

SAFE WORK METHOD STATEMENT

Excavation and Trenching for Plumbing — Safe Work Method Statement

■ SWMS required under WHS Regulation 2011, s.299 for high-risk construction work as defined in s.291

Business Name:	[Your Business Name]	ABN:	[Your ABN]
Contact Person:	[Contact Name]	Phone:	[Phone Number]
Site Address:	[Site Address — ACT]	Date:	18 July 2026
Document No:	SWMS-EXCAVATION-001	Revision:	1.0

■ Your business details are automatically pre-filled into every document at purchase

1. SCOPE OF WORK

Safe work procedures for all excavation and trenching operations associated with plumbing work including trench preparation, shoring, benching, and safe entry requirements.

High Risk Construction Work (s.291): Trenching, Energised Electrical, Powered Mobile Plant

Regulatory Reference: WHS Reg 2011, Reg 306 — excavation work | WHS Reg 2011, Reg 305 — notification of certain excavation work | WHS Reg 2011, Reg 60 — manual tasks

■ Each SWMS identifies the specific high-risk construction work category under WHS Reg 2011 s.291 that triggers the legal requirement for this document

2. SITE-SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

The PCBU must assess and document site-specific factors before commencing work. Considerations include but are not limited to:

- Site access and egress routes
- Underground services (gas, water, electrical, telecommunications)
- Overhead power lines and obstructions
- Adjacent activities and interface risks
- Weather conditions and environmental factors
- Emergency routes and assembly points

3. TASK STEPS, HAZARDS & CONTROL MEASURES

■ Control measures follow the Hierarchy of Controls per WHS Reg 2011, Reg 36: Elimination → Substitution → Engineering → Administrative → PPE. Risk ratings use a 5×5 matrix aligned with AS/NZS ISO 31000:2009

The full document contains task-by-task hazards, risk ratings, and prescribed control measures. To protect document IP, this sample shows the structural depth only. Summary of what the full document contains:

Document Structure	Count
Task steps documented	5
Hazards identified across all steps	9
Control measures specified	27
Hierarchy-of-control levels covered	Administrative, Engineering, PPE
PPE items with AS/NZS standard references	6
Australian Standards referenced	4

■ Every hazard is mapped to its initial risk rating, control measures across the hierarchy, and a residual risk rating after controls are applied

4. PPE REQUIREMENTS

■ Every PPE item references the specific Australian Standard it must comply with — not just generic PPE categories

PPE Item	Australian Standard	Required
Hard hat	AS/NZS 1801	Yes
Safety footwear	AS/NZS 2210.3	Yes
Hi-vis clothing (Class D/N)	AS/NZS 4602.1	Yes
Personal 4-gas monitor	AS/NZS 60079.29.1	Yes
Hearing protection	AS/NZS 1270	Yes
Safety glasses	AS/NZS 1337.1	Yes

5. REQUIRED LICENCES & COMPETENCIES

- Construction Induction Card (White Card) — required for all construction work under WHS Reg s.317; recognised in all states and territories
- Excavation competency and underground service location (Before You Dig Australia enquiry) prior to ground disturbance
- Electrician's licence issued by your state or territory regulator (restricted electrical licence where the work is limited in scope)
- High Risk Work Licence for the plant operated — e.g. Forklift (LF) or order-picking forklift (LO), boom-type elevating work platform over 11 m (WP), or the applicable crane class, WHS Reg Schedule 3
- Verification of Competency (VOC) for plant not covered by an HRW licence class
- Plumber's licence issued by your state or territory regulator
- Gasfitting licence issued by your state or territory regulator for work on gas mains or piping
- Verify current licence and competency requirements with your state or territory WHS regulator before commencing work.

6. TOOLS, EQUIPMENT & PLANT

- Excavator
- Trench shoring system (hydraulic or timber)
- Trench shields/boxes
- Cable and pipe locator (CAT/Genny)
- GPR unit
- Dewatering pump
- 4-gas detector
- Compaction plate
- Ladders

All equipment must be inspected before use. Defective equipment must not be used.

7. LEGISLATIVE REFERENCES

■ This section auto-populates with your state's specific WHS/OHS legislation. ACT shown here — Victoria references OHS Act 2004 Reg 327, Western Australia references the WHS Act 2020. All 8 states and territories are supported.

Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (ACT)

Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011 (ACT)

SWMS required under: s.299

Regulator: WorkSafe ACT

- WHS Reg 2011, Reg 306 — excavation work
- WHS Reg 2011, Reg 305 — notification of certain excavation work
- WHS Reg 2011, Reg 60 — manual tasks

Applicable Australian Standards:

- AS/NZS 3500.2 — Plumbing and drainage — Sanitary plumbing and drainage
- AS 4799 — Installation of underground utility services and pipelines within railway boundaries
- AS/NZS 2865 — Confined spaces (for deep trench entry)
- AS/NZS 4602.1 — High visibility safety garments

8. EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Emergency Services:	000
Site Supervisor:	[Enter name and phone]
First Aid Officer:	[Enter name and phone]
Nearest Hospital:	[Enter hospital name and address]

In the event of an emergency: Stop work immediately. Secure the area. Call 000 if required. Administer first aid. Notify site supervisor. Do not resume work until authorised.

9. WORKER SIGN-OFF

■ Satisfies WHS Reg 2011 s.299(c) — workers must be able to access the SWMS and confirm understanding before high-risk construction work commences

I have read, understood, and agree to comply with this Safe Work Method Statement. I understand the hazards and control measures and will follow the procedures outlined.

Name (Print)	Signature	Date	Company

10. MONITORING & REVIEW PROCEDURES

Control measures outlined in this SWMS must be monitored to ensure they remain effective. The following monitoring arrangements apply:

Monitoring Responsibility:	Site Supervisor / PCBU representative
Monitoring Frequency:	Before each shift, during work activities, at completion
Review Triggers:	Incident, near-miss, change in conditions, new worker, change in scope
Worker Consultation:	Toolbox talk before commencing HRCW; workers to report issues immediately

11. REVIEW LOG

Review Date	Reviewed By	Changes Made	Approved By
18 July 2026	[Reviewer Name]	Initial issue	[Approver Name]

■ Record-keeping obligation under WHS Regulation s.303 — SWMS must be retained until work is completed, or 2 years after a notifiable incident

RECORD KEEPING: Under WHS Regulation s.303, this SWMS must be kept until the work is completed. If a notifiable incident occurs, the SWMS must be retained for at least 2 years from the date of the incident.

SAMPLE DOCUMENT — Get your own trade-specific, editable SWMS at [getsiteready.com.au](https://www.getsiteready.com.au)