

# Media Release

**The Hon Ben Carroll MP**  
Deputy Premier  
Minister for Education  
Minister for WorkSafe and TAC



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## KEEPING WORKERS SAFE FROM ENGINEERED STONE

Victorian stonemasons and construction industries are adapting to the Allan Labor Government's ban on engineered stone – with advice and guidance to more than 1,100 operators across the sectors.

A prohibition on the processing, manufacture and supply of engineered stone has now taken full effect across Australia, while a federal ban on the importation of the product also came into effect on 1 January.

The Labor Government continued its nation leading action to protect workers from silicosis by fully implementing the ban on 1 July last year.

Since then WorkSafe inspectors have conducted 326 inspections of stonemasons and suppliers, issued 110 improvement notices and referred five operators for investigation over suspected illegal processing or supply of engineered stone.

WorkSafe has also ensured the construction industry is aware of the ongoing obligations for controlling crystalline silica dust, with inspectors providing guidance and advice to 865 residential and commercial builders since the ban took effect.

Victoria's introduction of a licensing scheme for processing engineered stone in November 2021 meant the industry was well positioned to adapt to the ban.

More than 700 Victorian workers have been impacted by silica-related disease since the start of 2018, including 20 who have lost their lives, with the majority linked to the processing and manufacturing of engineered stone.

Victorian regulations banning engineered stone apply to all employers, self-employed persons or those with management or control of a workplace, regardless of any previous contractual obligations.

This includes any trade working with stone benchtops, panels or slabs, with the onus on duty holders to ensure that products they are working with do not contain engineered stone, even if they are supplied by the customer or another business.

Existing engineered stone benchtops, panels or slabs that were installed prior to 1 July 2024 can be removed, repaired, modified and re-installed in the same position, as long as strict measures are in place to control silica dust.

Those with concerns about health and safety in a workplace, including risks associated with engineered stone, can contact WorkSafe's advisory service on 1800 136 089.

For more information on crystalline silica, including control measures [www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/crystalline-silica](http://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/crystalline-silica)

For information on data sheets visit [www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/interpreting-data-sheets-identify-engineered-stone](http://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/interpreting-data-sheets-identify-engineered-stone)

### Quotes attributable to Deputy Premier and Minister for WorkSafe and TAC Ben Carroll

*"Too many Victorian workers have already lost their lives or suffer the debilitating effects of silicosis as a result of working with engineered stone."*

*"No one should die for a kitchen benchtop – that's why the Allan Labor Government led the nation and swiftly implemented the ban on processing, manufacture and supply of engineered stone."*

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## **Quotes attributable to WorkSafe Executive Director Health and Safety Sam Jenkin**

*“Our proactive approach to working with the stonemason industry has paid off – with the vast majority aware of their obligations and wanting to do everything to protect workers from deadly silica dust.”*

*“WorkSafe will continue to take strong compliance and enforcement action, which could include possible prosecution and potentially significant fines, against any businesses looking to ignore the ban.”*