

Which documents does your job need?

A trade-by-trade guide for Victorian subcontractors

Builders ask for paperwork before you start, and the list is different for every trade. This guide sets out the documents each trade usually needs, so you know what to ask us for and what the builder is likely to want.

It is a general guide. You know your work and your site, so use it as a starting point, then check it against the actual job and what the builder has asked for.

Start with three questions

1

Is any of the work high risk construction work?

In Victoria, the OHS Regulations 2017 list 19 kinds of high risk construction work (listed below). If your job includes any of them, a safe work method statement (SWMS) has to be prepared before that work starts.

2

Will you cut, grind or drill concrete, brick, tile or stone?

Using power tools on these materials can be high risk crystalline silica work. A crystalline silica hazard control statement is required before that work starts. Where the work is also high risk construction work, the SWMS can cover it instead, as long as it includes what the statement requires.

3

What has the builder asked for?

Many builders ask every trade for a SWMS and site records, whether or not the law requires one for that task. Send us their list and we will match it.

The 19 kinds of high risk construction work

From the Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017 (Vic). Tick the ones that apply to your job: these are what your SWMS has to cover.

1. Work where there is a risk of a person falling more than 2 metres
2. Work on or adjacent to a road, railway or other traffic corridor in use by traffic other than pedestrians
3. Work in or near water or other liquid that involves a risk of drowning
4. Work in an area where there is movement of powered mobile plant
5. Structural alterations or repairs that require temporary support to prevent collapse
6. Work in an area with artificial extremes of temperature
7. Work on or near energised electrical installations or services
8. Work in or near a shaft or trench with an excavated depth greater than 1.5 metres
9. Work on or near pressurised gas distribution mains or piping
10. Demolition of an element of a structure that is load-bearing or otherwise related to its physical integrity
11. Work in or near a confined space
12. Work on or near chemical, fuel or refrigerant lines
13. Work on tilt-up or precast concrete elements
14. Work on a telecommunications tower
15. Diving work
16. Work that involves disturbing or removing asbestos
17. Work in an area that may have a contaminated or flammable atmosphere
18. Work that involves the use of explosives
19. Work in or near a tunnel

The everyday set: what most trades keep on every job

Document	What it is for
Job-specific SWMS	Sets out the steps of the job, the hazards in each step and how you will control them. One for each trade activity, written for the actual site and builder.
Site Induction Record	Shows each worker was inducted before starting on the site.
Toolbox Talk Record	Records each toolbox talk: what was covered, who attended and what was agreed.
Hazard Report	For anyone to report a hazard, and for you to record how it was fixed.
Incident & Near Miss Report	Records what happened, who was involved and what was done about it.
SWMS Register & Review Log	One list of every SWMS in use on the job, and each time one was reviewed.

Added when the job calls for it

Document	Add it when
Plant & Equipment Pre-Start Checklist	You use machines or powered equipment that should be checked before use each day.
Hazardous Chemicals Register	You use or store hazardous chemicals such as fuels, solvents, cement products, adhesives or sealers. Kept with a current safety data sheet for each one.
Crystalline Silica Hazard Control Statement	The job includes high risk crystalline silica work (question 2 on page 1).
Subcontractor Compliance Checklist	You bring in your own subcontractors, or a builder asks for your insurances, licences and tickets in one place.

When a builder or council asks for more

Larger builders, councils and prequalification systems often want to see how your business manages safety overall, not just the paperwork for one job.

Document	Usually asked for when
OHS Management Plan	You tender to larger builders or councils, or apply for prequalification.
Safety Policies & Procedures	A builder or prequalification form asks for your OHS policy and supporting procedures.
Site Induction Handbook	You take on new workers or subcontractors and want one consistent induction.
Toolbox Talks	You want ready-to-run talk topics to use with the Toolbox Talk Record.
Tender & Prequalification Pack	You fill in builder or council forms and want your company details, insurances, licences and capability ready to drop in.

Keeping your documents up to date

Paperwork goes out of date. A SWMS written for one site does not describe the next one, insurances renew, people and machines change. This page shows which documents need another look, and when.

When	Which documents	What to look at
Every new job or site	Job-specific SWMS Crystalline Silica Hazard Control Statement	Site address, builder and date, the high risk work that applies on this site, the job steps and controls, and fresh worker sign-on. Each is written for one job.
Straight away, when something changes	Job-specific SWMS Crystalline Silica Hazard Control Statement	The work or the way you do it changes, site conditions change, a control is not working, or there is an incident or near miss. The Regulations set these triggers, not a calendar date, so a review cannot wait for the end of the month.
As you go	SWMS Register & Review Log Hazardous Chemicals Register Subcontractor Compliance Checklist	Add each new SWMS, chemical or subcontractor when it arrives on the job. Replace any safety data sheet that is more than 5 years old. Note the expiry date of each insurance and licence you record.
Every use	Site Induction Record Toolbox Talk Record Plant & Equipment Pre-Start Checklist Hazard Report Incident & Near Miss Report	These are filled in fresh each time, so there is nothing to review on a schedule. The blank form only needs changing if your business details or the way you work change.
About once a month A good habit, not a legal date	Your completed records and registers	A ten-minute check: registers up to date, toolbox talks held and recorded, hazards and incidents closed out, and anything expiring in the next two months.
Once a year, or when your business changes	OHS Management Plan Safety Policies & Procedures Site Induction Handbook Toolbox Talks Tender & Prequalification Pack	Names and roles, the services you offer, your plant and equipment, how you really handle inductions, training and incidents, and recent projects. Sign and date them again. Builders and prequalification systems often ask for documents dated within the last 12 months.
When a certificate renews	Tender & Prequalification Pack Subcontractor Compliance Checklist	Insurance certificates of currency, licences, registrations and tickets. Swap in the new one as soon as it is issued, so the pack you send a builder never shows an expired date.

You do the review

Reviewing means you and your workers looking at whether a document still matches the work, the site and your business. That judgement stays with you. Our guide *How to use your documents* has a simple routine for it.

We do the paperwork

When something needs changing, tell us what. We update the document, give it a new version number and date, and send it back for you to check, approve and sign. Our Price Guide lists one-off updates and two optional monthly plans.

Trade by trade

How to read the trade pages. Each trade lists the SWMS we prepare for it, the kinds of high risk construction work that commonly come up in that trade, the documents to have on top of the everyday set, and the checks builders most often ask about. A kind of high risk work only applies if it is actually part of your job, and your job may include others that are not listed.

01 Fencing

SWMS 01 – Fencing

Removing old fences, set-out, post holes, concreting posts, and installing steel, timber paling, post-and-rail and pool fencing and gates.

HIGH RISK WORK TO CHECK FOR

- Powered mobile plant moving in the work area
- Energised electrical services, overhead or underground
- Pressurised gas mains or piping
- Disturbing or removing asbestos (old cement sheet fences)

DOCUMENTS TO HAVE

The everyday set (page 2), plus:

- **Plant & Equipment Pre-Start Checklist:** post-hole digger, auger, skid steer or excavator
- **Crystalline Silica Hazard Control Statement:** if you cut or drill concrete sleepers, plinths or footings with power tools
- **Hazardous Chemicals Register:** cement, fuel, paints and timber treatments

CHECK BEFORE YOU START

- Before You Dig Australia (BYDA) plans on site before any post holes
- Asbestos cement fencing identified before removal
- Pool fencing has its own rules: check with the builder or council

02 Landscaping, paving and retaining walls

SWMS 02 – Landscaping

Site clearing, excavation and levelling, retaining walls (sleeper, block and rock), paving, garden beds, turf, irrigation and planting.

HIGH RISK WORK TO CHECK FOR

- Risk of falling more than 2 metres (retaining walls, embankments)
- On or next to a road in use by traffic
- Powered mobile plant moving in the work area
- Energised electrical services
- Trench or shaft deeper than 1.5 metres
- Pressurised gas mains or piping

DOCUMENTS TO HAVE

The everyday set (page 2), plus:

- **Plant & Equipment Pre-Start Checklist:** excavator, skid steer, compactor, saws
- **Crystalline Silica Hazard Control Statement:** if you cut pavers, blocks, sleepers or stone with power tools
- **Hazardous Chemicals Register:** fuel, cement, sealers, herbicides and pesticides

CHECK BEFORE YOU START

- BYDA plans on site before digging
- Retaining walls may need engineering design or a building permit: check before you quote
- Operator competency for each machine

03 Concreting

SWMS 03 – Concreting

Base preparation, formwork, reinforcement, concrete delivery and pumping, placing, finishing, curing, saw-cutting control joints and stripping formwork.

HIGH RISK WORK TO CHECK FOR

- Risk of falling more than 2 metres
- On or next to a road in use by traffic (trucks and pumps set up on the street)
- Powered mobile plant moving in the work area
- Energised electrical services (overhead lines near pump booms)

DOCUMENTS TO HAVE

The everyday set (page 2), plus:

- **Plant & Equipment Pre-Start Checklist:** pump, vibrators, trowel machines, saws
- **Crystalline Silica Hazard Control Statement:** saw-cutting control joints or grinding
- **Hazardous Chemicals Register:** cement, curing compounds, form release, fuel

CHECK BEFORE YOU START

- Boom pump operators hold the right high risk work licence
- Traffic management if trucks or the pump set up on the road
- Silica training for anyone cutting or grinding

04 Concrete cutting and coring

SWMS 04 – Concrete Cutting & Coring

Wall, floor and road sawing, core drilling, chasing and grinding of concrete, masonry and pavement.

HIGH RISK WORK TO CHECK FOR

- On or next to a road in use by traffic
- Powered mobile plant moving in the work area
- Structural alterations needing temporary support
- Energised electrical services (cast-in cables and conduits)
- Pressurised gas mains or piping
- Chemical, fuel or refrigerant lines

DOCUMENTS TO HAVE

The everyday set (page 2), plus:

- **Crystalline Silica Hazard Control Statement:** expect to need this on most jobs in this trade
- **Plant & Equipment Pre-Start Checklist:** saws, core drills, grinders, vacuums and water supply
- **Hazardous Chemicals Register:** fuel and any coatings or sealers

CHECK BEFORE YOU START

- Slab or wall scanned before cutting to locate cables, conduits, tendons and reinforcement
- Engineer approval before any structural cut
- Services isolated before work starts

05 Carpentry and framing

SWMS 05 – Carpentry & Framing

Wall and roof framing, trusses and bracing, floor framing, windows and doors, cladding and internal fix-out.

HIGH RISK WORK TO CHECK FOR

- Risk of falling more than 2 metres
- Powered mobile plant (cranes and telehandlers delivering frames and trusses)
- Structural alterations needing temporary support
- Energised electrical services

DOCUMENTS TO HAVE

The everyday set (page 2), plus:

- **Plant & Equipment Pre-Start Checklist:** nail guns, saws, mobile scaffold, elevating work platform (EWP)
- **Crystalline Silica Hazard Control Statement:** if you cut fibre cement sheet or cladding with power tools
- **Hazardous Chemicals Register:** adhesives, sealants, treated timber

CHECK BEFORE YOU START

- Scaffold over 4 m erected by a licensed scaffolder, with a handover certificate
- High risk work licence for boom EWP of 11 m or more, cranes, dogging and rigging
- Fall protection planned before frames and trusses go up

06 Roofing and guttering

SWMS 06 – Roofing & Guttering

Installing, replacing and repairing metal roof sheeting, flashings, insulation, gutters, fascia and downpipes.

HIGH RISK WORK TO CHECK FOR

- Risk of falling more than 2 metres
- Powered mobile plant moving in the work area
- Energised electrical services (overhead lines and service connections)
- Disturbing or removing asbestos (old cement sheet roofing and eaves)

DOCUMENTS TO HAVE

The everyday set (page 2), plus:

- **Plant & Equipment Pre-Start Checklist:** EWP, harness and anchor equipment, power tools
- **Hazardous Chemicals Register:** sealants, primers and solvents
- **Crystalline Silica Hazard Control Statement:** if you cut concrete or terracotta tiles or fibre cement with power tools

CHECK BEFORE YOU START

- Height safety training, and a rescue plan where harnesses are used
- Scaffold over 4 m erected by a licensed scaffolder
- Asbestos cement roofing identified before any removal

07 Plasterboard and ceilings

SWMS 07 – Plasterboard & Ceilings

Plasterboard walls and ceilings, cornice, suspended ceilings, setting and sanding.

HIGH RISK WORK TO CHECK FOR

- Risk of falling more than 2 metres (voids, stairwells, high ceilings)
- Energised electrical services
- Disturbing or removing asbestos (older linings on renovation jobs)

DOCUMENTS TO HAVE

The everyday set (page 2), plus:

- **Plant & Equipment Pre-Start Checklist:** mobile scaffold, sheet lifters, sanders
- **Hazardous Chemicals Register:** compounds, adhesives and sealants
- **Crystalline Silica Hazard Control Statement:** if you cut fibre cement sheet with power tools

CHECK BEFORE YOU START

- Mobile scaffold training, and a licence if the scaffold is over 4 m
- Manual handling plan for sheets
- Asbestos register checked on renovation jobs

08 Painting

SWMS 08 – Painting

Surface preparation and brush, roller and spray application of paints and coatings, inside and outside.

HIGH RISK WORK TO CHECK FOR

- Risk of falling more than 2 metres
- Powered mobile plant (EWPs)
- Disturbing asbestos (sanding or scraping older surfaces)
- Contaminated or flammable atmosphere (solvent vapours, spraying in enclosed areas)

DOCUMENTS TO HAVE

The everyday set (page 2), plus:

- **Hazardous Chemicals Register:** paints, thinners, strippers and solvents, with a current safety data sheet for each
- **Plant & Equipment Pre-Start Checklist:** spray units, EWP, mobile scaffold, ladders
- **Crystalline Silica Hazard Control Statement:** if you grind or sand render, masonry or fibre cement with power tools

CHECK BEFORE YOU START

- Lead paint and asbestos checked on older buildings before sanding
- Respirator training and fit testing for spray work
- Licence for boom EWP of 11 m or more

09 Tiling and waterproofing

SWMS 09 – Tiling & Waterproofing

Removing old tiles, substrate preparation, waterproofing membranes, and laying ceramic, porcelain and natural stone tiles, including cutting and grouting.

HIGH RISK WORK TO CHECK FOR

- Risk of falling more than 2 metres
- Disturbing or removing asbestos (old tiles, sheeting and adhesives)
- Contaminated or flammable atmosphere (membranes and primers in enclosed wet areas)

DOCUMENTS TO HAVE

The everyday set (page 2), plus:

- **Crystalline Silica Hazard Control Statement:** cutting tiles or grinding substrates with power tools
- **Hazardous Chemicals Register:** membranes, primers, adhesives, grouts and sealers
- **Plant & Equipment Pre-Start Checklist:** wet saws, grinders, mixers

CHECK BEFORE YOU START

- Silica training and respirator fit-test records
- Ventilation when applying membranes in enclosed rooms
- Waterproofing to AS 3740, and licence or registration where required

10 Bricklaying and blocklaying

SWMS 10 – Bricklaying & Blocklaying

Set-out, mixing mortar, laying brick and block walls, core-filling, lintels, ties and flashings, and cutting masonry.

HIGH RISK WORK TO CHECK FOR

- Risk of falling more than 2 metres
- On or next to a road in use by traffic
- Powered mobile plant (forklifts and telehandlers moving pallets)
- Energised electrical services

DOCUMENTS TO HAVE

The everyday set (page 2), plus:

- **Crystalline Silica Hazard Control Statement:** cutting bricks and blocks or chasing with power tools
- **Plant & Equipment Pre-Start Checklist:** brick saw, mixer, forklift or telehandler
- **Hazardous Chemicals Register:** cement, lime, brick-cleaning acid

CHECK BEFORE YOU START

- Scaffold over 4 m erected by a licensed scaffolder, with a handover certificate
- Forklift, crane or dogging licences as required
- Silica training and respirator fit-test records

11 Excavation and trenching

SWMS 11 – Excavation & Trenching

Bulk and detailed excavation, service trenching, pits and footings with excavators, loaders and trucks, including backfill and compaction.

HIGH RISK WORK TO CHECK FOR

- On or next to a road in use by traffic
- Powered mobile plant moving in the work area
- Energised electrical services
- Trench or shaft deeper than 1.5 metres
- Pressurised gas mains or piping
- Confined space
- Chemical, fuel or refrigerant lines
- Contaminated or flammable atmosphere

DOCUMENTS TO HAVE

The everyday set (page 2), plus:

- **Plant & Equipment Pre-Start Checklist:** every machine, before first use each day
- **Hazardous Chemicals Register:** fuel, oils and greases
- **Crystalline Silica Hazard Control Statement:** if you break or saw rock or concrete

CHECK BEFORE YOU START

- BYDA plans on site, and asset owner permits where required
- Traffic management plan and accredited traffic controllers when working on or near a road
- Operator competency for each machine

12 Strip-out and minor demolition

SWMS 12 – Strip-out & Minor Demolition

Removing non-load-bearing walls, ceilings, linings, fixtures, joinery, floor coverings and isolated services in fit-outs and renovations.

HIGH RISK WORK TO CHECK FOR

- Risk of falling more than 2 metres
- Energised electrical services
- Disturbing or removing asbestos
- Contaminated or flammable atmosphere

DOCUMENTS TO HAVE

The everyday set (page 2), plus:

- **Crystalline Silica Hazard Control Statement:** if you break or cut concrete, masonry or tiles with power tools
- **Plant & Equipment Pre-Start Checklist:** breakers, saws and lifting gear
- **Hazardous Chemicals Register:** fuel, adhesive removers and any chemicals found on site

CHECK BEFORE YOU START

- Asbestos register or survey reviewed before work starts
- Services isolated by a licensed electrician and plumber or gasfitter
- Load-bearing or structural demolition is a different job and needs its own SWMS

13 Plumbing, drainage and gasfitting

SWMS 13 – Plumbing & Drainage

Water supply, sanitary and stormwater drainage, sewer connections, hot water units and gas appliances, including trenching, pipe cutting and hot works.

HIGH RISK WORK TO CHECK FOR

- Risk of falling more than 2 metres (roof plumbing)
- Powered mobile plant moving in the work area
- Energised electrical services
- Trench or shaft deeper than 1.5 metres
- Pressurised gas mains or piping
- Confined space (pits, tanks and sewers)
- Contaminated or flammable atmosphere

DOCUMENTS TO HAVE

The everyday set (page 2), plus:

- **Plant & Equipment Pre-Start Checklist:** excavator, trencher, press tools, gas equipment
- **Hazardous Chemicals Register:** solvent cement, primers, flux and gases
- **Crystalline Silica Hazard Control Statement:** if you cut, chase or core concrete or masonry

CHECK BEFORE YOU START

- Victorian plumbing or gasfitting licence or registration for each class of work
- BYDA plans on site, and water or sewer authority consent where required
- Confined space training and entry permit for pits, tanks and sewers

Your trade is not listed?

Tell us what the work involves. We prepare job-specific documents for other trades from the information you give us.

Request a quote
tally.so/r/dWBIRr

Call or text
0401 405 748

Email
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More information: WorkSafe Victoria, worksafe.vic.gov.au, Advisory Service 1800 136 089. We prepare your documents from our Victorian templates and the information you give us. You review them, consult your workers, and approve and sign them before they are used.