

# Media Release

## Build Aware 2023

20 February, 2023

### Victorian regulators launch 2023 Build Aware campaign around Wonthaggi and Phillip Island

Victorian regulators will launch their 2023 Build Aware campaign visiting the Bass Coast Shire Council area next week, ensuring construction workers are meeting safety, environmental and building compliance obligations.

Representatives from Energy Safe Victoria (ESV), the Victorian Building Authority (VBA), WorkSafe and Environment Protection Authority Victoria (EPA) will visit worksites, educating workers on good practice and calling out breaches.

The initiative, to run between Monday, 27 February and Friday, 3 March, will target building and plumbing compliance issues with a focus on air conditioning and swimming pools, powerline safety and waffle pod polystyrene management.

In recent years, the Build Aware campaign has included visits to Shepparton, Bairnsdale, Wodonga, Geelong, Bendigo, Latrobe Valley, Ballarat and Warrnambool.

Build Aware includes four Victorian regulators coming together to collaborate, sharing resources, knowledge and information to ensure compliance standards are met to keep communities safe.

During the week, ESV will visit construction and road sites enforcing No Go Zones, which describe minimum safety requirements relating to the distance between powerlines and the work being carried out.

The VBA has noticed an increase in building and plumbing activity across the region and will ensure all work is carried out correctly, with a focus on air-conditioning units, swimming pools and spas, which are in high use at this time of year.

With electrocution being one of the leading causes of death for construction workers, both ESV and WorkSafe will target electrical safety and remind employers and employees how to manage electrical hazards in the workplace.

EPA will ensure industry is aware of its responsibilities on building sites when it comes to management of waffle pod polystyrene, concrete slab construction that involves building on-ground, instead of in-ground. It will also be focusing on before and after use liquid storage and general waste management.

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

### ESV CEO Leanne Hughson

*“Build Aware has become an important campaign that provides us a united approach to address important safety issues across the construction and demolition industries.”*

*“Our compliance officers will spend the week visiting both construction and road worksites to ensure workers are working safely around powerlines.”*

*“We’ll also be ensuring that electrical workers are working safely, avoiding all hazards that commonly put lives at risk.”*



### **Victorian Building Authority Statewide Building Surveyor Andrew Cialini**

*"Build Aware is a great opportunity to visit regional areas and engage with practitioners. It informs our understanding of building and plumbing education needs and compliance issues."*

*"We have a role in ensuring practitioners understand how to do things correctly, and in discouraging risky, harmful or illegal behaviour. We are also keen to promote to consumers in the Bass Coast the importance of using registered practitioners."*

### **EPA Regional Manager Gippsland Jessica Bandiera**

*"The Environment Protection Act has given EPA greater power to protect the environment and community and every Victorian now has a legal responsibility to take reasonable action to protect the environment under the General Environmental Duty."*

*"Some of the simple things builders can do to meet their obligations are keeping skip bins closed or emptied before windy days, ensure waffle pod waste is bagged and disposed of appropriately, ensure sediment from the site is contained so it doesn't pollute waterways and keep liquids stored properly in bunded areas"*

### **WorkSafe Director Construction and Earth Resources Matt Wielgosz**

*"We're reminding employers and employees to take the steps needed to control the risks and ensure a safe workplace."*

*"Often simple oversights can lead to fatal consequences. It is essential to understand the importance of having a safe system of work in place, even with the most routine of tasks, like replacing a light fitting."*

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