrity who use the 10mm gap method, but most, and especially the large project home builders are building thousands of houses that don't comply with gutter installation requirements and are not brought to notice.

As a builder who takes pride in his workmanship, I am appalled at how this method of illegal construction is allowed to continue ultimately affecting the health of the unsuspecting families living in the houses.

My hope is that the Mould in Houses Inquiry will unveil the lack of compliance and expose the government bodies that are allowing this to unlawfully continue.

I await the results of this inquiry with interest.

Thank you for the opportunity to lodge this submission. I look forward to a positive outcome where the Building Code of Australia high front gutter installation requirements will be enforced and so stop the growth of and health impacts of mould.

Yours sincerely

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