

Media Release

Mr Danny Pearson MP

Minister for Transport Infrastructure

Minister for the Suburban Rail Loop

Assistant Treasurer

Minister for WorkSafe and the TAC



Friday, 22 March 2024

LEADING THE WAY ON BANNING DEADLY ENGINEERED STONE

The Allan Labor Government is keeping workers safe by banning the use of engineered stone in Victoria from July this year.

Today the Victorian Government joined the Commonwealth, states and territories to discuss a national ban on engineered stone.

Victoria and Queensland will lead the nation on banning the deadly product from July, just as Victoria led the nation in introducing the toughest regulations and Australia's first licensing scheme for businesses working with crystalline silica.

From 1 July, Victorian employers will no longer be permitted to carry out work involving the manufacturing, supply, processing or installation of engineered stone.

An exception to Victoria's prohibition of all engineered stone will apply if the work involves the removal, repair or minor modification of product installed in a premises before 1 July. This work will be subject to existing control requirements for engineered stone and additional high-risk crystalline silica work regulations.

Until the ban takes effect, Victoria's existing laws on exposure to crystalline silica dust and working with engineered stone will continue to protect workers.

Victoria established its Silica Action Plan in 2019 with a range of actions aimed at preventing exposure to crystalline silica dust and providing early intervention and support for affected workers.

This included the establishment of Australia's only dedicated public hospital occupational respiratory clinic through a partnership between WorkSafe and The Alfred.

Quotes attributable to Minister for WorkSafe and the TAC Danny Pearson

"Victoria is once again leading the nation on keeping workers safe from deadly silicosis by banning engineered stone from July this year."

"The evidence is clear that working with engineered stone is deadly – I don't want to see any more Victorian workers die because of a kitchen benchtop."

"We led the way with regulation and licensing in Victoria and now this ban will ensure workers are protected from silicosis."