

SYDNEY STREET PROJECTS

SWMS – WORKING IN UNPREDICTABLE ENVIRONMENTS
(DECEASED ESTATES & ABANDONED PROPERTIES)

Doc Ref: SSP-SWMS-005
Version: 1.0 | 14/05/2026

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This Safe Work Method Statement must be read, understood and signed by all workers before work commences.

It must remain on site and accessible at all times.

1.0 PROJECT & TASK DETAILS

Task / Activity	Working in Unpredictable Environments (Deceased Estates & Abandoned Properties)	SWMS Reference	SSP-SWMS-005
Site Address		Date of Works	
Supervisor on Site		Workers Consulted?	☐ Yes ☐ No – cannot proceed

2.0 HIGH-RISK WORK DECLARATION

☐ Structural instability – floors, ceilings, shelving ☐ Confined or poorly ventilated spaces ☐ Exposure to biological hazards (mould, sharps, vermin) ☐ Risk of falls (cluttered paths, unstable structures)	☐ Exposure to hazardous substances (asbestos, chemicals) ☐ Working alone or in isolation ☐ None of the above applicable
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3.0 TASK CONTEXT & SCOPE

i About this SWMS: Working in Unpredictable Environments (Deceased Estates & Abandoned Properties)

Deceased estates, hoarding properties, and abandoned sites present unpredictable hazards that cannot always be fully identified before entry.

This SWMS establishes baseline controls for operating in these environments.

Key risks: structural collapse, concealed sharps, toxic mould, asbestos-containing materials (pre-1990 properties), unknown chemicals, vermin, oxygen-deficient spaces, and trip/fall hazards.

A Pre-Removal Assessment (SSP-PRA-001) MUST be completed before entering an unpredictable environment.

If any STOP WORK trigger (asbestos, structural instability, gas leak) is identified, all workers must exit and escalate immediately.

Working alone in these environments is PROHIBITED without prior supervisor approval and a check-in schedule.

4.0 PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

i Minimum PPE for all SSP tasks

High-visibility vest/shirt, steel-capped safety boots, and disposable gloves are mandatory for ALL SSP field activities regardless of task type.

- ☐ High-visibility vest (mandatory)
- ☐ Steel-capped safety boots (mandatory)
- ☐ Heavy-duty work gloves (mandatory)

- ☐ Disposable coveralls (biohazard environments)
- ☐ Nitrile disposable gloves (biological material handling)
- ☐ Tongs / grabber (sharps)

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| ☐ P2 respirator (mandatory – mould, dust, asbestos risk) | ☐ Torch / head lamp (poor lighting) |
| ☐ Eye protection / safety glasses | ☐ Dust mask minimum if P2 not available – escalate to P2 ASAP |
| ☐ Hard hat (structural instability risk) | |

5.0 PLANT, EQUIPMENT & MATERIALS

Item / Equipment	Pre-Use Check Required	Condition Notes
Torch / head lamp (fully charged)	☐ Yes ☐ No	
Sharps container	☐ Yes ☐ No	
Spill kit	☐ Yes ☐ No	
Camera / phone (photo documentation)	☐ Yes ☐ No	
Hazard tape / exclusion zone barriers	☐ Yes ☐ No	
First aid kit	☐ Yes ☐ No	
Two-way radio or mobile phone (communication)	☐ Yes ☐ No	
Ventilation fan (if required for enclosed spaces)	☐ Yes ☐ No	

6.0 RISK RATING REFERENCE

Risk Rating Reference

Consequence ↓ Likelihood →	Rare (1)	Unlikely (2)	Possible (3)	Likely (4)	Almost Certain (5)
Catastrophic (5)	5 MED	10 HIGH	15 HIGH	20 EXT	25 EXT
Major (4)	4 LOW	8 MED	12 HIGH	16 EXT	20 EXT
Moderate (3)	3 LOW	6 MED	9 MED	12 HIGH	15 HIGH
Minor (2)	2 LOW	4 LOW	6 MED	8 MED	10 HIGH
Insignificant (1)	1 LOW	2 LOW	3 LOW	4 LOW	5 MED

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EXT Stop & escalate **HIGH** Senior review before proceeding **MED** Monitor **LOW** Routine controls

7.0 TASK STEPS, HAZARDS & CONTROL MEASURES

i Hierarchy of Controls – apply in order

1. ELIMINATE
2. SUBSTITUTE
3. ISOLATE
4. ENGINEERING CONTROLS
5. ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROLS
6. PPE (last resort)

Think: Entry assessment → Hazard identification → Control measures in place
→ Systematic room-by-room progression → STOP if unexpected hazard
encountered → Exit and escalate if required.

#	Task Step	Hazards & Risks	Control Measures (Hierarchy of Controls)	Initial Risk	Residual Risk	Person Responsible

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#	Task Step	Hazards & Risks	Control Measures (Hierarchy of Controls)	Initial Risk	Residual Risk	Person Responsible

(Add continuation sheets as required – reference this SWMS number on all sheets)

8.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROLS

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">☐ Site assessed before work commences – SSP-PRA-001 completed☐ Hazards photographed and documented before disturbance☐ Exclusion zones established around structural hazards☐ Mould-affected materials bagged before movement to prevent spore spread☐ Vermin / pest hazards reported to supervisor – pest control engaged if required | <ul style="list-style-type: none">☐ No materials removed before hazard assessment complete☐ Sharps placed in approved rigid container – not general waste☐ Unknown chemicals quarantined and photographed☐ Property left secure after each work session☐ Incident / hazard log maintained throughout project |
|---|---|

9.0 EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

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First Aid Officer	Nearest Hospital	EMERGENCY: 000
Name:		
Phone:		

FIRE	Evacuate > Call 000 Muster at: Do not re-enter.
INJURY	Administer first aid. Call 000 if required. Do not move injured person unless in immediate danger. Complete incident report.
CHEMICAL SPILL	Contain if safe. Prevent drain entry. Reference SDS. Do not wash to drain. Call 000 if required.
STRUCTURAL COLLAPSE RISK	STOP ALL WORK. Evacuate immediately. Do not re-enter. Call 000 if person trapped. Contact supervisor and SSP manager. Do not resume without structural engineer clearance.

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SUSPECTED GAS LEAK	Evacuate immediately. Do not operate electrical switches or create sparks. Call 000 and gas supplier. Do not re-enter until cleared by gas authority.
WORKER UNACCOUNTED FOR	Attempt radio / phone contact. If no response within 5 minutes, initiate search with supervisor. Call 000 if not located. Do not enter confined or structurally compromised areas alone.
BIOHAZARD EXPOSURE	Remove contaminated PPE carefully. Wash exposed skin immediately. Seek medical review. Incident report mandatory.

10.0 MONITORING & REVIEW

i When must this SWMS be reviewed?

Stop work and review immediately if:

1. An incident or near-miss occurs
2. Site conditions change
3. New hazards are identified
4. A worker requests a review
5. Work methods change from what is described here.

11.0 WORKER SIGN-ON

i All workers must sign before starting

By signing, each worker confirms they have READ this SWMS in full, UNDERSTOOD all hazards and controls and AGREE to work in accordance with it. Workers who have not signed may not commence work.

Full Name (print)	Signature	Role	Date
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