

CONSTRUCTION WORK WORK OF A MINOR NATURE INFORMATION SHEET

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Overview

This Information Sheet provides advice for persons conducting a business or undertaking (PCBUs) on what could be considered 'work of a minor nature' when testing, maintaining or repairing a building or structure.

As 'work of a minor nature' is not classified as 'construction work', Chapter 6 of the WHS Regulations does not apply. For example there would be no requirement to prepare a safe work method statement (SWMS) or for a worker to hold a general construction induction training (white) card. A SWMS is required for any activity that includes high risk construction work.

'Work of a minor nature' is usually but not always low risk. 'Work of a minor nature' may still be hazardous and must be carried out in full compliance with all applicable provisions of the work health and safety legislation. For example, if the work is carried out where there is a risk of a fall then those risks must be managed in accordance with Part 4.4 of the WHS Regulations.

The Code of Practice: Construction work provides further information on and examples of 'work of a minor nature', as well as information on when SWMS are required and construction worker induction.

What is construction work?

The work health and safety legislation distinguishes between 'construction work' and 'work of a minor nature'.

Construction work is 'any work carried out in connection with the construction, alteration, conversion, fitting-out, commissioning, renovation, repair, maintenance, refurbishment, demolition, decommissioning or dismantling of a structure'.

However, **construction work** does not include 'testing, maintenance or repair work of a minor nature carried out in connection with a structure'.

What is work of a minor nature?

Testing, maintenance or repair 'work of a minor nature' is work that generally:

- requires minimal control measures to manage risks

- requires little or no pre-start preparation of the work area, and
- is small scale and often of short duration.

If the work can be safely carried out with minimal preparation of the work area then it could be considered 'work of a minor nature'. Factors that may relate to minimal preparation are:

- small scale work that doesn't impact the existing design of the building or structure
- work that can be undertaken by workers with minimal supervision
- work that can be completed using hand tools and/or only requires light-duty material e.g. material that can be used without mechanical aids and does not need a designated storage area, and
- work that has minimal effect on the public e.g. roads and footpaths are not affected.

If more detailed preparation is required, the work is regarded as construction work.

Before starting work, ensure the building will not be affected by the work. If you believe it may be it is not 'work of a minor nature'. If necessary obtain advice about the building or structure's stability from a competent person.

Examples of activities that might be 'work of a minor nature' are listed in Appendix A.

What do I need to do?

A person conducting a business or undertaking must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that risks to health and safety are managed and workers are given the necessary information, training, instruction and supervision.

Further information

More information can be found in the Code of Practice: Construction work on the Safe Work Australia website (www.swa.gov.au).



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APPENDIX A - EXAMPLES OF CONSTRUCTION WORK OF A MINOR NATURE

'Work of a minor nature' can be hazardous and the risk should be assessed to determine suitable controls and ensure compliance with work health and safety legislation. Further information on assessing and managing risks can be found in the [*Code of Practice: How to manage work health and safety risks*](#) and other hazard specific codes of practice, for example the [*Code of Practice: Managing the risks of falls at workplaces*](#).

Work of a minor nature can include the following:

- inspecting a building's fire equipment
- inspecting a building's lifts but not maintaining or repairing the lifts regardless of how minor
- inspecting and servicing of, or replacing parts or repairing damage to:
 - an air-conditioning system but not installing or replacing the entire system
 - individual solar panels but not installing or replacing the entire solar panel system
 - pressure piping, including mechanical sleeving, repairing insulation and applying protective coating but not welding, cutting or replacing sections of pipe
 - sprinklers but not installing or replacing the entire sprinkler system
 - an irrigation system but not installing or replacing the entire system
 - a water pump
 - a pre-fabricated rainwater tank
 - a smoke detector
 - an alarm once de-energised but not the entire alarm system
 - remote-controlled windows, doors, gates and turntables once de-energised
 - an intercom system
 - a home entertainment system
 - a satellite dish or antenna
 - a computer network
 - a light globe, tube or diffuser
 - non-structural joinery such as kitchen cabinets, wardrobes, plasterboard panels, windows, doors, architraves
 - floor boards, floor joists, floor bearers on the ground floor but not an entire room or deck
 - furnishings, such as carpets, curtains, blinds and non-timber floors
 - floor and wall tiles, and grouting but not an entire room or deck
 - skirting boards, ceilings and cornices but not in an entire room
 - footpaths and steps but not the entire structure
 - individual roof tiles but not an entire section
 - gutters but not the whole guttering system
 - a fence but not replacing an entire fence or gates
 - a toilet, cistern and taps
- removing unleaded paint, patching, sanding or painting walls, and
- landscaping e.g. pruning plants, cutting grass, digging holes but not building a retaining wall, laying bricks or operating a machine like an excavator.