ACA BRANCH NEW ZEALAND BRANCH

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ACA NZ Branch President's message

As this is my first message to you since being elected President of the ACA New Zealand Branch at the end of March, I want to begin by extending a genuine hand to all our members and the wider corrosion community. We are, after all, friends and allies in the never-ending war against corrosion of our nation's assets.

My intent as President is clear: to ensure that the ACA NZ Branch continues to bring our corrosion-protection community together at seminars, technical events, and conferences, in partnership with industry. We want our members to have direct access to leading corrosion professionals, emerging technologies, and innovative surface-treatment and coating-application techniques. Our role, as the ACA NZ Branch Committee, is to create spaces where learning, collaboration, and professional growth can thrive.

It was with real sadness that we learned that, due to the impact of the global economic climate on our members, sponsors, and industry partners, the Corrosion & Prevention 2026 conference planned for October in Christchurch has had to be deferred to either 2028 or 2029. Many in our sector are doing it tough, and this decision reflects the realities our community is facing.

Together with our members and the rest of the ACA NZ Branch Committee, I am however looking forward with optimism to the ACA NZ and Australian Technical Symposium and Expo, which will replace the conference this year. These events are where we reconnect, share knowledge, and strengthen the professional networks that carry our industry forward. Please keep an eye out for more details, which will be published on the ACA website as they become available.

So let's show up. Let's bring our younger people, our new colleagues, and those who have not yet experienced the value of ACA events. Let's learn together, support each other, and keep building a strong, resilient corrosion-protection community.

I look forward to seeing you at our ACA events!

René Hill

ACANZ would like to gratefully acknowledge this month's sponsor…

Q & A CORNER

Older ACA NZ members have probably seen a number of situations that may never have made it to a textbook.

If you have a question you'd like clarification on, email it to the Editor at lesboultonrust@gmail.com. We'll pose it to our panel of experts who will answer it in another Bulletin, so everyone can improve their knowledge.

Corrosion, Coatings & Asset Protection

Why is the corrosion industry growing in 2026?

The corrosion and materials protection industry is expanding due to increased global infrastructure demand, ageing assets, and stricter safety regulations. Industries like energy, transportation, and maritime rely heavily on corrosion control to maintain reliability and prevent costly failures. Corrosion alone costs the global economy trillions annually, making prevention a top priority.

What are the biggest corrosion industry trends right now?

Key trends shaping the corrosion industry include:

- Adoption of AI for asset integrity and predictive maintenance
- Increased use of robotics and drones for inspection
- Expansion of workforce development programs and certifications
- Greater focus on sustainability and long-term infrastructure resilience

These innovations are helping companies reduce downtime, improve safety, and extend asset life.

How is AI being used in corrosion and pipeline integrity?

AI is transforming corrosion management by analysing large datasets to predict failures, detect early corrosion patterns, and optimise maintenance schedules. In pipeline systems, AI supports integrity management programs by identifying risks faster and improving decision-making around inspections and repairs.

Why is there a workforce shortage in corrosion and materials protection?

The industry faces a talent gap due to retiring professionals and a lack of awareness among younger workers. At the same time, demand is increasing as infrastructure ages and expands. Workforce initiatives are focused on training, certification, and creating accessible career pathways to meet this need.

Source: AMPP Newsletter, April 2026

EMEX 2026: *Engineering in Action*

The EMEX Trade Show returned to the Auckland Showgrounds from May 26-28 2026, bringing together the suppliers, systems and technologies shaping the future of engineering and manufacturing in New Zealand. The ACA Bulletin Editor went along to see what is new and what is trending.

Equipment was running, systems were in operation, and suppliers were there to show visitors how technologies are performing in real production environments. For many attendees, a visit was about efficiency; EMEX compressed weeks of supplier research into a single day, which allowed businesses to map the market, prioritise supplier conversations, and leave with a clearer view of any next steps.

There was a strong practical focus across the wider event. The "Knowledge Theatre" was running concurrently, delivering a series of speaker presentations linking what is being discussed with what is being delivered. Subjects included a range of talks on the keynote subject of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in many aspects of engineering and manufacturing.

However, one specific area we will no doubt hear a lot more about is the adaption of "collaborative robots", cobots, in NZ manufacturing. Cobots co-exist alongside humans, working together to produce high-mix low-volume work to give great efficiency and productivity.

Materials engineering was not left out at EMEX either, with several exhibitors displaying their capabilities in 3D-printing of intricate metal components made from alloys such as titanium. Stainless steel fabricators were also present showing their latest developments to weld and fabricate the alloy into complex forms for special applications.

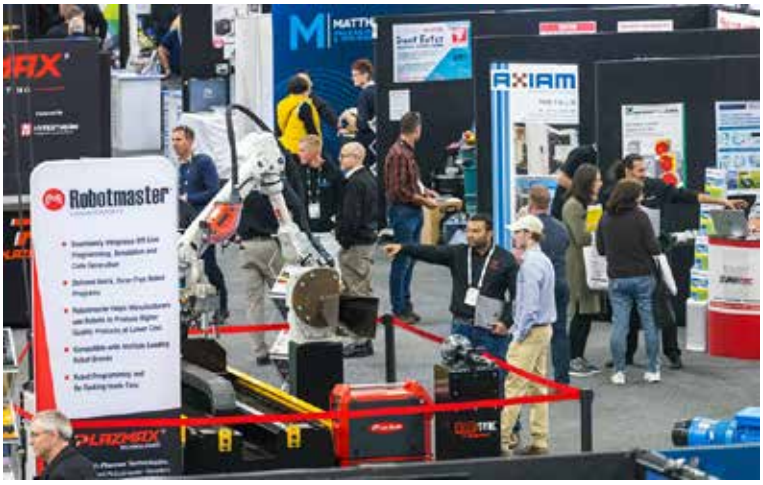
Events such as the EMEX trade show offer a setting where suppliers, engineers, manufacturers and business decision makers can engage directly, without the constraints and filters of a virtual environment. Face-to-face interaction still carries weight, and it aids businesses to move more quickly from concept to application. There is no doubt that EMEX 2026 will help drive the future of engineering and manufacturing in New Zealand.

more pics on pg 4


2026 EPICOR
KNOWLEDGE THEATRE
Day 2
1.00pm


SYNTECH

EMEX


Robotmaster
AXIAM


GLOBAL STAINLESS
ARTWORKS

Lead-free plumbing rules take effect in NZ and Australia

The Flint water crisis was a public health disaster that began in 2014, when the city of Flint, Michigan, USA, switched its drinking water source from the Detroit water system to the Flint River as a temporary cost-saving measure. The crisis resulted in widespread lead contamination and a significant outbreak of Legionnaires' disease.

In an effort to reduce a multimillion-dollar deficit, the city began using the Flint River while a new pipeline to Lake Huron was under construction. However, the water from the Flint River was highly corrosive and it was not treated with anti-corrosive agents which are standard in water treatment. Because the water was not properly treated, it stripped the protective mineral scale off the interior of the city's ageing service lines. This caused lead to leach directly into the potable water supply.

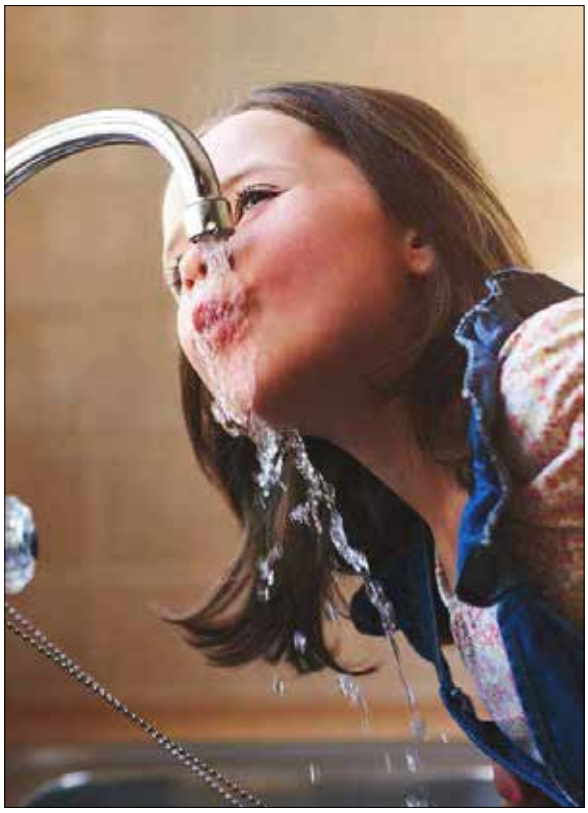
The health impact was the presence of the neurotoxin lead (Pb) in the Flint potable water supply. Thousands of children were exposed to elevated levels, which led to permanent developmental delays, behavioural issues, and physical illnesses. The Flint disaster highlighted how the prioritisation of fiscal austerity over technical safeguards and public health can lead to catastrophic infrastructure failure.

Lead-free plumbing in Australasia

Lead-free plumbing rules have taken effect in NZ and Australia to avoid such a disaster ever happening in either country. From May 2026 in NZ, plumbing used for drinking water in new builds and renovations must be lead-free, helping protect water quality in new homes. Plumbing products, used for drinking water in new building consents, must meet updated requirements to be lead-free and resistant to dezincification corrosion.

The change is intended to support safer drinking water and healthier homes, by reducing the potential for lead to leach into water over time. International health advice shows that even low levels of lead exposure can pose long term health risks, particularly for children. The updated requirements followed changes to the NZ Building Code, which confirmed the move to limit the amount of lead permitted in copper alloy plumbing products used in contact with potable water.

A transition period was built in to give designers, trades people, manufacturers and suppliers time to prepare.



The requirements apply to new building work and renovations that require a building consent from May 2026. Existing homes are not affected, and homeowners do not need to replace plumbing that is already installed. For new work, all pipes, fittings, valves and tapware that come into contact with drinking water must contain less than 0.25% lead. Tapware must also be dezincification resistant (DR) helping to prevent corrosion and maintain drinking water quality over time.

Designers and trades people are expected to use lead-free plumbing products as the standard for drinking water in new work, ensure product selections and consent documentation meet the updated requirements, and note any limited exemptions such as non-drinking water systems, and confirm product availability with suppliers.

In New Zealand, more information, including practical guidance for designers, plumbers, suppliers and homeowners, is available on the Building Performance website www.building.govt.nz

Source: MBIE & Radio NZ, May 2026

The highest certified Australian Garnet is now available in NZ from Blast Worx

Advertorial

For blasting professionals working to specification, abrasive selection directly affects surface profile consistency, chloride contamination risk, coating adhesion, and long-term asset performance. Choosing the right media matters. Remember, 80% of coating failures are due to poor surface preparation.

Blast Worx now supplies Australian Garnet throughout New Zealand, with local stock available for prompt dispatch to customers across both the North and South Islands.

Australian Garnet stands apart because of its single-source origin. The product is mined and processed exclusively at Lucky Bay in Western Australia, with no blending from multiple global sources. This delivers batch-to-batch consistency, a consistently clean abrasive, and very low chloride levels — critical advantages when working to tight coating specifications, inspection hold points, and long-term corrosion protection requirements.

Australian Garnet also holds some of the industry's strongest certifications and approvals, including SSPC-AB1 Appendix B certification (the only garnet globally to achieve this certification), US MIL-SPEC QPL-22262, ISO quality approvals, and Saudi Aramco approval. For high-specification marine, oil and gas, and infrastructure projects, these approvals provide added confidence in product performance and compliance.

Blast Worx best seller is the 30/60 mesh grade, suitable for a wide range of abrasive blasting applications. Its engineered particle size distribution provides an effective balance between cutting performance and profile consistency — aggressive enough to efficiently remove heavy rust and thick coatings, while consistently achieving a 60–90 µm surface profile suitable for coating adhesion.

Australian beach garnet is also significantly denser and harder than many alternative abrasives. The grains resist breakdown during blasting, helping maintain low dust levels while allowing the abrasive to be recycled multiple times. This can reduce overall media consumption and disposal costs across the life of a project.

For technical information, pricing, or to place an order, contact Blast Worx on 0800 252 789, email sales@blastworx.co.nz, or visit www.blastworx.co.nz.

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