

# Essential safety measures

Essential Safety Measures (ESMs) are the safety features required in a building to protect occupants in the event of a fire.

ESMs may include fire detection and alarm systems, fire doors, emergency lighting and fire hydrants.

Owners Corporations are responsible for the maintenance of a building's ESMs. If a fire occurs, well maintained ESMs can provide residents with more time to exit the building and lessen the chance of fire spreading. ESMs require ongoing care and maintenance.

## Maintaining ESMs

All building occupants have an obligation to ensure all exits and paths of travel are kept readily accessible, functional and clear of obstructions.

Your Owners Corporation Manager, on behalf of owners, is responsible for ensuring ESMs are regularly tested and maintained. Maintenance and servicing must be completed by a professional with a good understanding of the building's ESMs.

### You should also know that:

- Annual ESM reports must be made available for inspection on request after 24 hours notice has been given by the fire brigade's chief officer or your Municipal Building Surveyor (MBS).
- If building work is proposed to alter an existing building it may have an impact on ESMs, so it's worth checking with an MBS or private building surveyor to see what needs to be done to comply with Building Act 1993 and the Building Regulations 2018.

## What happens if an owner doesn't comply?

It's important to keep in mind that non-compliance not only puts occupants at risk, but also passers-by and adjoining buildings.

Logbooks need to be filled in and penalties apply for non-compliance.

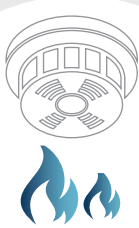
Non-compliance may result in an infringement notice being issued by your Council or the fire authority. Fines may range from \$290 to over \$17,000 for an individual and over \$88,000 if a company is prosecuted.

## Further information

If you have any questions about how to maintain ESMs, please contact your local fire safety department or your MBS.

# Essential safety measures

ESMs act as a first line of defence in the event of an emergency, such as a fire.



ESMs include fire safety systems installed to protect building occupants



They also include exit doors, emergency lighting, exit signs and fire hydrants



Adequate maintenance will ensure ESMs operate reliably if an emergency arises



Owners Corporation Managers, on behalf of owners, must ensure ESMs are kept up to date and regularly tested



Non-compliance puts occupants, passers-by and adjoining buildings at risk



Non-compliance may result in fines

All building occupants have an obligation to ensure all exits and paths of travel to exits are kept readily accessible, functional and clear of obstructions.

## Want to know more?

If you have any questions about this information, please contact the VBA.

Telephone: 1300 815 127

Email: [customerservice@vba.vic.gov.au](mailto:customerservice@vba.vic.gov.au)

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