



Media Release

Friday, 22 September 2023

Victorian regulators on inspection blitz in Warrnambool

Four Victorian regulators carried out a week-long construction safety and compliance inspection blitz in Warrnambool.

Victorian Building Authority (VBA) inspectors visited Warrnambool in September in collaboration with Energy Safe Victoria (Energy Safe), WorkSafe and the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) as part of the Build Aware campaign.

A key focus of Build Aware is to raise industry awareness about safety, environmental, building and plumbing compliance.

More than 100 plumbing, carpentry and electrical apprentices heard from the regulators about plumbing, electrical safety and managing environmental risks during two presentations at Warrnambool TAFE.

The **VBA** conducted almost 100 inspections and discovered various sites with non-compliant building or plumbing work.

Some of the non-compliance issues related to timber framing, unreinforced masonry work, box gutters and gas multi-layer piping installations.

Inspectors also identified issues with firefighting equipment.

Non-compliant building and plumbing work is followed up by the VBA and rectification costs are paid for by practitioners, not consumers.

Energy Safe focused on educating electrical and plumbing apprentices about important safety and legislative requirements.

A presentation to 60 field workers at Warrnambool City Council focussed on safety campaigns such as the 'Look up and Live' and 'Before You Dig' initiatives.

EPA spoke to developers at two new estates, conducted numerous joint agency inspections at commercial construction projects, and visited 10 residential construction sites.

This resulted in 16 instances of compliance advice, focusing on common issues like litter and sediment.

The EPA also held an awareness session about the General Environmental Duty and how to manage environmental risks to TAFE apprentices.

WorkSafe inspectors identified numerous safety issues that included a lack of secondary guarding for elevated work platforms, unsafe or incomplete scaffolds and inadequate electrical testing and tagging.

Inspectors issued 24 improvement notices and highlighted a further 25 safety issues that were fixed on-the-spot.

For more information, visit [Victorian Building Authority](#), [WorkSafe Victoria](#), [Energy Safe Victoria](#) and [Environment Protection Authority](#) websites.

Victorian Building Authority CEO Anna Cronin

"The safety of all Victorians is our priority and that's why the work our inspectors do on the ground plays such a vital role in our building regulatory system."

Media Enquiries:

VBA Media
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Energy Safe CEO Leanne Hughson

"Build Aware is not just about enforcement, it's also about industry engagement and supporting electrical workers to comply."

"While I am pleased with the levels of compliance found on the sites Build Aware visited in the South West, it is concerning that some electrical workers are not aware of their responsibilities. Energy Safe will continue working with our stakeholders and industry to ensure electrical workers understand what is expected from them."

WorkSafe Director of Construction and Earth Resources Matt Wielgosz

"It is really encouraging to know that so many employers are eager to refresh their knowledge on workplace health and safety requirements, but there is clearly more that needs to be done."

"WorkSafe inspectors will continue to work with employers and workers in the construction industry to ensure they're prioritising safety and are receiving the latest guidance and advice."

Environment Protection Authority South-West Regional Manager Tanya McAteer

"We saw good compliance in Warrnambool. We inspected new home and commercial construction sites, engaged with developers, and addressed apprentices at local TAFE courses."

"The key to compliance is understanding and controlling your risks, so the campaign was all about having those conversations to help the local industry to keep lifting environmental standards to protect the community."

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