



INFORMATION SHEET

BUILDING SERVICES

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DUST IN CABINETRY HARDWARE

When installing cabinetry of any type it is important to ensure that dust created during fitting is prevented from penetrating any hardware such as drawer runners, hinges, locks and the like. Any dust is a potential problem, but dust from natural or reconstituted stone bench tops is particularly abrasive and has been known to severely reduce the service life of some fittings, especially the rollers and bearings of drawer runners. Such problems have caused expensive call backs and rectification during warranty periods established under consumer protection laws.

Who is responsible?

Control of the dust in these circumstances is actually in the hands of the person/s doing the work. Whether or not control is exercised at this time will depend largely on the procedures established with the person/s responsible for the contract. This means that the situation is a contractual one where it is expected that due diligence will be exercised to be able to complete the job in a “tradesman like manner” and the work will be “fit for its intended purpose”. The chances of this happening will be highest where appropriate procedures are established between the people involved in the contract and adequate supervision is done to ensure the agreed procedures are followed.

How can you manage dust?

Before quotes and rates are finalised, appropriate procedures should be established with all involved to ensure the desired result will be achieved. This will provide operators and supervisors with a clear guide and prevent claims of “but that wasn’t allowed for”.

For bench top installation the following should be considered:

1. All cutting and drilling for sink, basin, tap ware etc. can done off site;
2. Scribing the bench top to the wall should also be done off site where possible. If not practical to work from templates and site measurements, cutting/grinding should be performed away from the actual installation site (eg. in the yard) where dust will not cause problems and can be easily cleaned up;
3. Where there is no alternative to cutting at the installation site, procedures should include –
 - a. Remove all drawers and store them out of harms way;
 - b. Mask all drawer runners, hinges, catches etc;
 - c. Use dust covers, drop sheets etc. to prevent dust from getting to places where it is not wanted;
 - d. Where available, choose cutting/grinding equipment with inbuilt dust collection facilities;
 - e. Have a good quality vacuum cleaner ready to catch dust as it is created (as far as safety will allow) and/or clean up as work proceeds. Preferably the cleaner should be fitted with a High Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA) filter;
 - f. On completion when removing masking and replacing drawers etc. ensure all fittings are clear of dust (vacuum as necessary) and are in good working order.

Final responsibility for the outcome of the work rests with the Principal Contractor (either the Builder or Cabinetry Manufacturer/Installer). If the Principal Contractor has taken steps to ensure appropriate controls have been used they will be in a position to confidently hand over the job knowing that the installation is clean and will perform to its expected service life.

**HIA members can contact HIA’s Building Services team for more information
on 1300 650 620 or hia_technical@hia.com.au.**

DISCLAIMER - The above is intended to provide general information in summary form. The contents do not constitute specific advice and should not be relied upon as such. Formal specific advice should be sought by members with respect to particular matters before taking action.

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