Everybody needs to be a good neighbour when you plan to build

Everybody needs good neighbours, particularly if you plan to build or renovate your home.

The Victorian Building Authority says that neighbours have rights when it comes to building and renovations.

Chief Executive Officer Prue Digby said under Victorian and local council laws, people have rights that protect them from inappropriate development and nuisance from a neighbour’s building work.

“Keeping your neighbours informed about your building and renovations can help avoid problems before, during and after you’ve built,” she said.

In Victoria, neighbours are entitled to view any planning permit documentation that is advertised for the purpose of the planning permit application. Local councils manage this process.

There are other ways to view what building work is going on in your neighbourhood. A site sign for the building project must be displayed in an easily seen location, providing details of the building permit, the building surveyor who issued it and the builder responsible for the work.

Ms Digby said problems with neighbours in relation to building are often overcome by providing details about the work to them in person. Sometimes, you may even need to have your neighbour onside to obtain a permit.

She said that building regulations provide protection for neighbouring properties. If you want to build or renovate, you may be required to undertake protection work to ensure your neighbour’s property isn’t damaged during building. The building surveyor will assess the plans for the building permit to decide if protection work is needed.

“Neighbours should never be unduly inconvenienced by building work. Victorian and local government laws also set out requirements regarding construction processes to protect the community from unsafe footpaths, roads and building sites.

“If a neighbour makes a complaint to council about your building project this may result in an inspection of your building work. That’s why it is important to know what is expected and what you need to do to ensure it complies with building regulations.”

When your building and renovation work meets building and planning requirements, you are well on the way to avoiding neighbourly issues. For further information on building permits and adjoining property rights, visit www.vba.vic.gov.au
What should I do if I’m planning to build or renovate?
• Let your neighbours know what building work you plan on doing.
• Make sure your builder displays a sign on the site that shows the details of the building surveyor, builder and building permit.
• Anyone carrying out building work needs to protect neighbouring properties from potential damage. Your building surveyor will let you know if work needs to be carried out to make sure your neighbour’s property isn’t affected or damaged during the building work.

My neighbour is building or renovating – what are my rights?
• During the planning process, you are entitled to view any planning permit documents in relation to the building work. Your local council will have these.
• Anyone carrying out building work needs to protect neighbouring properties from potential damage. You will be notified if your neighbour needs to carry out work to make sure your property isn’t affected or damaged.
• Victorian and local government laws are in place to protect the community from unsafe footpaths, roads and building sites during construction work.
• If you are still concerned about your neighbour’s building work, contact the building surveyor in writing. Alternatively, contact your local council.

ENDS

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