

Media Release

Build Aware

14 March, 2023

Regulators inspect construction sites across Bass Coast Shire during five-day blitz

Four Victorian regulators carried out almost 150 inspections in and around Phillip Island and Wonthaggi construction sites as part of the Build Aware campaign, educating workers and identifying safety risks.

Energy Safe Victoria (ESV), WorkSafe, the Victorian Building Authority (VBA) and Environment Protection Authority Victoria (EPA) visited sites between 27 February and 3 March, to ensure the construction industry was meeting safety, environmental and building obligations.

ESV inspectors witnessed strong compliance across the 26 sites visited, including 15 solar installations. There was a keen focus on basic electrical safety, including checks to ensure machinery remained clear of powerlines.

VBA inspectors carried out 91 inspections, with more than half of work sites featuring non-compliant building or plumbing work. Workers were required to demonstrate improved processes and how compliance will be achieved.

WorkSafe conducted 17 visits and issued five improvement notices across two sites for a trenching risk with no emergency rescue plan, no safe trench access and egress and an inadequate handrail on a roof.

EPA authorised officers carried out 12 inspections across residential and commercial construction sites, providing compliance advice on containment of waste, sediment control and stormwater management.

Build Aware has visited Ballarat, Bendigo, Geelong and Warrnambool in recent years. Details: Victorian Building Authority, Worksafe Victoria, Energy Safe Victoria and Environment Protection Authority websites.

ESV CEO Leanne Hughson

“The week gave us the opportunity to inspect work sites and educate workers on a range of electrical safety issues, particularly the safety of solar installations and powerline clearance requirements to ensure lives and property are protected.”

VBA State Building Surveyor Andrew Cialini

“Our results demonstrate the importance in collaborating with fellow regulators. While most workers do the right thing, Build Aware is an important reminder to builders and plumbers to ensure compliance of their work.”

WorkSafe Director Construction and Earth Resources Matt Wielgosz

“While most workplaces visited were operating safely, it was disappointing to find well known risks around working from height and trenching were being ignored at two sites. Safety should always be the first priority when working on electrical installations.”

EPA Gippsland Regional Manager Jessica Bandiera:

“The week was a great success. We will continue to work with our regulatory partners to educate businesses and take a more coordinated enforcement approach for sediment controls and polystyrene waste.”

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