

The Plumber GBP Audit

What 80% of plumbers in Collingwood get wrong

A free guide.

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Why I wrote this

I've audited dozens of plumber Google Business Profiles across the Georgian Bay corridor. And while every one is different, the same 6-7 issues come up in nearly every audit. Most take less than an hour to fix.

The reason they're not fixed isn't that the owner doesn't care - it's that nobody told them what to look for. So this is what to look for. No retainer, no sales pitch, just the checklist I'd run through if you hired me to do an audit.

The 7-point Plumber GBP checklist

1. Primary category

Should be "Plumber" - the most specific match. Not "Plumbing Service," not "Contractor." Just "Plumber."

2. Secondary categories

You want 4-6 secondary categories, not 1. The list to consider:

- Emergency Plumber (this one is critical and most plumbers don't have it)
- Drain Service
- Water Heater Repair
- Hot Water System Supplier
- Septic System Service (if applicable)
- Gasfitter (if applicable)
- Plumbing Supply Store (if applicable)

Every secondary category opens you up to one more set of searches. Most plumbers in Collingwood have only their primary category set - which means they're invisible for "emergency plumber" specifically.

3. Business name (this one breaks profiles)

Your business name should be exactly your real business name. Nothing else. The most common mistake I see: "Bay Pipe and Drain Plumbing Services Collingwood Ontario" - keyword-stuffed. Google penalizes this and can suspend the profile entirely.

If your GBP business name has any of these red flags, fix it this week:

- City name added to the name when it isn't part of the legal business name
- Service keywords ("Plumbing," "Plumbers," "Drains") added when they're not in the legal name

- Any descriptive phrase that isn't on your truck signage, invoices, and CRA registration

4. Services list (with prices and descriptions)

GBP lets you list services with descriptions and pricing ranges. Most plumbers list 3 services. You should list 8-12:

- Emergency plumbing repair
- Drain cleaning / snaking
- Water heater repair
- Water heater replacement
- Toilet repair / replacement
- Faucet installation
- Pipe repair / re-piping
- Backwater valve installation
- Sump pump installation
- Frozen pipe repair (seasonal)

Pricing ranges are optional but worth including. "Service call from \$150" filters tire-kickers and signals you're a serious operator.

5. Photos

The minimum is 20. Profiles with 20+ photos get 42% more views (per Google's own GBP help docs). For a plumber, what works:

- Storefront / vehicle wrap (3-5)
- Team in uniform (2-3)
- Before/after pipe work, water heater installs, fixture installs (8-10)
- Behind-the-scenes shots that humanize the business (3-5)

Photos should be uploaded fresh every month. Profiles with stale photos signal a dormant business to Google.

6. Q&A seeded

This is one of the easiest wins. Post 6-8 common customer questions from a non-business Google account, then answer them as the owner:

- "Do you do emergency plumbing on weekends?"
- "Do you work on cottage plumbing?"
- "How fast can you come out for a burst pipe?"
- "Do you do gas line work?"

- "What's the typical cost of a water heater replacement?"

Public answers reduce friction for prospects and signal Google that you're an active, trusted profile.

7. Posts cadence

GBP Posts are weekly content updates that appear directly on your profile. Most plumber profiles haven't posted in 6+ months. Active profiles outrank dormant ones. The minimum cadence is 1 post per week:

- Winter: "Frozen pipe emergency - we're available 24/7"
- Spring: "Backwater valve installs - basement flood season is coming"
- Summer: "Cottage opening plumbing - book ahead"
- Fall: "Outdoor faucet winterization, \$99"

Why these matter (the plumber-specific case)

Plumbing is one of the highest-intent local searches there is. When someone Googles "emergency plumber Collingwood" at 9pm on a Saturday, they're calling the first business in the Map Pack. Not the fifth.

The difference between #2 and #7 in the Map Pack is roughly 5x the call volume. Most of that difference comes down to: are your 7 GBP fields complete and correct, and is your review velocity steady. Nothing else moves Map Pack ranking faster than reviews + a complete profile.

The 5 most common mistakes I see

Mistake 1: Keyword-stuffed business name

The single biggest risk in any plumber GBP audit. If your business name has "Plumbing Services Collingwood Ontario" appended, fix it this week. Google has been actively suspending these in 2026.

Mistake 2: No "Emergency Plumber" secondary category

You do emergency calls - but Google doesn't know that, so it doesn't surface you when someone Googles "emergency plumber near me." This is a 30-second fix in GBP Manager.

Mistake 3: 12 reviews vs. 60 for the competitor

Star rating matters less than people think (anything 4.5+ is essentially equivalent in Google's eyes). What matters is volume and recency. Your competitor's profile gets a new review every 10 days; you get one every 90 days. That gap compounds in Map Pack ranking.

Mistake 4: Asking for reviews verbally at the end of the job

The customer just had a flooded basement and you fixed it. They're stressed, distracted, and the last thing on their mind is logging into Google. They say yes when you ask, then forget. The right approach: automated SMS, sent 2-3 hours after the job, with a one-tap link to your Google review page.

Mistake 5: Phone number mismatch across web

You changed your business line last year but Yellow Pages, Apple Maps, and your website footer still have the old one. Google reads NAP inconsistency as a low-trust signal and discounts your profile.

Your 30-day quick-win plan

Week 1

- If your business name has keyword stuffing, rename it to your real business name only. This is the highest-priority fix.
- Add 4-5 secondary GBP categories (Emergency Plumber is non-negotiable, plus Drain Service, Water Heater Repair, Hot Water System Supplier)
- Expand services list from 3 to at least 10 with descriptions

Week 2

- Upload 16 photos: storefront, team, recent jobs (pipe work, water heater installs, drain work), before/after fixture installs
- Seed 6 Q&A from a non-business account, answer each as the owner
- Reply to every existing Google review (good or bad)

Week 3

- Audit your NAP consistency across Google, Apple Maps, Yelp, Bing, Facebook, Yellow Pages, HomeStars. Fix any mismatch.

- Set up your first GBP Post (announce the current season's service)
- Build a 4-week posting calendar so you don't have to think about it every week

Week 4

- Set up an automated SMS review request system (one-tap link to your Google review page, sent 2-3 hours after job completion)
- Add LocalBusiness schema markup to your website homepage
- Audit your top 2 service pages (emergency plumbing, drain cleaning) for missing title tags, meta descriptions, and H1s with your city in them

By the end of the 30 days you should see a 30-60% increase in profile views and a measurable lift in your Map Pack ranking for at least 1-2 target keywords.

Want me to do all this for you?

I'm Lasse Pettersen. Georgian Bay SEO is my local consultancy - I work exclusively with trades and service businesses across Collingwood, Blue Mountain, Wasaga Beach, Thornbury, and Meaford.

If you'd like me to run a personalized audit on your business (not the generic checklist above - the specific things wrong with your GBP, with screenshots, action plan, and competitor comparison), I do them as a \$499 one-off. If you decide to go monthly after, the \$499 applies as credit against the first month.

Foundation retainer is \$750/mo with a 90-day Map Pack movement guarantee. Shoreline is \$1,500/mo. Month-to-month, no annual contracts.

Email me at hello@georgianbayseo.ca or book a free 20-minute call at georgianbayseo.ca.

Either way - good luck with the work.

— Lasse / Georgian Bay SEO

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