SAFE WORK METHOD STATEMENT (SWMS)

Business name

Document: SWMS-001 Rev 1
Prepared: 9 Nov 2026
Review by: 9 Dec 2026
Highest risk after controls: Medium

1. BUSINESS AND JOB DETAILS

Job	Replace a hot water system	**Start date**	9 Nov 2026
Working hours	7:00 am to 3:30 pm	**Trade**	Plumbing

2. HIGH RISK CONSTRUCTION WORK COVERED BY THIS SWMS

	Risk of a person falling more than 2 metres		Work on or near chemical, fuel or refrigerant lines
	Work on a telecommunication tower		Work on or near energised electrical installations or services
	Demolition of an element of a structure that is load-bearing or related to its physical integrity		Work in an area that may have a contaminated or flammable atmosphere
	Likely to involve disturbing asbestos		Work involving tilt-up or precast concrete elements
	Structural alterations or repairs that require temporary support to prevent collapse		Work on, in or next to a road, railway, shipping lane or other traffic corridor in use by traffic other than pedestrians
	Work in or near a confined space		Work in an area with movement of powered mobile plant
	Work in or near a shaft or trench with an excavated depth greater than 1.5 metres		Work in an area with artificial extremes of temperature
	Work in or near a tunnel		Work in or near water or other liquid that involves a risk of drowning
	Use of explosives		Diving work
	Work on or near pressurised gas distribution mains or piping		

3. JOB STEPS, HAZARDS AND CONTROLS

#	Job step	Hazards	Risk before	Controls	Risk after	Responsible
1	Check access to the unit and plan the removal route through stairs, roof spaces or tight cupboards	Tight spaces: roof spaces and under floors Lifting and carrying heavy loads Rules: WHS Regulation 2011, Part 4.2 Hazardous manual tasks	**High Likely / Moderate**	1.1 Do as much of the work as you can from outside the tight space. [Eliminate] 1.2 Turn the power off at the switchboard before entering where you can, as damaged cables may be live. [Isolate] 1.3 Lay crawl boards across the joists so you cannot step through the ceiling. [Engineering] 1.4 Set up ventilation and lighting in the space. [Engineering] 1.5 Limit time in hot roof spaces and take breaks somewhere cool. [Administrative]	**Medium Unlikely / Moderate**	Site supervisor

#	Job step	Hazards	Risk before	Controls	Risk after	Responsible
				1.6 Tell someone when you go in and when you are out. [Administrative] 1.7 Wear a dust mask, knee pads, gloves and a bump cap. [PPE] 1.8 Plan to avoid carrying: have materials delivered, and old items picked up, as close as possible to where they are used. [Eliminate] 1.9 Use lighter or smaller loads: order smaller bags and shorter lengths, and drain or break down old items before moving them. [Substitute] 1.10 Use trolleys, pallet jacks, hoists, vacuum lifters or plant instead of carrying by hand. [Engineering] 1.11 Use a two-person lift for anything heavy, long or awkward. Plan the route first and clear it. [Administrative] 1.12 Keep the load close, back straight and no twisting. Turn with your feet. [Administrative] 1.13 Rotate tasks and take breaks on long lifting jobs. [Administrative] 1.14 Wear gloves for grip and safety boots to protect your feet. [PPE]		
2	Isolate power at the switchboard and gas or water at the meter, lock out and danger tag	Electric shock from live wiring Gas and fuel lines Stored energy Rules: WHS Regulation 2011, Part 4.7 General electrical safety	**Extreme Possible / Catastrophic**	2.1 Isolate the power before any work. Do not do live work except in the limited cases the WHS Regulations allow (r.157; in Qld, the Electrical Safety Regulation 2013). [Eliminate] 2.2 Lock out and tag the isolation point with your own personal lock and danger tag. [Isolate] 2.3 Electric shock from live wiring: see step 8 for the full controls [Administrative] 2.4 Isolate and purge the line before work, with the owner's approval. [Eliminate] 2.5 Lock off and tag the isolation valve. [Isolate] 2.6 Gas and fuel lines: see step 8 for the full controls [Administrative] 2.7 Release or block all stored energy before work: release the pressure in pipes, tanks and hoses, bleed hydraulics, release springs, lower loads. [Eliminate] 2.8 Lock out and tag all energy sources with personal locks. [Isolate] 2.9 Put mechanical blocks or props under raised parts like buckets, tipper bodies and doors. [Engineering] 2.10 Test that the system is dead and nothing can move before you start. [Administrative] 2.11 Follow the maker's procedure, for example for garage door and roller door springs. [Administrative]	**Medium Rare / Catastrophic**	Site supervisor
3	Drain the old unit, watching for scalding water and steam	Hot water and steam Burns from hot surfaces Slips and trips	**Medium Likely / Minor**	3.1 Turn the system off and let it cool before work. [Eliminate] 3.2 Isolate and lock off the heat source and valves, and release the pressure. [Isolate] 3.3 Hot water and steam: see step 9 for the full controls [Administrative] 3.4 Isolate heating systems and let parts cool before you touch them. [Eliminate] 3.5 Fit guards or insulation on hot pipes and equipment. [Engineering] 3.6 Mark hot items with chalk or a "HOT" sign so others know. [Administrative] 3.7 Keep a first aid kit and cool running water nearby for burns. [Administrative]	**Low Unlikely / Minor**	Site supervisor

#	Job step	Hazards	Risk before	Controls	Risk after	Responsible
				3.8 Wear heat-resistant gloves and long sleeves. [PPE] 3.9 Plan walkways and keep them clear of materials, hoses and leads. [Eliminate] 3.10 Run leads and hoses overhead on hooks or stands, or along walls, not across walkways. [Engineering] 3.11 Fill or cover holes, and lay boards or mats on muddy access paths. [Engineering] 3.12 Clean up offcuts, packaging and spills as you go, not at the end of the day. [Administrative] 3.13 Keep work areas, stairs and access paths well lit. [Administrative]		
4	Disconnect pipes, flue and wiring, and cap the gas line. Treat old fibre cement flues and base sheets as asbestos until checked, and do not cut or break them	Gas and fuel lines Electric shock from live wiring Cuts from sharp edges Rules: WHS Regulation 2011, Part 4.7 General electrical safety	**Extreme Possible / Catastrophic**	4.1 Check for leaks with a gas detector before and during work, and ventilate the area. [Engineering] 4.2 Only licensed gasfitters work on gas lines. [Administrative] 4.3 Gas and fuel lines: see step 8 for the full controls [Administrative] 4.4 Test before you touch: prove dead at the point of work with a voltage tester, proving the tester on a known live source before and after (AS/NZS 4836). [Engineering] 4.5 Only licensed electricians do electrical work. [Administrative] 4.6 Electric shock from live wiring: see step 8 for the full controls [Administrative] 4.7 Deburr or cover sharp edges, and fit edge protectors on exposed sheet metal. [Engineering] 4.8 Use knives with retractable or self-retracting blades. [Engineering] 4.9 Cut away from your body and keep your other hand clear. [Administrative] 4.10 Put used blades in a blade bin or sharps container. [Administrative] 4.11 Use two people to handle large sheets of metal or glass. [Administrative]	**Medium Rare / Catastrophic**	Site supervisor
5	Remove the old unit using a trolley and two people	Lifting and carrying heavy loads Cuts from sharp edges Rules: WHS Regulation 2011, Part 4.2 Hazardous manual tasks	**High Likely / Moderate**	5.1 Lifting and carrying heavy loads: see step 1 for the full controls [Administrative] 5.2 Wear cut-resistant gloves and long sleeves. [PPE] 5.3 Cuts from sharp edges: see step 4 for the full controls [Administrative]	**Medium Unlikely / Moderate**	Site supervisor
6	Position and secure the new unit on a level base	Lifting and carrying heavy loads Tight spaces: roof spaces and under floors Rules: WHS Regulation 2011, Part 4.2 Hazardous manual tasks	**High Likely / Moderate**	6.1 Lifting and carrying heavy loads: see step 1 for the full controls [Administrative] 6.2 Tight spaces: roof spaces and under floors: see step 1 for the full controls [Administrative]	**Medium Unlikely / Moderate**	Site supervisor
7	Make pipe joins, with a hot work permit and an extinguisher at hand if	Fire from hot works Burns from hot surfaces	**Extreme Possible / Catastrophic**	7.1 Use cold work methods where you can, such as bolting, press fittings or cutting with a saw instead of a torch. [Eliminate] 7.2 Move anything that can burn at least 15 metres away (AS 1674.1), or	**Medium Rare / Catastrophic**	Site supervisor

#	Job step	Hazards	Risk before	Controls	Risk after	Responsible
	soldering or brazing	Rules: AS 1674.1 Safety in welding and allied processes (fire precautions)		protect it with fire blankets or screens. [Isolate] 7.3 Use fire-resistant screens to stop sparks reaching people or gaps in walls and floors. [Engineering] 7.4 Get a hot work permit before starting. [Administrative] 7.5 Keep a charged fire extinguisher and fire blanket at the work spot. [Administrative] 7.6 Keep a fire watch during the work and for at least 60 minutes after you finish. [Administrative] 7.7 Check for smouldering behind walls, in ceilings and under floors before you leave. [Administrative] 7.8 Wear flame-resistant clothing, welding gloves and eye or face protection. [PPE] 7.9 Burns from hot surfaces: see step 3 for the full controls [Administrative]		
8	Reconnect gas (by a licensed gasfitter) and power (by a licensed electrician, or a plumber with a restricted electrical licence where your state allows), then leak test the gas with a manometer or leak detection fluid, never a flame	Gas and fuel lines Pressure testing Electric shock from live wiring Rules: WHS Regulation 2011, Part 4.7 General electrical safety	**Extreme Possible / Catastrophic**	8.1 Isolate and purge the line before work, with the owner's approval. [Eliminate] 8.2 Lock off and tag the isolation valve. [Isolate] 8.3 Check for leaks with a gas detector before and during work, and ventilate the area. [Engineering] 8.4 Only licensed gasfitters work on gas lines. [Administrative] 8.5 Remove ignition sources: no smoking, no hot work and no sparking tools near the line. [Administrative] 8.6 Test with water instead of air or gas where the system allows it. Never put water in refrigerant pipework, which is tested with dry nitrogen. [Substitute] 8.7 Keep people out of the test area with signs and barriers. [Isolate] 8.8 Use a calibrated gauge and a relief valve set to protect the system. [Engineering] 8.9 Test to the pressure the system calls for and hold it for the set time. Never go over. [Administrative] 8.10 Release the pressure fully before tightening anything or fixing leaks. [Administrative] 8.11 Isolate the power before any work. Do not do live work except in the limited cases the WHS Regulations allow (r.157; in Qld, the Electrical Safety Regulation 2013). [Eliminate] 8.12 Lock out and tag the isolation point with your own personal lock and danger tag. [Isolate] 8.13 Test before you touch: prove dead at the point of work with a voltage tester, proving the tester on a known live source before and after (AS/NZS 4836). [Engineering] 8.14 Only licensed electricians do electrical work. [Administrative] 8.15 Check for back feeds from solar, batteries and generators that can keep a circuit live after the main switch is off. [Administrative]	**Medium Rare / Catastrophic**	Site supervisor
9	Fill and purge air, check the temperature and pressure relief valve and its drain, then commission. Store at 60°C or	Hot water and steam Pressure testing	**Medium Unlikely / Major**	9.1 Turn the system off and let it cool before work. [Eliminate] 9.2 Isolate and lock off the heat source and valves, and release the pressure. [Isolate] 9.3 Check the temperature, and open fittings slowly while facing away.	**Low Rare / Major**	Site supervisor

#	Job step	Hazards	Risk before	Controls	Risk after	Responsible
	more, and fit or check a tempering valve so bathroom outlets get no more than 50°C (45°C in aged care, child care and health care), as AS/NZS 3500.4 requires			[Administrative] 9.4 Keep a first aid kit and cool water ready for burns. [Administrative] 9.5 Wear heat-resistant gloves, long sleeves and a face shield. [PPE] 9.6 Wear safety glasses or a face shield. [PPE] 9.7 Pressure testing: see step 8 for the full controls [Administrative]		
10	Take the old unit off site and clean up	Lifting and carrying heavy loads Poor housekeeping and waste Rules: WHS Regulation 2011, Part 4.2 Hazardous manual tasks	**High Likely / Moderate**	10.1 Lifting and carrying heavy loads: see step 1 for the full controls [Administrative] 10.2 Order materials to size and send packaging back where you can. [Eliminate] 10.3 Put skip bins and waste chutes close to the work. [Engineering] 10.4 Clean as you go, and do a full clean up at the end of each day. [Administrative] 10.5 Keep exits, stairs and walkways clear at all times. [Administrative] 10.6 Stack materials neatly on level ground, away from edges. [Administrative] 10.7 Wear gloves when handling waste. [PPE]	**Medium Unlikely / Moderate**	Site supervisor

Risk key: risk = likelihood x consequence on a 5 x 5 matrix. Low, Medium, High, Extreme. Work must not start while the risk after controls is high or above. Controls are listed in order of the hierarchy of control: Eliminate, Substitute, Isolate, Engineering, Administrative, PPE.

4. PPE AND PERMITS

Required PPE	Permits and plans
Steel cap boots Work gloves Safety glasses P2 dust mask Knee pads Hard hat Face shield Overalls Welding gloves Cut-resistant gloves	Electrical isolation permit Hot work permit

5. PLANT AND EQUIPMENT

Plant / equipment	Licence or training needed	Inspection needed	Rego / ID	Last inspected	Certificate / report
Hand tools					
Pipe press tool					
LPG gas torch					

Plant / equipment	Licence or training needed	Inspection needed	Rego / ID	Last inspected	Certificate / report
Trailer					

6. CREW COMPETENCY, TICKETS AND LICENCES

Crew listed at sign-on below, with ticket and licence numbers.

7. EMERGENCY ARRANGEMENTS

Emergency number	000	**First aid kit**	In the work vehicle
Fire extinguisher	In the work vehicle	**Alarm and evacuation**	Shout for help and stop work. Make the area safe and go to the assembly point. Call the emergency number and send someone to meet the ambulance.
Reporting incidents	Notify the regulator immediately of any notifiable incident and preserve the site.		

8. IMPLEMENTING, MONITORING AND REVIEWING THE CONTROLS

How they are put in place	Controls are set up before the work starts. The person responsible explains this SWMS to every worker before they start, and workers sign to confirm they understand it.	**How they are monitored**	The person responsible checks the controls are in place before work starts each day and during the work, and talks to the workers about any problems. Stop work and review this SWMS if the work changes, the controls are not working, after any incident, or if a worker raises a concern.
When it is reviewed	Reviewed when the work or site changes, after any incident, if a control is not working, or if a worker or health and safety representative asks.		

Legal basis: Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011, Part 6.3 (Victoria: OHS Regulations 2017). A SWMS must be prepared before any high risk construction work starts. It must list the high risk work, the hazards and risks, the control measures, and how those controls will be put in place, monitored and reviewed. It must be easy for the workers to read and understand.

Keep this SWMS, and every revised version, until the high risk construction work is finished, where workers and inspectors can see it on site. If a notifiable incident happens during the work, keep it for at least 2 years after the incident.

9. REVIEW AND AMENDMENT RECORD

Rev	Date	By	What changed
1	9 Nov 2026		First issue

10. SIGN-OFF

	Name	Signature	Date	
Prepared by				
Person responsible (supervisor)				
Principal contractor review				Accepted for use: Yes / No

By signing below, each worker confirms they were consulted on and have read and understood this SWMS, and will follow it. If the work cannot be done as this SWMS says, stop as soon as it is safe and do not restart until the SWMS is reviewed.

Name	Role / company	Tickets / licences	Inducted	Signature	Date

Name	Role / company	Tickets / licences	Inducted	Signature	Date