

**Brick and Masonry Cleaning**

Business Name:		ABN:
Business Address:		
Contact Person:	Phone:	Email:

**THIS RISK ASSESSMENT IS APPROVED BY THE PCBU ON THIS PROJECT**

Under the Work Health and Safety Regulation (WHS Regulation), a person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU) is required to ensure that a RISK ASSESSMENT is prepared before the proposed work starts.

Full Name:	
Signature:	Date:

**CLIENT OR PRINCIPAL CONTRACTOR DETAILS**

Client:	SCOPE OF WORKS
Project Name:	
Project Address:	
Project Manager:	
Contact Phone:	
Date Risk Assessment supplied to Project Manager:	



RISK MATRIX									
LIKELIHOOD	INSIGNIFICANT	MINOR	MODERATE	MAJOR	CATASTROPHIC	SCORE	ACTION	HIERARCHY OF CONTROLS	
ALMOST CERTAIN	3 HIGH	3 HIGH	4 ACUTE	4 ACUTE	4 ACUTE			<b>Elimination</b> Remove the hazard.	
LIKELY	2 MODERATE	3 HIGH	3 HIGH	4 ACUTE	4 ACUTE	4A ACUTE	DO NOT PROCEED	<b>Substitution</b> Replace the hazard.	
POSSIBLE	1 LOW	2 MODERATE	3 HIGH	4 ACUTE	4 ACUTE	3H HIGH	Review before work starts.	Isolation Isolate People from the hazard	
UNLIKELY	1 LOW	1 LOW	2 MODERATE	3 HIGH	4 ACUTE	2M MODERATE	Ensure control measures in place.	<b>Engineering</b> Isolate the hazard	
RARE	1 LOW	1 LOW	2 MODERATE	3 HIGH	3 HIGH	1L LOW	Monitor and keep records.	<b>Administrative</b> Change	
								<b>PPE</b>	

  

Risk Rating & Required Action:	
<b>4A</b>	Stop work. The risk is intolerable. Eliminate the hazard or redesign the activity before proceeding. A Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS) or higher-level authorisation is required.
<b>3H</b>	Review and approve additional controls before task starts. Senior supervisor sign-off needed.
<b>2M</b>	Ensure all nominated controls are in place and effective. Proceed with caution; monitor conditions.
<b>1L</b>	Proceed, following standard operating procedures. Monitor and keep records.

  

Consequence Scale:			
Consequence	People (injury/illness)	Project / Assets	Compliance / Reputation
<b>Catastrophic</b>	Fatality or permanent total disability	project shutdown	Significant regulator intervention; criminal prosecution
<b>Major</b>	Serious injury/illness (hospital > 5 days)	critical delay	Improvement notice; major media coverage
<b>Moderate</b>	Medical-treatment injury; lost-time > 1 day	moderate delay	Minor breach; adverse client comment
<b>Minor</b>	First-aid only, no lost time	negligible delay	Isolated non-conformance
<b>Insignificant</b>	No injury	no schedule impact	Deviation caught and corrected on site

  

**Notes on Hierarchy of Controls:**  
Remember to apply controls in the preferred order shown by the coloured pyramid:

1. **Eliminate**
2. **Substitute**
3. **Isolate**
4. **Engineering**
5. **Administrative**
6. **PPE**

Always document **why** a lower-order control is accepted if elimination or substitution is not reasonably practicable.

*aligned with Safe Work Australia's Managing the risk of fatigue at work (2023) and ISO 45001:2018 clauses 6–8.*

JOB STEP	POTENTIAL HAZARDS	IR	CONTROL MEASURES	RR
SPECIFIC WORK STEPS	HAZARDS THAT MAY ARISE	INITIAL RISK	SPECIFIC MEASURES TO BE PUT IN PLACE TO ELIMINATE OR CONTROL THE RISKS	RESIDUAL RISK
1. WHS Governance, Roles and Accountabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of clearly defined WHS responsibilities for brick and masonry cleaning activities under WHS Act 2011 and WHS Regulations</li> <li>Inadequate consultation mechanisms between PCBUs, principal contractors, subcontract brick cleaners and stonemasons</li> <li>Absence of documented WHS objectives, targets and key performance indicators for high-risk chemical and masonry work</li> <li>Poor integration of brick and masonry cleaning risks into the broader construction project WHS management plan</li> <li>No formal process to verify that all PCBUs involved in brick cleaning, efflorescence treatment and brick/stone replacement are meeting their primary duty of care</li> </ul>	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish and document a WHS governance framework that specifically references brick and masonry cleaning, efflorescence treatment and replacement works, aligned to WHS Act 2011 and relevant state WHS Regulations</li> <li>Define and document WHS roles, responsibilities and authorities for project managers, site supervisors, subcontract brick cleaners, stonemasons, labour hire workers and principal contractor representatives</li> <li>Embed brick and masonry cleaning requirements into the overall Project WHS Management Plan, including clear escalation paths for chemical exposure, structural instability and work at height concerns</li> <li>Implement structured WHS consultation arrangements (toolbox talks, pre-start meetings, safety committees) that regularly cover masonry cleaning and replacement risks, including interface with other trades</li> <li>Require WHS responsibilities and performance expectations to be included in all contracts and subcontract agreements for brick cleaners and stonemasons</li> <li>Introduce WHS performance indicators specific to masonry cleaning (e.g. chemical incident rate, property damage incidents to masonry, near misses from falling debris) and review at management meetings</li> <li>Undertake periodic WHS governance audits to verify implementation of policies, consultation processes and consultation arrangements related to masonry activities</li> <li>Ensure coordination of duties between multiple PCBUs on site using written WHS coordination plans that address overlapping duties during cleaning, efflorescence remediation and brick replacement</li> </ul>	Medium
2. Risk Management Framework and Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of systematic risk identification for chemical brick cleaning, efflorescence treatment and brick/stone replacement activities</li> <li>Failure to consider non-routine work such as remedial cleaning, repairs work or rework of defective masonry</li> <li>Inadequate consideration of interactions with other high-risk construction work (e.g. scaffolding, powered mobile plant, overhead work)</li> <li>No structured process to review risk assessments when chemicals, cleaning methods or masonry systems change</li> <li>Project deadlines driving work to proceed without adequate planning or review of existing controls</li> </ul>	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement a documented WHS risk management procedure consistent with WHS Regulations, requiring formal risk assessments for brick and masonry cleaning and associated remediation tasks</li> <li>Develop standard risk assessment templates that explicitly address high-risk elements: corrosive chemicals, pressurised water, falling objects, structural stability, working at heights and confined spaces where relevant</li> <li>Require task-specific risk assessments (separate from SWMS) to be completed and approved before the introduction of new cleaning products, efflorescence treatment methods or replacement techniques</li> <li>Ensure risk assessments take into account site-specific conditions such as façade height, access systems, weather exposure, adjacent public areas and heritage or fragile masonry</li> <li>Mandate review and update of risk assessments when incidents, near misses, changes in chemicals, plant, building design or sequencing of trades occur</li> <li>Integrate risk management outputs into construction planning meetings so that sequencing of brick cleaning and replacement activities avoids clashes with other high-risk work</li> <li>Include consultation with brick cleaners, stonemasons and HSRs in the development and review of all risk assessments to ensure practical and realistic controls</li> <li>Maintain a central, version-controlled repository of all masonry-related risk assessments accessible to supervisors and workers</li> </ul>	Medium

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3. Procurement and Selection of Chemicals, Materials and Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Procurement of brick and masonry cleaning chemicals with unnecessary levels of corrosivity, toxicity or volatility</li> <li>Use of unapproved acids or proprietary cleaners without safety data sheets (SDS) or manufacturer guidance</li> <li>Incompatibility between cleaning chemicals and specific brick, mortar or stone types, leading to structural weakening or spalling</li> <li>Sourcing replacement bricks and stone units that do not match the physical or structural properties of the existing masonry</li> <li>Purchase of cheap or non-compliant containers and labelling for decanting and storage of hazardous chemicals</li> <li>No systematic evaluation of alternative, less hazardous cleaning methods or products</li> </ul>	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement a formal procurement procedure requiring pre-purchase WHS review of all brick cleaning, efflorescence and stone treatment products by a competent person</li> <li>Require current Australian-compliant SDS for all chemicals prior to approval, with verification that products are suitable for the masonry type and conditions of use</li> <li>Mandate selection of the least hazardous practical cleaning chemical that will achieve the required cleaning performance, giving preference to non-acidic or weak-acid formulations where feasible</li> <li>Require written assurance from suppliers that recommended products are compatible with the specific brick, mortar and stone assembly, including any sealants or coatings</li> <li>Specify that any containers and labelling systems compliant with WHS and dangerous goods legislation are used for transport, storage and decanting of chemicals</li> <li>Include selection criteria for replacement bricks and stone units that cover structural properties, porosity, salt resistance and compatibility with existing mortar and adjacent elements</li> <li>Prohibit procurement of decanted or unlabelled chemical products and require purchasing only from reputable, verified suppliers</li> <li>Maintain an approved products list for cleaning chemicals and replacement materials, with documented reasons for acceptance or rejection based on WHS and technical criteria</li> </ul>	Medium
4. Contractor and Worker Competency, Licensing and Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engagement of bricklayers or stonemasons without verified competency in safe chemical handling and masonry repair</li> <li>Insufficient training on reading and applying SDS instructions and manufacturer technical data sheets for masonry products</li> <li>Workers unaware of the risks of efflorescence treatments, including repeated wetting, salt migration and potential structural impacts</li> <li>Lack of competency in identifying defective or unstable brickwork and stone prior to cleaning or replacement</li> <li>Supervisors not trained to recognise unsafe work practices or early warning signs of chemical exposure and structural failure</li> </ul>	High	<p>[REDACTED]</p>	Medium

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			[REDACTED]	
5. Safe Systems of Work, Procedures and Documentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Absence of documented safe work procedures for brick cleaning, efflorescence treatment and replacement, leading to ad-hoc practices</li> <li>SWMS that do not adequately address chemical exposure, falling masonry, or complex access arrangements</li> <li>Inconsistent application of procedures across different sites or different crews from the same contractor</li> <li>Failure to control non-authorized modifications to methods, chemicals or sequences once works commence</li> <li>Over-reliance on informal verbal instructions without written confirmation or version control</li> </ul>	High	[REDACTED]	Medium
6. Chemical Safety and Hazardous Substances Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inadequate identification and register of hazardous chemicals used in brick and masonry cleaning and efflorescence removal</li> <li>Improper storage and segregation of acids and other reactive agents, increasing risk of leaks, reactions or fumes</li> <li>Lack of atmospheric monitoring where vapours may accumulate in recesses, voids or confined courtyard areas</li> <li>No systematic approach to managing cumulative exposure to corrosive or irritant chemicals over repeated tasks</li> </ul>	High	[REDACTED]	Medium

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ineffective spill response planning for acids and salt-laden run-off impacting workers, public or the environment</li> </ul>		[REDACTED]	
7. Plant, Equipment and Maintenance Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use of poorly maintained high-pressure washers, pumps, hoses or spray equipment leading to sudden failure, injection injuries or uncontrolled discharge</li> <li>Inadequate selection and maintenance of scaffolds, mast climbers, EWPs or other access equipment used during façade cleaning and masonry replacement</li> <li>Failure to inspect and maintain hand tools used for brick and stone removal, increasing risk of flying fragments and musculoskeletal injury</li> <li>Lack of formal pre-use inspection systems for water supply, electrical connections and pumps used in cleaning operations</li> <li>Unverified compatibility of plant (e.g. pressure, nozzle type, flow rate) with masonry substrate, leading to damage and subsequent structural instability</li> </ul>	High	[REDACTED]	Medium
8. Structural Integrity and Engineering Control of Masonry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cleaning or replacing bricks and stone on structurally compromised walls or façades without prior engineering assessment</li> <li>Undermining of load-bearing elements due to inappropriate removal of bricks or stone units</li> </ul>	High	[REDACTED]	Medium

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hidden defects such as corroded ties, delaminated backing or voids becoming critical after aggressive cleaning</li> <li>• Lack of a formal system for escalating concerns about cracking, bulging or movement discovered during works</li> <li>• Inadequate shoring or temporary support systems for partial brick and stone replacement works</li> </ul>		[REDACTED]	
9. Work at Height, Access and Public Interface Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inadequate planning for safe access elevated brick and stone surfaces, leading to falls of persons or materials</li> <li>• Poor coordination between brick cleaners, stonemasons and scaffold/EWP providers regarding loading, reach and tie-ins</li> <li>• Falling debris, tools, bricks or stone fragments onto workers or members of the public in adjacent areas</li> <li>• Insufficient segregation of work zones near public walkways, building entries or traffic areas during façade cleaning</li> <li>• Emergency evacuation complications for workers on scaffolds or EWPs where chemicals and water lines are in use</li> </ul>	High	[REDACTED]	Medium
10. Environmental and Effluent Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uncontrolled discharge of acidic or contaminated run-off from brick cleaning</li> </ul>	Medium	[REDACTED]	Low

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(Run-off, Salts and Waste)	<p>into stormwater, soil or neighbouring properties</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concentration and migration of salts into masonry or adjacent structures due to ineffective efflorescence treatment strategies</li> <li>• Inadequate systems for collection, neutralisation and disposal of waste water and sludge containing salts, mortar and chemical residues</li> <li>• Regulatory non-compliance with local council or environmental authority requirements for water discharge and waste disposal</li> <li>• Re-use of contaminated wash water leading to repeated deposition of salts and surface staining</li> </ul>		[REDACTED]	
11. Health Surveillance, Exposure Monitoring and Wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chronic respiratory or skin conditions from repeated exposure to cleaning chemicals, fine particulates</li> <li>• Lack of formal health surveillance where hazardous substances may cause long-term health effects</li> <li>• Heat stress and dehydration from working in full PPE during extended façade cleaning in hot Australian conditions</li> <li>• Under-reporting of early symptoms such as dermatitis, eye irritation or respiratory discomfort due to cultural or production pressures</li> <li>• Insufficient systems to manage fitness for work, including the impact of pre-existing conditions aggravated by chemical or physical exposure</li> </ul>	Medium	[REDACTED]	Low

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			[REDACTED]	
12. Incident Reporting, Investigation and Corrective Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Under-reporting of near misses involving chemicals, structural instability or falling masonry during cleaning and replacement works</li> <li>Superficial incident investigations that fail to identify systemic causes such as inadequate training, poor planning or ineffective supervision</li> <li>Lack of tracking and close-out of corrective actions, allowing recurring incidents in brick and masonry activities</li> <li>Limited sharing of lessons learned between projects, contractors and supervisors</li> <li>Failure to meet statutory notification requirements for serious incidents under the WHS Act 2011</li> </ul>	Medium	[REDACTED]	Low
13. Emergency Preparedness and Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uncoordinated response to chemical splashes, inhalation incidents or sudden structural failure during cleaning or replacement works</li> <li>Inadequate availability of eyewash stations, safety showers and neutralising agents in work areas where corrosive cleaners are used</li> <li>No specific emergency procedures for evacuation and rescue from height where workers are tethered to scaffolds</li> </ul>	High	[REDACTED]	Medium

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	<p>or EWPs with active chemical and water lines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of joint exercises with contractors to practise response to credible worst-case scenarios such as façade collapse or major chemical spill</li> <li>Confusion around roles, communication channels and site access for emergency services</li> </ul>		[REDACTED]	
14. Communication, Consultation and Change Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Failure to effectively communicate changes to cleaning chemicals, application methods or brick/stone replacement techniques to affected workers</li> <li>Inadequate consultation with HSRs, brick cleaners and stone masons regarding proposed procedural changes</li> <li>Language, literacy or cultural differences leading to misunderstanding of WHS expectations and chemical hazards</li> <li>Poor management of change processes when new products, plant or subcontractors are introduced mid-project</li> <li>Stakeholder assumptions that brick cleaning is a low-risk task, leading to resistance to new controls</li> </ul>	Medium	[REDACTED]	Low
15. Audit, Review and Continuous Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WHS controls for brick and masonry cleaning becoming outdated or ineffective over time due to changes in legislation, technology or project types</li> </ul>	Medium	[REDACTED]	Low

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited assurance that contractors are complying with documented systems and not reverting to unsafe legacy practices</li> <li>Failure to integrate findings from audits, inspections and external regulatory visits into system improvements</li> <li>Inadequate management review of overall performance of masonry cleaning activities across projects</li> <li>Reliance on lag indicators (injuries, incidents) without proactive leading indicators for brick and stone work</li> </ul>		<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	

SAMPLE

**EMERGENCY RESPONSE – CALL 000 FOR EMERGENCIES**

Ensure to have an Emergency Management Plan in place as well as adequate numbers of trained first aid staff with easy access to fully stocked first aid kits, rescue equipment, material safety data sheets, adequate access to emergency communication equipment and fire-fighting equipment suitable for all classes of fire and ignition sources.

**LEGISLATIVE REFERENCES**

RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND CODES OF PRACTICE. DELETE THE LEGISLATIVE REFERENCES FOR ANY STATE THAT ARE NOT APPLICABLE

**Queensland & Australian Capital Territory**

Work Health and Safety Act 2011  
 Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011  
 Legislation QLD: <https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/laws-and-compliance/work-health-and-safety-laws>  
 Codes of Practice QLD: <https://www.worksafe.qld.gov.au/laws-and-compliance/codes-of-practice>  
 Legislation ACT: <https://www.worksafe.act.gov.au/laws-and-compliance/acts-and-regulations>  
 Codes of Practice ACT: <https://www.worksafe.act.gov.au/laws-and-compliance/codes-of-practice>

**Victoria**

Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004  
 Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017  
 Legislation VIC: <https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/occupational-health-and-safety-act-and-regulations>  
 Codes of Practice VIC: <https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/compliance-codes-and-codes-practice>

**New South Wales**

Work Health and Safety Act 2011  
 Work Health and Safety Regulations 2025  
 Legislation NSW: <https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/legal-obligations/legislation>  
 Codes of Practice NSW: <https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/resource-library/list-codes-of-practice>

**Western Australia**

Work Health and Safety Act 2020  
 Work Health and Safety Regulations 2022  
 Legislation Western Australia: <https://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/worksafe/legislation>  
 Codes of Practice WA: <https://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/worksafe/codes-practice>

**Northern Territory**

Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Act 2011  
 Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Regulation 2011  
 Legislation NT: <https://worksafe.nt.gov.au/laws-and-compliance/workplace-safety-laws>  
 Codes of Practice NT: <https://worksafe.nt.gov.au/laws-and-compliance/codes-of-practice>

**Safe Work Australia Links**

Law and Regulation (All States): <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/law-and-regulation>  
 Model Codes of Practice: <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/resources-publications/model-codes-of-practice>

**South Australia**

Work Health and Safety Act 2012 (SA)  
 Work Health and Safety Regulations 2012 (SA)  
 Legislation for SA: <https://www.safework.sa.gov.au/resources/legislation>  
 Codes of Practice for SA: <https://www.safework.sa.gov.au/workplaces/codes-of-practice#COPs>

**Model Codes of Practice**

- Managing noise and preventing hearing loss at work
- Confined spaces
- Labelling of workplace hazardous chemicals
- Managing risks of hazardous chemicals in the workplace
- Welding processes
- First aid in the workplace
- Managing the risk of falls at workplaces
- Hazardous manual tasks
- Managing the risk of falls in housing construction
- Managing electrical risks in the workplace
- Demolition work
- Excavation work
- Work health and safety consultation, cooperation and coordination
- Managing the work environment and facilities
- How to manage work health and safety risks
- Managing risks of plant in the workplace
- Construction work

**Tasmania**

Work Health and Safety Act 2012  
 Work Health and Safety (Transitional and Consequential Provisions) Act 2012  
 Work Health and Safety Regulations 2012  
 Work Health and Safety (Transitional) Regulations 2012  
 Legislation for TAS: <https://worksafe.tas.gov.au/topics/laws-and-compliance/acts-and-regulations>  
 Codes of Practice for TAS: <https://worksafe.tas.gov.au/topics/laws-and-compliance/codes-of-practice>

Details of permits, licenses or access required by regulatory bodies (add or delete as required):

- Permits from local council
- Authorisation to commence work
- Any required documents.