

Media Release

Build Aware

17 March, 2022

Victorian regulators visit work sites during Bendigo safety blitz

Four Victorian regulators carried out more than 180 inspections across Bendigo worksites as part of last week's Autumn Build Aware campaign.

Inspectors from Energy Safe Victoria (ESV), WorkSafe, the Victorian Building Authority (VBA) and Environment Protection Authority Victoria (EPA) visited work sites across the Bendigo area between Monday 7 and Friday 11 March.

The agencies also presented safety messages to more than 150 carpentry, plumbing and electrical students at Bendigo TAFE throughout the five-day initiative.

Build Aware aims to ensure the construction and demolition industries are meeting safety, environmental, building and plumbing compliance obligations with each agency focused on a specific area of safety.

During the week, ESV inspectors visited 45 sites, checking to see if excavators, mobile cranes and tipper trucks were being operated too close to overhead powerlines. The visits were designed to provide education to workers in meeting their legal obligations when working in the vicinity of electrical powerlines.

VBA's inspectors attended 61 building sites, carrying out 44 building and 17 plumbing inspections with structural deficiencies in timber framing, unreinforced brickwork, inadequate or incorrectly installed roof drainage systems and inadequate temporary fencing identified.

WorkSafe inspectors attended 50 sites, including housing construction sites to provide information to duty holders on health and safety issues in the construction of new residential houses.

EPA inspectors carried out inspections at 27 sites focused on the responsibilities of construction and demolition industries when it comes to waste management at building sites

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

For more information, visit the Victorian Building Authority, Worksafe Victoria, Energy Safe Victoria and Environment Protection Authority websites.

ESV Commissioner and Chairperson Marnie Williams

"Build Aware has become an important initiative for us to work closely with other agencies to address all aspects of the construction and demolition industries. Our inspectors felt the TAFE visits were a great way to reach aspiring tradies and instil positive energy safety messages early on."

VBA State Building Surveyor Andrew Cialini

"As Victoria's building regulator, our starting point is that individuals want to do the right thing. These inspections are designed to level the playing field for all builders and plumbers who produce high-quality work. It's all part of our goal to empower and educate practitioners supporting a robust and high-quality construction sector."

WorkSafe Director Construction and Earth Resources Matthew Wielgosz



“The campaign provided a great opportunity for regulators to work together and assist duty holders with their obligations under the various acts and regulations. This can support builders with quoting for future works. It’s also an important reminder to all builders to maintain a safe construction site with safe systems of work and a focus on key safety issues such as site fencing, amenities, housekeeping, electrical and work at heights.”

EPA Regional Manager North West Dr Scott Pigdon

“EPA’s Authorised Officers found compliance on sites across Bendigo was generally good. Any problems were with containment of waste, including scraps from the cutting of polystyrene waffle pods used in laying of concrete slabs. The issues they found were easily resolved with advice to the builders.”

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