



Media Release

Tuesday, 24 May 2022

Victorian regulators take 2022 Build Aware campaign to the Latrobe Valley

Four Victorian regulators will take their Build Aware campaign to the Latrobe Valley next week, ensuring construction workers are meeting safety, environmental, building and plumbing compliance obligations.

Energy Safe Victoria (ESV), WorkSafe, the Victorian Building Authority (VBA) and Environment Protection Authority Victoria (EPA) will visit worksites providing operators with information on laws that protect the community and the environment.

The initiative, to run between Monday, 30 May and Friday, 3 June, will focus on the Latrobe Valley, working to educate and call out issues.

Build Aware has previously targeted regional areas including Shepparton, Bairnsdale, Ballarat, Wodonga, Geelong, Bendigo and Warrnambool. Joint activities delivered by the regulators include industry trade breakfasts, joint inspections and educational presentations to local TAFE students.

Next week inspections will be carried out across the Latrobe Valley to ensure compliance with safety, environmental, building and plumbing standards.

During the week, ESV compliance officers will focus on dangers related to No Go Zones and the need for construction workers and machinery operators to be aware of overhead and underground electrical assets.

WorkSafe will look to risks associated with exposure to asbestos and crystalline silica dust and remind employers and workers of the recent changes to the OHS regulations, including the requirements to identify 'high-risk' crystalline silica work.

The VBA will again be checking building and plumbing works as part of its Proactive Inspections Program, which aims to reduce non-compliant building and plumbing work.

While the EPA will ensure the construction and demolition industries are aware of their responsibilities when it comes to waste management at building sites.

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

ESV Commissioner and Chairperson Marnie Williams

"Unfortunately, powerline incidents are still as prevalent as ever, with ESV reporting almost daily powerline incidents, including a fatality in Malvern East, earlier this year.

"Build Aware allows us to get to regional communities, including those in the Latrobe Valley to explain the severe consequences of working too close to powerlines.

ESV has been promoting these dangers through its Look Up and Live campaign for more than a decade."

EPA Regional Manager Gippsland Zac Dornom

"The new 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 do the same."

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“Waste management issues are common at building sites, it’s important to understand the responsibilities of waste producers, to ensure that waste is properly managed onsite and goes to a lawful place for disposal or recycling.”

“You also have the power to report illegal waste disposal – it’s a way of protecting the environment and ridding the industry of the dodgy operators who compete unfairly with legitimate builders.”

Victorian Building Authority State 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.” he said.

“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 the importance of using registered practitioners.”

WorkSafe Director Construction and Earth Resources Matthew Wielgosz

“Exposure to hazardous materials such as asbestos or crystalline silica dust during demolition or construction work can lead to serious and life-threatening illnesses.

“Duty holders will be reminded that, since 15 May 2022, changes to OHS regulations mean businesses making dust when working with materials containing crystalline silica must identify and document any high-risk silica work and the measures used to control those risks.”

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