

Exterior Cleaning Pressure Washing and Graffiti

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:	Title:	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			Elimination Remove the hazard.	
LIKELY	2 MODERATE	3 HIGH	3 HIGH	4 ACUTE	4 ACUTE	4A ACUTE	DO NOT PROCEED	Substitution 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.	Engineering Isolate the hazard	
RARE	1 LOW	1 LOW	2 MODERATE	3 HIGH	3 HIGH	1L LOW	Monitor and keep records.	Administrative Change	
								PPE	

Risk Rating & Required Action:	
4A	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.
3H	Review and approve additional controls before task starts. Senior supervisor sign-off needed.
2M	Ensure all nominated controls are in place and effective. Proceed with caution; monitor conditions.
1L	Proceed, following standard operating procedures. Monitor and keep records.

Consequence Scale:			
Consequence	People (injury/illness)	Project / Assets	Compliance / Reputation
Catastrophic	Fatality or permanent total disability	project shutdown	Significant regulator intervention; criminal prosecution
Major	Serious injury/illness (hospital > 5 days)	critical delay	Improvement notice; major media coverage
Moderate	Medical-treatment injury; lost-time > 1 day	moderate delay	Minor breach; adverse client comment
Minor	First-aid only, no lost time	negligible delay	Isolated non-conformance
Insignificant	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 Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of a documented WHS management system for exterior cleaning and graffiti removal activities Unclear WHS roles, responsibilities and delegations for managers, leading hands and workers Inadequate consultation with workers about pressure washing, ice-blasting and chemical use risks as required under WHS Act 2011 Failure to provide accessible WHS policies and procedures to labour hire, subcontractors and new starters Poor worker participation in risk assessments, leading to unreported hazards on building façades, roofs and underground carparks Inadequate issue-resolution procedure for safety concerns raised at sites (e.g. unsafe access to chimneys or rooftops) 	4A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop, implement and maintain a WHS management system aligned with WHS Act 2011, WHS Regulations and relevant Codes of Practice for exterior cleaning operations Define and document WHS roles, responsibilities and accountabilities for officers, managers, supervisors and workers in position descriptions and WHS procedures Establish a formal WHS consultation framework (toolbox talks, HSRs, WHS committee) specifically including pressure washing, graffiti removal and rooftop work Ensure all workers, subcontractors and labour hire personnel receive site- and task-specific WHS induction covering exterior and underground cleaning hazards Implement a documented hazard and incident reporting procedure with clear escalation, investigation and closure timeframes Review WHS policies and procedures at least annually or after significant incidents, with worker input and communication of changes 	3H
2. Contractor, Subcontractor and Labour Hire Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement of subcontractors for façade, chimney or rooftop work without adequate WHS prequalification Inconsistent safety standards and procedures between contractor and subcontractors Poor oversight of subcontractor competency when operating high-pressure, ice-blasting or chemical cleaning machinery Lack of clarity regarding who controls and supervises work in underground carparks or multi-tenant premises Inadequate verification of licences, high-risk work authorisations and insurance coverage Failure to ensure subcontractors conduct compatible risk assessments and SWMS for high-risk construction work 	4A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a contractor management procedure requiring WHS prequalification, including safety history, systems documentation and references Use written contracts that clearly allocate WHS duties, consultation arrangements and site control responsibilities in line with WHS Act 2011 PCBU obligations Require subcontractors and labour hire providers to submit evidence of worker competencies, high-risk work licences and plant training records prior to engagement Mandate that all high-risk activities (e.g. work at height on roofs, chimney access, use of EWP, confined or poorly ventilated underground carparks) have approved SWMS Conduct periodic audits and field verifications of subcontractor compliance with agreed WHS procedures and site rules Establish a process for joint planning meetings before complex jobs involving multiple PCBUs (e.g. shared underground carparks or large building façades) 	3H

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3. Worker Competency, Induction and Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inadequate training in high-pressure water, ice-blasting and mechanical sweeping plant operation Lack of competency in safe work at height for roof and chimney cleaning or façade access systems Poor understanding of chemical hazards associated with harsh graffiti removal substances Insufficient familiarity with underground carpark ventilation, lighting limitations and traffic patterns Workers unaware of emergency procedures for spills, plant failure or contact with live electrical installations No systematic verification of training currency or language barriers affecting training effectiveness 	4A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a competency framework detailing required qualifications, skills and experience for pressure washing, ice-blasting, rooftop and graffiti removal roles Provide task-specific training on safe plant operation, limitations, lock-out procedures, and interaction with other site activities Ensure all workers who may work at height are trained in fall prevention, use of fall protection systems and relevant Australian Standards Deliver chemical safety training including SDS interpretation, decanting, dilution, storage and disposal for graffiti removal and cleaning agents Include underground and enclosed space awareness in induction, covering ventilation, vehicle exhaust risks and emergency egress routes Implement a system to record, verify and periodically refresh competencies, including addressing literacy, numeracy and language needs 	2M
4. Plant and Equipment Procurement, Design and Guarding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Procurement of pressure washers, ice-blasters and sweepers without adequate safety features or guarding Incompatibility between plant design and intended use on elevated façades, roofs and confined underground areas Use of non-compatible high-pressure hoses, fittings or lances prone to failure and fluid injection risk Insufficient noise and vibration control engineering on larger sweepers and pressure washing units Lack of emergency stop controls, dead-man switches or interlocks on mobile cleaning machinery Failure to consider water run-off containment and electrical isolation in plant design 	4A	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	2M
5. Plant Maintenance, Inspection and Pre-Start Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Failure of high-pressure hoses, couplings or lances due to inadequate inspection regimes 	4A	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	2M

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unreliable sweepers or ice-blasting equipment causing unexpected breakdowns and unsafe improvisation • Bypassing or deterioration of safety devices such as guards, interlocks or emergency stops • Blocked or malfunctioning nozzles leading to unstable reaction forces or erratic spray patterns • Maintenance records not kept, making it difficult to identify systemic plant issues • Lack of standardised pre-start checks for rooftop access equipment, vacuum recovery units or underground carpark cleaning plant 		<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	
6. Work at Height and Building Access Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate planning for rooftop, chimney and façade access leading to falls from height • Use of improvised or unsuitable access methods (e.g. leaning ladders for extended façade cleaning) • Failure to inspect anchor points, guardrails, platform or rope access systems before use • Lack of exclusion zones below overhead cleaning leading to falling object risk to the public • Poor coordination with building owners regarding roof access hatches, fragile surfaces or skylights • No documented rescue plan for suspended or injured workers at height 	4A	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	2M
7. Traffic, Pedestrian and Public Interface Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncontrolled interaction between cleaning plant and public vehicles in carparks, driveways and underground parking • Pedestrian slips, trips and falls due to wet or obstructed footpaths and pavements during cleaning 	4A	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	2M

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public exposure to high-pressure spray, flying debris or chemical mist during façade and graffiti removal Inadequate management of shared zones with delivery vehicles, residents and other contractors Poor visibility in underground parking areas leading to collisions with sweepers or pressure washing vehicles Ineffective signage and barricading around work zones 		[REDACTED]	
8. Electrical, Water and Utility Interface	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact between high-pressure water or ice-blasting spray and live electrical installations on façades or roofs Use of non-RCD-protected electrical equipment in wet environments such as driveways and underground carparks Uncontrolled use of water near electrical switchboards, lighting, EV chargers or carpark ventilation system Damage to underground utilities or drainage from high-pressure cleaning or mechanical sweeping Cross-connection or backflow into potable water systems during pressure washer hookup Inadequate liaison with building management about isolation of sensitive equipment prior to cleaning 		[REDACTED]	2M
9. Chemical Procurement, Handling and Graffiti Removal Substances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of harsh graffiti removal chemicals without adequate hazard assessment Incompatible chemical storage leading to fire, fume or reaction risk Lack of current Safety Data Sheets (SDS) and unclear instructions for dilution and application Inadequate systems for spill management on footpaths, driveways and underground parking areas 	4A	[REDACTED]	2M

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uncontrolled aerosolisation or misting of solvents affecting workers, occupants and the public Improper disposal of chemical residues and contaminated wash-water into stormwater drains 		[REDACTED]	
10. Environmental and Water Management Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uncontrolled run-off from façade, pavement and driveway cleaning entering stormwater systems Sediment, oils and chemicals from parking lot sweeping being released to the environment Noise impacts from high-pressure cleaners and sweepers on neighbouring properties, especially at night Ice-blasting residue or meltwater affecting nearby property or public pathways Non-compliance with council permits for footpath and pavement cleaning or after-hours works Inadequate planning for waste segregation and disposal from underground carpark and rooftop cleaning 	3H	[REDACTED]	2M
11. Exposure to Physical, Chemical and Biological Agents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prolonged exposure to vibration and noise from pressure washers, sweepers and ice-blasting machinery Inhalation of aerosols, dust, exhaust fumes or chemical vapours, particularly in underground carparks Skin and eye contact with corrosive or irritant graffiti removal substances Exposure to biological contaminants such as bird droppings on roofs and façades, or waste in carparks Heat stress or cold stress during extended exterior cleaning in extreme weather Inadequate systems to monitor cumulative exposures or health effects 	3H	[REDACTED]	2M

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12. Manual Tasks, Ergonomics and Work Organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repetitive or sustained awkward postures while cleaning façades, chimneys or high walls • Handling and manoeuvring heavy hoses, pressure washers and ice-blasting units on uneven pavements and roofs • Pushing and operating parking lot sweepers over extended periods without adequate rest • Poor job design leading to excessive overtime or rushed work to meet client timeframes • Inadequate provision of mechanical aids or hose management systems • Insufficient consideration of individual worker capacity or pre-existing injuries 	3H	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	2M
13. Fatigue, Remote and After-Hours Work Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extended work hours and early starts to complete large carparks, facades or underground areas outside business hours • Driving fatigue when travelling between multiple client sites with heavy equipment • Reduced supervision and safety support during night or weekend cleaning • Working alone in remote or poorly occupied areas such as rooftops, chimneys or underground carparks • Impaired decision-making due to cumulative fatigue over busy periods • Inadequate systems for checking worker wellbeing and location 	3H	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	2M
14. Site-Specific Planning, Permits and Client Liaison	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commencing work without adequate understanding of site-specific risks on façades, roofs or underground carparks • Failure to obtain or comply with permits for hot works, confined spaces, out-of-hours access or street/footpath occupation 	4A	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	2M

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflicting activities with other contractors, building tenants or carpark users • Inaccurate or incomplete information from clients regarding structural integrity, drainage or access constraints • Uncontrolled changes to scope during works leading to unassessed risks (e.g. moving from pavement to rooftop cleaning) • Lack of documented site access and security arrangements for after-hours cleaning 		[REDACTED]	
15. Emergency Preparedness and Incident Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate preparedness for medical emergencies, falls from height or chemical exposures during cleaning • Lack of site-specific emergency procedures for underground or multi-storey carparks • Insufficient first aid resources or training of first aiders on mobile crews • Delayed emergency response due to unclear address details or access routes in large complexes • Poor incident reporting and investigation practices leading to repeat events • No process to capture and report near-miss data from pressure washing or graffiti removal activities 	3H	[REDACTED]	2M
16. Documentation, Records and Continuous Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate documentation of risk assessments, SWMS and plant maintenance for exterior and graffiti cleaning activities • Loss of critical records such as training, inspections or permits affecting legal defensibility under WHS Act 2011 • Outdated procedures that do not reflect current equipment, chemicals or work methods 	3H	[REDACTED]	1L

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to analyse incident trends, near misses or audit findings to identify systemic issues • Inconsistent implementation of safety standards across different crews or regions • Poor change management when introducing new plant such as ice-blasting units or automated sweepers 		<div style="background-color: black; height: 15px; width: 100%;"></div> <div style="background-color: black; height: 15px; width: 100%;"></div>	

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.