

Know the renovation rules this summer

Victorians wanting to fix up their homes while summer is still here can avoid dangerous pitfalls by knowing the latest rules around renovation.

The Victorian Building Authority (VBA) is urging all do-it-yourself handy men and women wanting to DIY while the weather is warm to be aware of the [rules and regulations](#) that apply to domestic building work.

State Building Surveyor Andrew Cialini said anyone trying to carry out larger and more complicated projects needs to use a registered practitioner.

“Carrying out [building work](#) yourself can be a proud achievement, however, building and renovating work is often complex, so you need to know when to hire professionals,” Mr Cialini said.

“Although we love to take on big projects ourselves, if the project costs more than \$10,000 and involves structural work or two or more specific trade skills, you will need to use a registered building practitioner.”

The VBA has a [home renovation essentials online hub](#) with guides on a variety of topics including landscaping, protecting adjoining properties and appointing a building surveyor.

Mr Cialini said DIY projects can often end up costing more than first thought if things go wrong.

“If you don’t follow the right steps, DIY can become expensive, so make a plan before you start,” he said.

“Examples of DIY going wrong include decking using timber that doesn’t meet durability requirements, enclosing a carport which can become a fire hazard and removing or altering internal bracing walls which affect building stability.”

To do any regulated [plumbing work](#) in Victoria, a plumbing practitioner must be licensed or registered by the VBA and if the total value of the works is \$750 or greater, a licenced plumber must issue a compliance certificate to you.

All licensed and registered plumbers are issued with a photo ID card that lists the type of plumbing work they are eligible to do.

Some landscaping can be carried out by anyone, such as planting trees, garden beds, ornamental water features or constructing outdoor furniture.

Other [landscaping work](#), such as retaining structures, some fencing or building verandas and decks attached to your home are considered domestic building work and require a registered building practitioner.

To ensure a project is completed by a builder with the necessary qualifications and experience, make sure you always use a registered building practitioner.

You can also check if a building practitioner or company is registered using our [find a practitioner](#) directory.

Before starting any job around the home, Melbournians, as well as regional Victorians, should [know the rules](#) to do home improvements right the first time.