Water Damage Restoration

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

THIS RISK ASSESSMENT IS APPROVED BY THE PCBU OF THE 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:

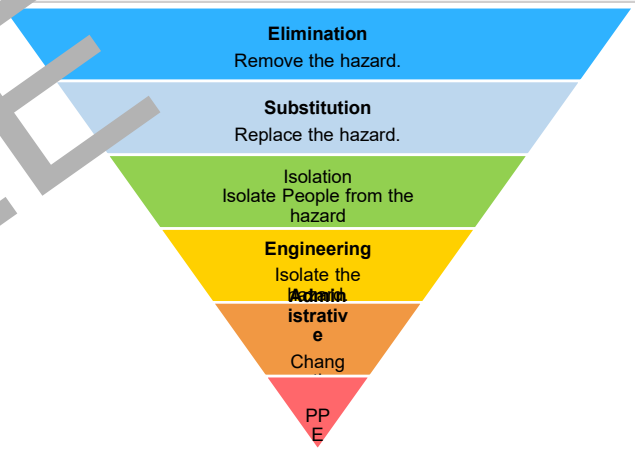
CLIENT OR PRINCIPAL CONTRACTOR DETAILS

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
ALMOST CERTAIN	3 HIGH	3 HIGH	4 ACUTE	4 ACUTE	4 ACUTE		
LIKELY	2 MODERATE	3 HIGH	3 HIGH	4 ACUTE	4 ACUTE	4A ACUTE	DO NOT PROCEED
POSSIBLE	1 LOW	2 MODERATE	3 HIGH	4 ACUTE	4 ACUTE	3H HIGH	Rev before work
UNLIKELY	1 LOW	1 LOW	2 MODERATE	3 HIGH	4 ACU	2M MO RATE	Ensure control measures in place.
RARE	1 LOW	1 LOW	2 MODERATE	3 HIGH	3 H	1L LOW	Monitor and keep records.

HIERARCHY OF CONTROLS



Risk Rating & Required Action:

4A	Stop work. The risk is intolerable. E inate the hazar redesign the activity before proceeding. A Safe Work Method Statement (SWMS) or hi er-level authorisati is required.
3H	Review and approve additional c rols b ask arts. Senior supervisor sign-off needed.
2M	Ensure all nominated controls are in ace and effe ive. 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. Governance, Legal Compliance and WHS Duties	• Failure to recognise and discharge primary duty of care under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 for water damage restoration activities • Inadequate WHS governance framework for projects involving large volumes of water and building fabric repair (including drywall/gyprock) • Lack of documented WHS policy, responsibilities and delegations for officers, managers, supervisors and workers • Insufficient consultation with workers and Health and Safety Representatives about water damage restoration risks and controls • Inadequate consideration of WHS legal duties in contractor and subcontractor arrangements (particularly for specialised drying and demolition trades) • Poor integration of WHS requirements into business planning, budgeting and resource allocation • Failure to maintain due diligence by officers (e.g. not acting on up-to-date knowledge of flood and water-damage specific risks, mould, electrical, structural and psychosocial hazards)	High	• Establish and maintain a documented WHS management system aligned with the Work Health and Safety Act 2011, Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011 and relevant Codes of Practice (e.g. Managing the Risk of Falls, Hazardous Manual Tasks, Confined Spaces, Electrical Risks at the Workplace, Managing Psychosocial Hazards) • Define and document WHS roles, responsibilities and accountabilities for officers, managers, supervisors, workers and contractors specifically addressing water damage restoration and building repair activities • Implement a formal WHS legal register capturing key WHS Act and Regulation duties, applicable Australian Standards (e.g. AS/NZS 4801 / ISO 45001 principles, AS 3740 for waterproofing, relevant electrical and plumbing standards) and client requirements for water damage restoration • Require officers to demonstrate due diligence through regular WHS reporting, review of incident trends on water damage jobs, and documented participation in WHS risk reviews • Embed WHS criteria into contractor selection, contracts and performance reviews, including requirements for evidence of a WHS management system, insurance, training records and method statements for water and moisture restoration • Implement structured worker consultation mechanisms (toolbox talks, safety committees, HSR feedback channels) specifically addressing large-scale water handling, mould risks and drywall repair processes • Mandate project-specific WHS risk assessments and job planning for significant water damage restoration jobs (e.g. multi-storey, extensive saturation, electrical and structural impact) before commencement • Schedule periodic internal audits and management reviews of the WHS management system with focus on water damage restoration projects, including follow-up of non-conformances and corrective actions • Ensure WHS policies and procedures are easily accessible, kept current, and communicated to all relevant parties through inductions, briefings and digital platforms	Medium
2. Risk Management, Planning and Job Control	• Inconsistent or informal risk assessment processes for properties affected by large amounts of water (floods, burst pipes, storm ingress) • Failure to identify hidden hazards such as compromised electrical systems, structural instability, asbestos-containing materials behind wet drywall, and biological contamination (mould, sewage, stagnant water) • Inadequate consideration of cumulative risks across multiple trades (demolition,	High	• Implement a formal risk management procedure consistent with WHS Regulation Part 3.1, requiring structured hazard identification, risk assessment and control selection for each significant water damage restoration project • Develop standardised risk assessment templates for water-affected properties that prompt consideration of electrical risks, structural integrity, hazardous materials, mould and indoor air quality, manual tasks, slips, trips and psychosocial stressors • Establish clear risk criteria and decision trees to trigger escalation to structural engineers, licensed electricians, occupational hygienists or other specialists before work proceeds in high-risk environments • Introduce a project planning protocol addressing scope of wet areas, likely duration of drying, phases of demolition and repair, access/egress, power supply management and controls for multiple contractors on site	Medium

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	drying equipment setup, electrical work, carpentry, painting) • Poor planning of sequencing for water extraction, drying, demolition and drywall repair leading to unsafe overlaps and congestion • No formal criteria to determine when specialist engineering, hygienist or electrical assessments are required • Insufficient planning for remote or after-hours jobs where support, supervision and emergency response are limited • Lack of structured review of previous incident, near-miss and property damage data for continuous improvement		• Require pre-start WHS planning meetings for complex or large-scale water incidents, including coordination of roles, communication channels and emergency arrangements • Use a digital job management system to record risk assessments, photos of affected areas, approvals and control measures, ensuring traceability and real-time updates • Establish a formal change management process for significant variations in conditions (e.g. worsening structural damage, new contamination evidence, power restoration) including reassessment of risks and controls • Incorporate learnings from previous incidents, near misses and client complaints into updated risk assessment checklists and planning guidance for water damage work • Ensure planning considers community and public safety for works in occupied buildings, multi-residential dwellings and public facilities including access control, isolation zones and communication with occupants	
3. Competency, Training and Supervision	• Workers and supervisors lacking specific knowledge of water damage mechanisms, moisture behaviour and safe restoration practices including drywall repair • Insufficient training on WHS legislative duties, risk management and emergency procedures in water affected environments • Inadequate understanding of electrical hazards in wet structures and the limitations of equipment such as RCDs and portable generators • Limited knowledge of mould growth, microbial contamination, and appropriate containment and remediation approaches • Poor competency in using moisture meters, thermal imaging and other assessment tools leading to misjudgement of residual moisture in drywall and structural elements • Inadequate supervision of new or labour-hire workers on high-risk tasks such as demolition of saturated walls and ceilings	High	• Develop and implement a competency framework for water damage restoration roles, including required qualifications, licences, experience and task-specific competencies (e.g. moisture assessment, containment setup, drywall repair) • Provide formal induction and ongoing refresher training on WHS Act 2011 duties, company WHS procedures, risk management, emergency response and incident reporting requirements • Deliver targeted technical training on water damage science, building materials response, drying principles, and correct methods for repair and replacement of water-damaged drywall and insulation systems • Ensure workers receive training on recognition and control of electrical hazards in wet environments including isolation protocols, lock-out/tag-out requirements and coordination with licensed electricians • Provide training on identification and control of mould and microbial contamination, including use of containment, negative pressure, HEPA filtration and appropriate cleaning and disposal methods • Require competency-based training and recorded verification for operation of pumps, wet vacuums, dehumidifiers, air movers, negative air units, generators and any height access equipment • Implement a structured supervision regime where new, young or inexperienced workers are closely supervised during high-risk phases such as removal of ceiling linings, cutting out saturated gyprock and working in partially demolished rooms • Maintain centralised, auditable training and competency records, with expiry tracking for licences and mandatory refresher training • Evaluate effectiveness of training through field observations, audits and incident trend analysis, updating training materials where competency gaps are identified	Medium

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	• Failure to maintain training records and competency verification for specialised plant (e.g. high-capacity pumps, negative air machines, elevated work platforms)			
4. Plant, Equipment and Technology Management	• Use of unsuitable or poorly maintained pumps, wet vacuums, dehumidifiers and air movers when handling large amounts of water • Electrical equipment used in wet areas without appropriate IP rating, testing and tagging or RCD protection • Inadequate capacity planning for drying equipment leading to prolonged dampness, mould growth and structural deterioration • Improper installation or positioning of negative air units, ducting and temporary power cabling creating trip, entanglement and fire hazards • Failure of equipment during critical remediation activities due to poor maintenance, lack of spare capacity or unavailability of replacement parts • Noise, vibration and heat from high-capacity equipment resulting in worker fatigue and potential hearing damage if not managed • Inadequate systems for safe use, inspection and maintenance of tools used to cut and remove water-damaged drywall, framing and fixings	High	[redacted]	Medium
5. Contractor, Subcontractor and Labour-Hire Management	• Engagement of contractors for demolition, electrical, plumbing, carpentry or painting without adequate verification of WHS capability for water damage environments • Unclear allocation of WHS duties between PCBUs working together on the	High	[redacted]	Medium

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	same water-affected site leading to gaps in risk controls • Inconsistent induction of contractors and labour-hire workers into site-specific water damage risks and procedures, including hidden hazards behind damp drywall • Divergent work methods and standards among multiple trades causing conflicting controls and unsafe interfaces • Inadequate monitoring of contractor performance, including failure to follow agreed risk assessments and safe work procedures • Language barriers or literacy limitations resulting in poor understanding of WHS expectations, particularly for labour-hire staff on demolition and clean-up tasks		[redacted]	
6. Structural Integrity, Building Services and Hazardous Materials Management	• Failure to recognise structural weakening of walls, ceilings and floors as a result of prolonged wet saturation, particularly where drywall, timber framing and fixings are compromised • Inadequate systems for identifying and controlling asbestos-containing materials or lead-based paints disturbed during removal of wet linings • Uncontrolled energisation of electrical systems and services in areas affected by water damage and demolition works • Damage to or interference with fire systems, gas lines and plumbing during water extraction and wall/ceiling repairs • Lack of formal escalation to structural engineers when significant sagging, cracking or displacement is observed	High	[redacted]	Medium

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	• Unmanaged residual moisture in structural cavities behind replaced drywall leading to ongoing deterioration and mould growth		[redacted]	
7. Environmental, Mould and Indoor Air Quality Management	• Uncontrolled growth of mould and microbial contaminants due to delayed or inadequate drying of water-damaged materials, including drywall and insulation • Inadequate assessment and control of sewage-contaminated or Category 3 water events resulting in exposure to harmful microorganisms • Poor containment of contaminated dust and spores during removal of wet linings and materials • Odour, volatile organic compound (VOC) and chemical exposure from cleaning and antimicrobial agents used in restoration • Inadequate ventilation and air exchange when high-capacity dryers and negative air equipment is operating in enclosed spaces	High	[redacted]	Medium
8. Manual Tasks, Ergonomics and Fatigue Management	• High manual handling loads associated with moving heavy wet materials, pumps, dehumidifiers and furniture during large water events • Repetitive and awkward tasks such as overhead work removing wet ceilings, cutting out wall sections and installing new drywall sheets • Extended working hours and rapid response to emergency call-outs leading to fatigue, reduced concentration and increased injury risk	High	[redacted]	Medium

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	• Poor ergonomic design of tools and equipment used in demolition and repair activities • Lack of structured systems to rotate workers between heavy, repetitive or awkward tasks		[redacted]	
9. Site Access, Traffic and Public Safety	• Uncontrolled vehicle and pedestrian movements around affected properties during emergency response and equipment deployment • Restricted access and egress routes inside buildings due to pooled water, hoses, cables, drying equipment and stacked materials • Unauthorised entry of [redacted] visitors or members of the public into hazardous work zones where demolition and repair are underway • Inadequate planning for multi-storey and strata environments where common areas, stairwells and lifts are shared with residents and other workers • Poor management of slips, trips and falls risks from wet surfaces, temporary ramps and floor coverings	Medium	[redacted]	Low
10. Emergency Preparedness, Incident Response and First Aid	• Lack of structured emergency arrangements for incidents occurring in water-affected and partially demolished environments (e.g. collapse, electrocution, major leaks) • Unclear procedures for managing sudden structural failure during removal of saturated ceilings or walls	High	[redacted]	Medium

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	• Delayed response to injuries or medical events due to dispersed work locations and after-hours operations • Under-reporting and poor investigation of incidents and near misses, limiting the organisation's ability to learn and improve controls • Inadequate first aid coverage and equipment suitable for wet, contaminated or remote work locations		[redacted]	
11. Health Monitoring, PPE and Psychosocial Risk Management	• Long-term exposure to mould, biological agents and cleaning chemicals without adequate health monitoring or control systems • Inconsistent provision, selection, fit a maintenance of personal protective equipment for wet, contaminated and dusty environments • Psychological stre trauma and mora distress when wor g in severely damaged homes a busin supporting distresse • Workload pressures and high job demand during major storm or fl events contributing to bur fatigue and reduced attention to safety • Insufficient organisational systems to identify, assess and manage psychosocial hazards as required under WHS laws	High	[redacted]	Medium
12. Documentation, Records and Continuous Improvement	• Incomplete or inaccurate WHS documentation for water damage restoration projects leading to uncontrolled risks and poor legal defensibility	Medium	[redacted]	Low

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	• Loss of critical records such as risk assessments, plant maintenance logs, training evidence and exposure data • Failure to systematically review WHS performance and implement lessons learned across multiple jobs and events • Over-reliance on informal communication rather than documented procedures and records, particularly during high-volume incident periods • Inconsistent application of procedures across teams or branches, leading to variable safety standards			

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

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-of-codes-of-practice

Northern Territory
Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Act 2011
Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Regulations 2011
Legislation NT: https://worksafe.nt.gov.au/laws-and-compliance/workplace-safety-laws
Codes of Practice NT: https://worksafe.nt.gov.au/forms-and-resources/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

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.

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

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

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

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