

Carly happy 'as one of boys'

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CAREERONE EDITOR

CARLY Gerrard on week-days gets dirt under her nails but at the weekend she polishes them pink.

The apprentice plumber, 18, from Enfield, is the sole woman among males on worksites and in classrooms.

She is happy to be "one of the boys" during the week and spend time with girlfriends on days off.

"I thought coming on to a construction site, I would get treated differently but, no, I'm one of the boys and that's just how it is. It's really good like that," she said.

Working with Jordan Plumbing on a new engineering building for the University of Adelaide, Ms Gerrard says plumbing was not always a target.

"At high school, I wanted to be a carpenter, so I did a pre-vocational course. Plumbing was in that. From that day on I was like, 'yep I want to be a plumber,'" she said.

At TAPS group training, she is the only woman among more than 260 men.

"Since Carly started her apprenticeship with TAPS, we have had a lot of inquires from female school leavers interested in plumbing apprenticeships," executive officer Michael Wakefield said.

Master Plumbers and Mechanical Services Association of Australia acting general manager of industry development John Clarke said there still were too few women in the trade.

"A lot of people who aren't in the industry think plumbing is dealing with sewers and fixing up blocked toilets but, particularly in Adelaide, there's a lot of scope."



IN SAFE HANDS: Apprentice plumber Carly Gerrard at work at the University of Adelaide site yesterday.
Picture: JO-ANNA ROBINSON