



VBA Mail

5 August 2015

Dear Subscriber,

Welcome to this edition of the Victorian Building Authority's email newsletter, VBA Mail.

- [VBA investigates Mt Waverley building site collapse](#)
 - [Minimising foundation movement and damage to your house – information sheet](#)
 - [Get building and plumbing advice from the VBA at the Herald Sun Home Show](#)
 - [Updated Australian Standard for roofing](#)
 - [eToolbox outage – scheduled maintenance](#)
 - [To butt or not to butt – articulation joints at openings](#)
 - [Proposed new refrigeration Standards](#)
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VBA investigates Mt Waverley building site collapse

The VBA, Victoria Police and WorkSafe officers attended a community meeting held by the City of Monash in Mt Waverley on Wednesday 22 July to explain the process that will see the VBA investigate practitioners involved in the Mt Waverley construction site excavation collapse.

VBA Director Enquiries and Dispute Resolution David Wolf explained that as the regulator of the building and plumbing industries, the VBA has responsibilities in relation to the registration of building practitioners and investigation of their activities where there is evidence of non-compliance with the *Building Act 1993* and the *Building Regulations 2006*.

In relation to the Mt Waverley site collapse, the VBA's investigation will consider the conduct of all the building practitioners involved for all stages of the construction process.

The VBA has also assisted and advised the City of Monash and their Municipal Building Surveyor to ensure the site is safe and in their efforts to have the remediation works commence. Remediation works to backfill the site began this week.



VBA Director Enquiries and Dispute Resolution David Wolf talks with local residents at a community meeting

Minimising foundation movement and damage to your house – information sheet

The VBA has released an information sheet to provide new homeowners with advice about what steps they can take to maintain their homes and contribute to the prevention of damage caused by movement of the foundations.

The information sheet '*Minimising foundation movement and damage to your house*' has been designed for builders to give to the homeowners at the handover stage. It explains that taking some simple steps to look after your home can go a long way to minimising damage that can occur if the home's foundation moves.

The information sheet also covers:

- the role of the builder, architect and draftsman in making sure the home is designed and built to suit the soil conditions
- how landscaping and planting trees can impact the house's foundations
- how poor maintenance of the site or property can lead to building damage.

Building practitioners and consumers can access the information sheet from the [VBA website](#).

Get building and plumbing advice from the VBA at the Herald Sun Home Show

The VBA will be at the Herald Sun Home Show from Thursday 13 August until Sunday 16 August 2015.

Specialist staff will be available at the VBA stand so you can chat to them one-on-one about your building or plumbing project, or ask about the requirements for becoming a registered or licensed practitioner.

The event will be held at the Melbourne Exhibition Centre and entry is free for qualified tradespeople.

For more information about the expo, including the identification required to gain free trade entry, visit www.melbournehomeshow.com.au

Chat with Consumer Affairs Victoria staff

Staff from Consumer Affairs Victoria will also be available at the Herald Sun Home Show to provide information about buying or selling a home, living in an owners corporation, renting, buying an investment property and retirement village living. For more information, visit www.consumer.vic.gov.au/property

Updated Australian Standard for roofing

Standards Australia has released a revised version of the Roofing Code *SA HB 39:2015 Installation code for metal roofing and wall cladding*.

The updated Standard came into effect on 16 July 2015 and replaces the 1997 edition.

It has been updated to introduce emerging coating technologies and to reinforce appropriate installation practices to ensure roof coverings and flashings are watertight.

The handbook is used to provide basic installation guidelines and acceptable standards of good practice for use by training providers and metal roofing installation contractors.

The updated handbook can be purchased from [SAI Global](#).

eToolbox outage – scheduled maintenance

The VBA will be performing online maintenance for eToolbox on Sunday 9 August 2015 from 10am – 12pm.

During this time, users will receive a timeout message from their browser while attempting to access eToolbox.

The VBA apologises for any inconvenience caused while we work to perform necessary upgrades.

To butt or not to butt – articulation joints at openings

There is some confusion in the industry regarding the requirements for articulation joints where they occur at window or door openings. Common industry practice has been to butt masonry hard against window or door frames at the location of an articulation joint, however, this practice does not comply with the requirements of *Australian Standard AS 4773.2 Masonry in Small Buildings – Construction*.

The requirements for articulation joints are addressed in clause 7.1 of the Standard, which states: '*A control joint placed at an opening shall provide sufficient clearance to door and window frames to accommodate any movement within the control joint space and remain weatherproof*'. This clause makes clear that where articulation joints are required at openings, a gap must be left between the opening and the masonry reveal and carried through to the full height of the masonry.

If there is no gap left between the masonry and the opening at the articulation joint, it will not only be non-compliant, but may also cause damage to windows and doors resulting in defects that need to be rectified.

Builders, building surveyors and building inspectors should be aware of this requirement and be sure to check articulation joints both at approval stage and on site.

For more detailed information refer to Section 3 of *AS 2870 Residential Slabs & Footings*, *AS 4773.2 - 2010 Masonry in Small Buildings – Construction* and [TN61 \(Technical Note 61\) Articulated Walling](#) from Cement Concrete & Aggregates Australia.

Proposed new refrigeration Standards

Standards Australia has released for public comment five proposed new

Australian Standards for refrigeration systems and refrigerants. This includes:

- *AS/NZS ISO 817:2015, Refrigerants – Designation and safety classification*
- *AS/NZS 5149, Refrigerating systems and heat pumps – Safety and environmental requirements, Parts 1 to 4.*

The proposed new Standards are based on international standards published by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) in 2014.

The proposed standards address a revised, internationally-aligned system of refrigerant designation and safety classification, as well as an extended scope to not only include safety requirements, but also the environmental aspects of system construction, leak prevention, vibration, maintenance, log books, repair and recovery of refrigerant.

Standards Australia has worked with ISO to make the standards available for public comment. The proposed text of these international standards is available to view for free until 1 September 2015.

View Standard Australia's [media release](#) for a summary of the proposed changes.

To review the proposed new Standards or submit comments, visit the [Standards Australia website](#).

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