

## Victorians warned about heater danger in homes

Victorians should keep flammable objects including towels and clothes away from heaters at all times, the state plumbing regulator warns.

The Victorian Building Authority (VBA) also reminds homeowners and renters of the need to have gas heaters serviced to stay safe this winter.

The VBA's Executive Director, Regulatory Operations, Lynda McAlary-Smith, said there were dangers posed by heaters.

"The best way to make sure your heater or any gas appliance is safe is to have it serviced at least once every two years by a specialised plumber called a gasfitter, who is registered or licensed in Type A gas appliance servicing work," Ms McAlary-Smith said.

"Hiring a professional with the right qualifications and skill set is important."

When booking service work, a consumer can ask the gasfitter about their qualifications and check the back of their ID card to make sure they are licensed or registered in Type A appliance servicing work.

Anyone not sure if they are engaging the right type of gasfitter to undertake this work can check their type of licence or registration on the VBA's [Find a practitioner](#) tool.

After they have done the servicing work, the gasfitter must provide a compliance certificate if the total value of the work is \$750 or more.

If work needs a compliance certificate, this must be provided by a licensed gasfitter.

Ms McAlary-Smith said that as well as the risk of fire, [carbon monoxide](#) poisoning is another potential danger posed by gas heaters that are not regularly serviced.

"As part of servicing a gas appliance, the gasfitter will test for carbon monoxide spillage and negative pressure – two key risks for carbon monoxide poisoning," she said.

"If the gasfitter identifies carbon monoxide spillage it must be rectified immediately as exposure can put lives at risk and the appliance may need to be repaired or disconnected."

It is also important for wood fired heaters and chimneys to be serviced regularly by a registered or licenced plumbing practitioner to ensure that homes are safe.

Victorians wanting to know how to keep their homes safe can find out more information by reading the VBA's online [safety guides](#).