

Manufacturer Iplex blamed for 'faulty pipes' in 1200 WA homes



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April 18, 2023 – 4.15pm

'Faulty piping' has been installed in around 1200 West Australian homes, according to the building watchdog, which has identified a 'manufacturing defect' in a popular plumbing product.

Hundreds of homeowners were [considering a class action against builder BGC](#), who is one of two companies in WA who extensively used Iplex piping in their builds between mid-2017 and mid-2022.



The piping after being removed from a Perth home.

Within two years of the builds being completed, hundreds of homeowners reported flooding issues, with some requiring all their plumbing to be ripped out and replaced.

A preliminary investigation by the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety has found the pipe leaks were caused by a manufacturing defect, potentially absolving the builders of any liability.

“DMIRS has advised Iplex Australia that, while its tests are not yet complete, Iplex Australia should expect its results to lead to DMIRS finding that the leaks are due to a manufacturing defect,” an Iplex statement to the Australian Stock Exchange on Monday read.

“A Western Australia group home builder has also advised it expects to deliver to Iplex Australia the results of its own tests once they are completed.”

Iplex said its own investigation into the high number of leaks, while ongoing, had not identified any manufacturing defect.

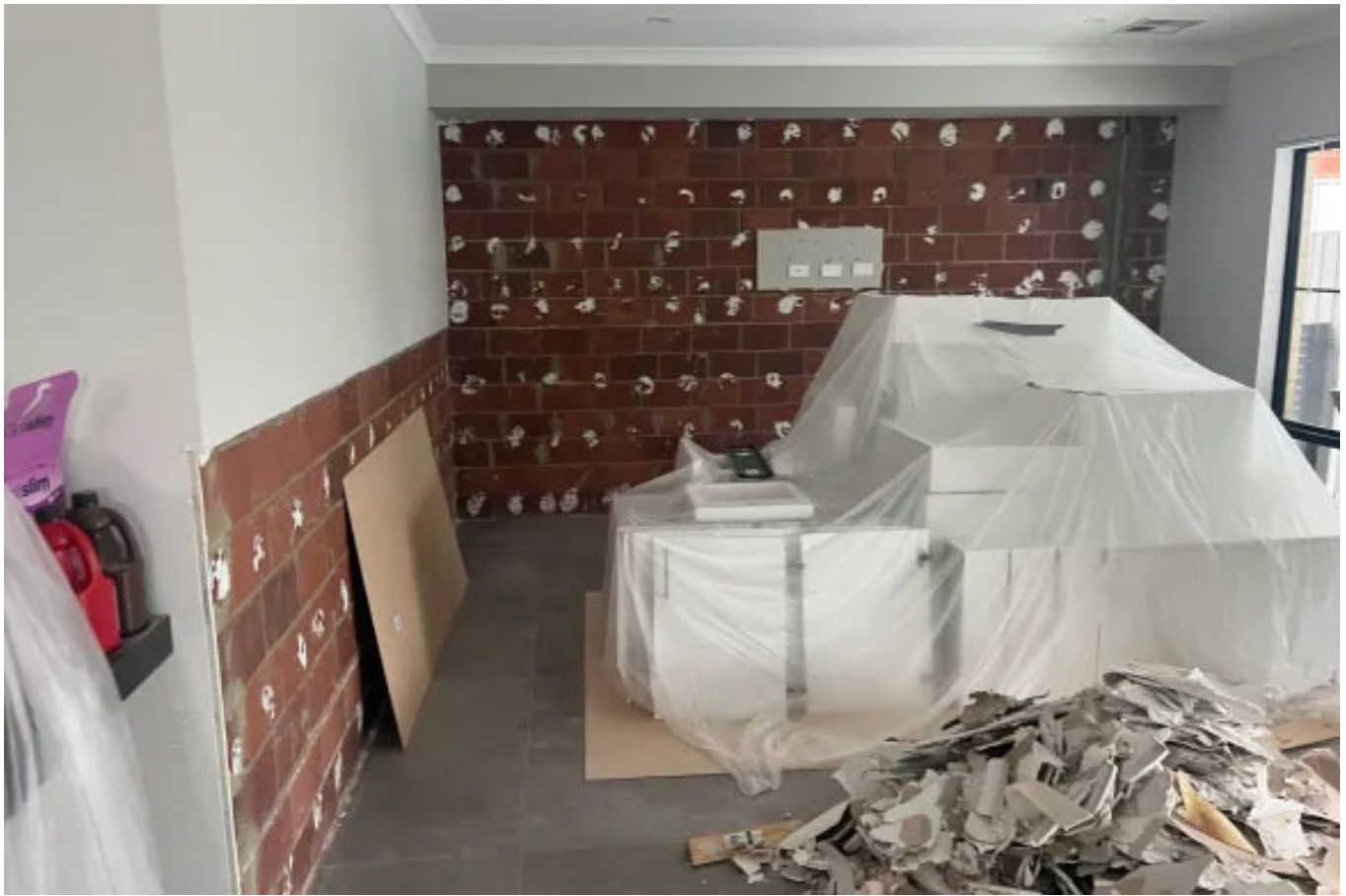
While not admitting responsibility for the issue, Iplex has offered to assist the two major builders caught up in the pipe leaks – BGC and Delstrat – which account for 90 per cent of the 15,000 homes built with Iplex piping during the five-year period being investigated.

The company has put aside \$15 million to fund any repairs.

An additional \$2 million fund will also be made available for other builders.

The piping at the centre of the investigation is no longer sold, with Iplex noting the product did not experience similar issues in other states, despite being sold across Australia.

In October, BGC Housing Group customer Kristy, who did not want her surname published, told *WAtoday* her Banksia Grove family home was uninhabitable, with the builder paying them \$150 a day to live somewhere else while they repair the damage and replace the Iplex polybutylene piping.



Kristy's Banksia Grove home is uninhabitable as plumbers rip out and replace the plumbing.

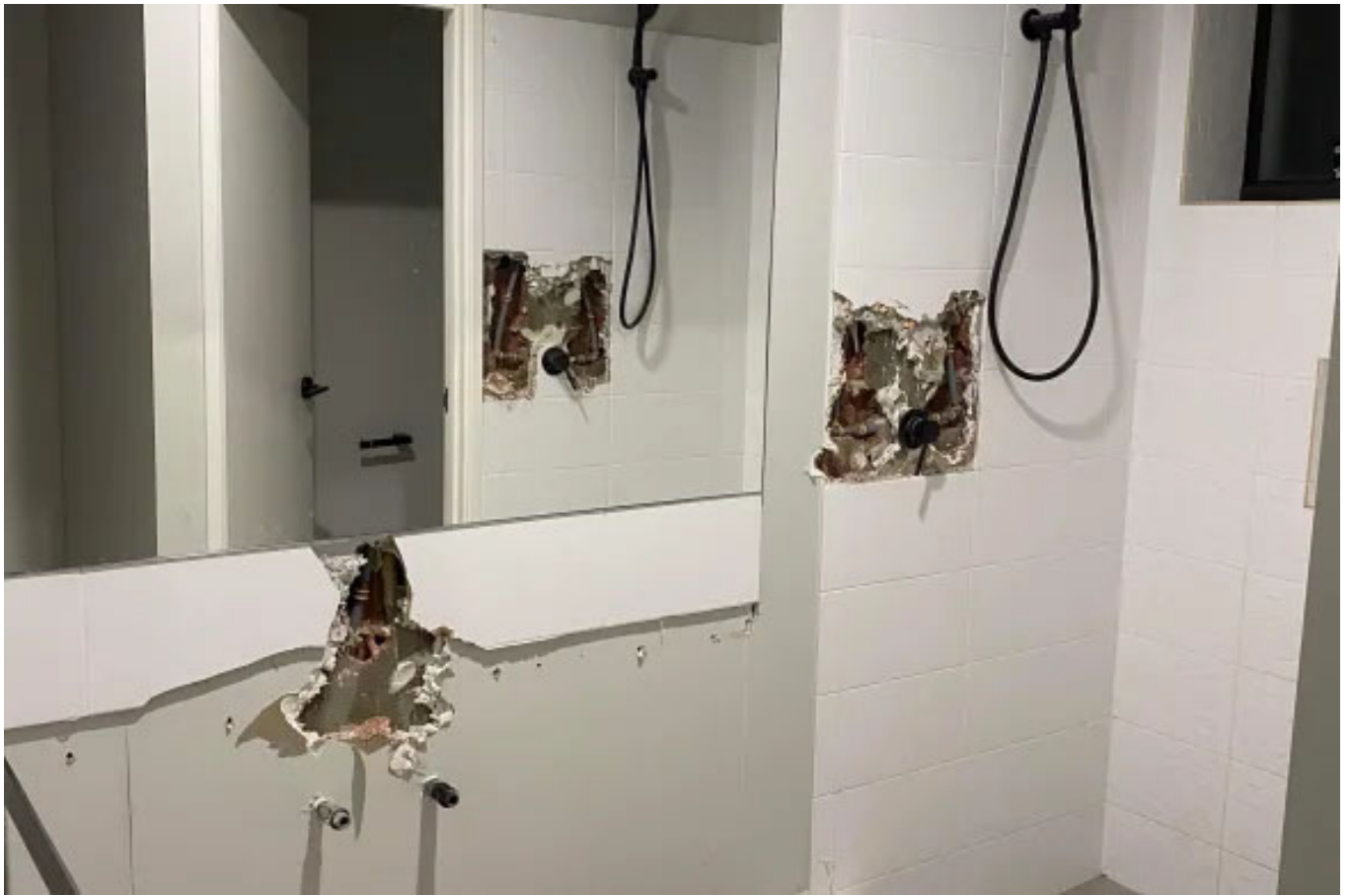
“We got the keys to the house in April 2020. On the 10th July 2022, I woke up to hear water gushing through the wall near my living room,” she said.

“On 15th July 2022, we woke to find our ensuite flooded. To find the burst pipe the plumber had to smash through the tiles in the toilet and also ensuite. The damage has gone through to the master bedroom, study nook area and the walk in robe.

“On 22nd September 2022, we got home to find our other bathroom flooded which has gone through to three bedrooms down that side of the house.”

Midvale homeowner Maddy Black said the pipes in her house began to burst in August, just over two years after her build was completed.

“We woke up to find our carpet damp under our baby’s bassinet,” she said.



Maddy West's bathroom.

“I assumed I had spilt some water during the night while feeding our one-month-old daughter, but the carpet was getting damper by the minute and upon further investigation, the wall in our bedroom was damp, the bricks on the outer wall of our bedroom were damp and water began appearing on our ensuite floor.

“Our master bedroom is no longer habitable.

“It feels as if the rest of our house is a ticking time bomb to when the next leak will spring.”