

Media Release

Build Aware 2022

31 August, 2022

Victorian regulators continue 2022 Build Aware campaign in Ballarat

Victorian regulators will bring the 2022 Build Aware campaign to Ballarat next week, working to ensure construction workers are meeting safety, environmental, building and plumbing compliance obligations.

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

The initiative, which will run between Monday, 5 and Friday, 9 September, will focus on Ballarat, working to educate and call out issues, including building code and regulation compliance, No Go Zones, crystalline silica dust and waste management.

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

During the week, the VBA will visit sites and review potential construction compliance risks with sites selected based on volume of work, practitioners of interests and available classes of building permits issued.

ESV will address dangers relating to No Go Zones, which includes the need for construction workers and machinery operators to always be aware of overhead and underground electrical assets, including high voltage power lines.

WorkSafe will raise awareness of the risks associated with exposure to crystalline silica dust and recent changes to the occupational health and safety regulations, which require duty holders to identify 'high-risk' crystalline silica work and document the measures used to control those risks.

While the EPA will ensure the construction industries are aware of their responsibilities on building sites when it comes to management of waffle pod polystyrene 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.

Victorian Building Authority State Building Surveyor Andrew Cialini

"We are excited to be bringing the Build Aware program to Ballarat, this is an opportunity to proactively collaborate with both the local building industry and our fellow regulators to ensure the community is kept safe in the built environment."

"Regulation does more than ensure safety – it helps industry and community reach economic and social potential."

"Through Build Aware, we aim to bring government co-regulators together to solve complex regulatory challenges in our building system and enhance the regulatory ecosystem."

ESV Commissioner and Chairperson Marnie Williams



“Just last month we witnessed an excavator hitting underground cables at a school in Shepparton, which means there are still members of the construction and demolition industries who are not aware of the importance of No Go Zones.

“Build Aware allows us to get to regional communities, including those in the Ballarat area to explain the severe consequences of working too close to powerlines.

EPA Regional Manager South West Carolyn Francis

“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 Matthew Wielgosz

“While the risks of working with engineered stone are well known, fewer people in the construction industry would know that cutting or crushing products such as ceramic tiles, concrete, bricks and marble can also expose workers to dangerous crystalline silica dust.”

“Inhaling crystalline silica dust can cause life-changing, even fatal respiratory diseases such as silicosis, so we're reminding employers of the steps they must take to ensure a safe workplace for every worker.”

Media Contacts

For ESV Adrian Bernechich 0437 729 194 | adrian.bernechich@energysafe.vic.gov.au

For VBA Clayton Bennett 0417 854 245 | clayton.bennett@vba.vic.gov.au

For WorkSafe media line 0438 786 968 | media_team@worksafe.vic.gov.au

For EPA John Rees 0418 504 951 | john.rees@epa.vic.gov.au