

Media Release

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The real reality of renovation and building projects

With the rise of reality television programs showcasing home renovation and building projects, Victorians are being reminded of the importance of being aware of the rules, to ensure your home meets all the necessary building requirements.

The Victorian Building Authority (VBA) is urging all do-it-yourself handy men and women wanting to start similar projects 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 book a professional to stay safe.

"Building and renovating work is 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 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.

Some 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.

"Reality television can give the wrong impression on how the system works. Your home is your greatest asset, you need to make sure you're fully aware of the rules, if you're not, things can easily go wrong, causing stress and costing you money," Mr Cialini said.

"The shows you see have teams of industry practitioners assisting with the builds and doing the heavy lifting, don't be fooled and end up ruining your dream home."

Plumbing work is also strictly regulated 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 you a compliance certificate, which is an important consumer protection tool.

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

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

Victorians wanting to engage a builder or plumber can visit vba.vic.gov.au/find

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