

Check your gutters and downpipes to stay dry

The Victorian Building Authority (VBA) is urging Victorians to clean out their gutters and downpipes of leaves and debris to help reduce the risk of water overflowing into homes and buildings.

Following windy and wet weather, leaves that have blown into gutters and downpipes risk causing rainwater to overflow into eaves and inside buildings, resulting in extensive damage.

Trapped wet leaves that sit in guttering also have the potential to lead to surface damage and corrosion, with leaks making the guttering ineffective.

VBA Executive Director of Operations Alison Byrne said gutter maintenance is an important part of annual property upkeep, especially during the winter months.

“Leaf litter build-up in gutters not only increases the risk of blockages, which can result in overflow back into eaves and ceilings, but over time can cause corrosion and damage that can also prove costly to repair.

“Checking your gutters and downpipes often will help prevent blockages and reduce the risk of problems that can cause a lot of stress and cost a lot of money,” Ms Byrne said.

While clearing gutters is not regulated plumbing work, any clearing of blockages that requires the gutter or downpipe to be detached or altered must be carried out by a licensed or registered plumber.

Non-compliant roof plumbing increases the risk of leaves and debris getting stuck in gutters and downpipes, which has the risk of leading to flooding.

May data from the VBA showed that non-compliant roof plumbing was the leading cause of people lodging an official complaint about plumbing work at their property, with 40 per cent of all complaints received about poor workmanship relating to roof plumbing.

“Unfortunately, non-compliant roof plumbing is an issue that we continue to find through our Proactive Inspections Program and our Plumbing Audit Program.”

“The vast majority of plumbers do the right thing, but there is a small number who don’t take the time to check their work which leads to problems down the track like clogged gutters and downpipes.”

Non-compliant box guttering is one area of roof drainage where problems are regularly identified. To help prevent this, the VBA has been working with plumbers and builders to develop and promote education on the specific installation requirements of these types of gutters.

Installation and replacement of guttering and most roofing components must be carried out by a suitably registered or licensed plumber and a compliance certificate must be issued at the completion of any work.

Owner-builders also need to make sure that all roofing such as metallic or polycarbonate roofing, including eaves and box gutters, are installed by a registered or licensed plumber.

When checking your own gutters with a ladder, you should always follow the [ladder safety rules](#) on the WorkSafe website.

For more information about [roof plumbing and guttering](#), visit the VBA website or visit the [Find a Practitioner](#) portal to find a suitably registered or licensed roof plumber for your work.