

Gas Information Sheet No. 06

Feature walls in domestic kitchens

Feature walls made of ceramic tiles, toughened safety glass or sheet metal are suitable as wall cladding material. AS/NZS 5601:2013 now has provision for toughened safety glass.

If you are considering installing a feature wall, adjacent to a gas cooker, in a domestic kitchen you must be aware that heat will quickly transfer through these materials and may damage the combustible wall material behind. Unless you take appropriate precautions there is the potential for the wall material to burn.

At what point must you provide protection?

The proximity of the nearest burner to a combustible surface will define whether protection is needed. Combustible material will require thermal protection for distances less than 200 mm.

If the distance measured from the periphery of the nearest burner to any vertical combustible surface is 200 mm or greater, then the combustible surface does not need protection. Adding a feature wall will have no impact, regardless of the material used.

Feature walls and protection

When the distance, measured from the periphery of the nearest burner to any vertical combustible surface, is less than 200 mm then protection of combustible surfaces is required and should be installed to a height of not less than 150 mm above the periphery of the nearest burner. At this point a combination of facing material and fire resistant (backing) material will be required.

The following table identifies different types of feature wall (facing) material and explains the thicknesses required related to the fire resistant (backing) material being used.

<i>Feature wall (facing) material</i>	<i>Facing material thickness</i>	<i>Backing material and thickness</i>
Ceramic tiles	Not less than 5 mm	Gypsum based wall board 10 mm or greater in thickness or Fibre cement board 6 mm or greater in thickness.
Toughened safety glass	Not less than 5 mm	Gypsum based wall board 10 mm or greater in thickness or Fibre cement board 6 mm or greater in thickness.
Sheet metal	Not less than 0.4 mm	Fibre cement board 12 mm or greater in thickness or A combination of fibre cement board (min. 6 mm) over 10 mm of gypsum based wall board.
Any other (material) system	Where any other material is used as a feature wall you must ensure that the surface temperature of any nearby combustible surface will not exceed 65 °C above ambient.	

If further information is required, please phone the Gas Safety Technical Information Line on 1800 652 563.