

Your obligations under the *Environment Protection Act 2017*

I am writing to you as an organisation that does civil construction, building and demolition work in the Macedon Ranges Shire to remind you about your responsibilities under the *Environment Protection Act 2017* (the **Act**). We continue to see poor environmental practices at residential construction sites across the state, leading to potential harm to the environment and human health.

Your responsibilities under the Act

From 1 July 2021, new environmental laws came into effect. At the centre of the Act is the **General Environmental Duty (GED)**. The GED requires anyone engaging in an activity that may give rise to risks of harm to human health or the environment from pollution and waste, must minimise those risks so far as reasonably practicable.

The GED applies to all Victorians. It means that you will need to understand, assess and control your risks. This includes understanding how your activities can impact land, water and air quality, or cause harm from waste and excessive noise.

Additional to your GED, the Act imposes other obligations or duties relevant to the civil construction, building and demolition industries.

- **Pollution incident** – you have a duty to tell EPA and to clean up any waste and pollution caused by your operations.
- **Contaminated land** – you have a duty to manage risks associated with contaminated land and to tell EPA if the contaminated land is above certain thresholds.
- **Waste** – there are seven duties associated with producing, transporting, receiving and depositing waste.

Common risks and available guidance

Below are common concerns that EPA and councils receive about businesses that do civil construction, building and demolition work. You can find guidance on EPA's website to help you understand common hazards and possible controls, depending on the size and difficulty of the activity. Notably, the [Civil Construction, Building and Demolition Guide](#) (EPA Publication 1834.1, enclosed with this letter).

- **noise and vibration**, including scheduling works, community consultation, managing noise and vibration at the source, and managing noise using offsite controls
- **erosion, sediment and dust**, including managing stormwater flows, minimising dust, managing stockpiles and working within waterways
- **contaminated land and groundwater**, including identifying presence of contaminated land, and preventing contamination of stormwater and groundwater
- **chemical storage and handling**, including managing storage and handling of liquid and solid chemicals, spill response and cleanup, and managing volatile liquids
- **waste**, including managing different types of waste, storage, collection, transport and removal.

epa.vic.gov.au

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Further information

Other information that will support you in planning and conducting your activities include:

- Assessing and controlling risk: A guide for business (publication 1695.1) - <https://www.epa.vic.gov.au/about-epa/publications/1695-1>
- Reasonably practicable (publication 1856) - <https://www.epa.vic.gov.au/about-epa/publications/1856>
- Understanding your contaminated land duties – <https://www.epa.vic.gov.au/duty-manage-contaminated-land>
- Guide to the duty to manage contaminated land (publication 1977.1) - <https://www.epa.vic.gov.au/guidance-duty-manage-contaminated-land>
- Managing industrial waste – your duties as a waste producer (publication 1990.1) – <https://www.epa.vic.gov.au/about-epa/publications/1990-1>
- How to establish lawful place (publication 1946.1) <https://www.epa.vic.gov.au/19461-how-establish-lawful-place>

If you would like any further information, please contact me on 1300 372 842 or paul.ratajczyk@epa.vic.gov.au.

Yours sincerely



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