

Regulator warns of silent killer in Victorian homes

As gas heaters fire up in homes across Victoria this winter, the Victorian Building Authority (VBA) is alerting plumbers and consumers to the deadly risk of carbon monoxide poisoning.

In response to the Carbon Monoxide Awareness Week (3-9 May) which hopes to increase community understanding of these dangers, the VBA is providing resources for plumbers on the responsible servicing of gas appliances through the [carbon monoxide safety program](#).

Plumbers are also encouraged to attend a free [gas safety webinar](#) this month presented jointly by the VBA, Energy Safe Victoria and Master Plumbers.

The VBA's State Building Surveyor Andrew Cialini said that despite increasing awareness of the risks posed by gas heaters in homes, there has still been far too many tragic incidents of carbon monoxide poisoning.

"Sadly, each winter sees stories of serious poisonings, close calls and worse as the silent killer of carbon monoxide poisoning strikes homes across Victoria," Mr Cialini said.

"Residents are reminded to get gas heater appliances serviced regularly (once every two years) and discuss the danger of faulty or poorly maintained indoor gas heaters with plumbers."

For plumbers, this month's gas safety webinars provide expert advice on gas safety practices for 2021, highlighting changes and issues in testing and servicing gas appliances.

For residents, the VBA also has [consumer resources on carbon monoxide](#) safety and the proper servicing of gas heating appliances.

Gas heating appliances must be serviced by specialist plumbers called gasfitters, who are registered or licensed in Type A appliance servicing work.

Consumers should ask gasfitters for their registration and licence details, which can also be confirmed on the VBA website, and 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.

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.

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

Consumers can use the VBA's [Find a practitioner](#) tool to find the right kind of gasfitter.