

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT
BY DEPUTY G.C.L. BAUDAINS OF ST. CLEMENT
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 22nd OCTOBER 2013**

Question

Further to the Minister's consultation regarding the requirement to fit baths with temperature-sensitive valves, would he advise the scale of the problem he seeks to address and detail how many cases of scalding he is aware of annually and why he considers that legislation should be replacing common-sense in this area?

Answer

The Planning and Building Law requires me to make building bye-laws to secure the health, safety and welfare of people in buildings and to ensure those bye-laws prevent the waste and undue consumption of water in buildings. My consultation follows a review of current bye-law requirements relating to drainage provision and hot water storage. It proposes to improve standards in terms of water efficiency and safety in respect of hot provision in new homes.

The proposal for fitting thermostatic mixing valves as part of standard plumbing work in newly constructed dwellings reflects changes to building regulations elsewhere, and the fact that it is now common for new hot water storage systems to deliver hot water at high pressure and at temperatures of 60⁰ C or more. Bath water at this temperature can give an adult a full thickness burn in 5 seconds, even quicker in a child and the elderly.

Data provided by Child Accident Prevention Jersey, shows that 88 children under the age of 16 attended Jersey's Accident and Emergency Department in 2012 because of a burn injury. It is not possible from the data available to identify the cause of every burn injury but it is apparent from the Jersey Child Unintentional Injury Statistics 2012 report that many were caused by liquid or steam, with at least one being due to a bath scald. Bath scalds are known to cause some of the most severe burn injuries.

The proposal which I am currently consulting on is about improving building standards by the fitting of a simple device at the time a new house or flat is constructed that helps prevent hot water injuries. It will also contribute to the energy performance of the home by reducing hot water consumption. I believe there will be much support for this change.