

## Media Release

14 February 2017

### Building regulators heading to Geelong and Surf Coast

Builders will have access to a range of construction industry experts when regulators visit Geelong and the Surf Coast next week to examine safety and building compliance.

A week of site inspections will be undertaken by representatives from the Victorian Building Authority (VBA), WorkSafe Victoria, Consumer Affairs Victoria (CAV), Energy Safe Victoria (ESV) and Environment Protection Authority Victoria (EPA).

The inspections are part of the Build Aware joint initiative, created by the five regulators to increase awareness in the construction and demolition sector about the importance of complying with building, construction, environment, consumer rights and OH&S laws and regulations.

More than 100 inspections are expected across the Geelong and Surf Coast region from 20-24 February. They will be preceded by a special information breakfast for local builders on 17 February at Fagg's Mitre 10 in South Geelong.

VBA Director of Enquiries, Inspections and Complaints Murray Smith said representatives from the different agencies will visit construction and demolition sites to provide on-the-spot advice to builders to ensure they understand their legal responsibilities.

"VBA inspectors will also assist builders and owner-builders in fire safety regulations for new builds and retrofits of existing dwellings," Mr Smith said.

EPA South West Regional Manager Carolyn Francis said EPA officers will focus on the management of construction and demolition waste materials.

"Construction and demolition activities generate a range of industrial waste materials such as concrete, timber, brick, asbestos and soil that may be contaminated," she said.

"This waste can potentially pollute the environment and pose a public health risk if it's not managed responsibly. EPA officers will be ensuring that sites are identifying and managing wastes at building sites appropriately."

EPA officers will also focus on ensuring stormwater is not affected by demolition activities.

WorkSafe Regional Operations Manager Trevor Butler said it was critical for builders to prioritise safety at construction sites.

"Construction sites are dynamic in nature because they change from day to day. So do the safety hazards and risks that must be controlled to prevent a serious incident," Mr Butler said.

"WorkSafe will pay particular attention to the risk of falling objects and building materials at construction sites during these inspections."

A free trade breakfast and information session will be held at Fagg's Mitre 10, 1-9 Barwon Terrace, South Geelong on Friday, 17 February from 7am, so the building industry can hear from regulators and ask questions about what to expect during the week of inspections.

A social media campaign to alert the Geelong and Surf Coast community to the Build Aware program has also begun.

For further information on the Build Aware program, visit [consumer.vic.gov.au/buildaware](http://consumer.vic.gov.au/buildaware)

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