



Media Release

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Keep out of harm's way when keeping warm

Victorians keeping warm in the cold months need to make sure they have their heaters serviced to reduce the risk of unintentional fire.

The Victorian Building Authority (VBA) has issued an alert to all consumers that heaters should be serviced each year by a registered or licensed practitioner to ensure they operate efficiently and do not put lives at risk.

The VBA's State Building Surveyor Andrew Cialini said consumers need to be vigilant and aware of the risk heaters can pose.

"While heaters are a great way to keep warm in the colder months, they pose several risks to the safety of individuals and their families," he said.

"Wood heaters can cause a fire if they are not cleaned properly, and gas heaters pose the risk of carbon monoxide leaking into the home causing serious illness or death."

Mr Cialini said regular servicing of a heater was vital to preventing a fire or creation of hazardous conditions.

"Faulty heaters can cause fires and put lives at risk," he said.

"It's important to know that if you entered into a rental agreement from 29 March 2021 onwards, your residential rental provider must provide a gas safety check every two years."

From 2021, the residential rental provider must ensure that a gas safety check of all gas installations and fittings in the rented premises is conducted every two years by a licensed or registered gasfitter.

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, which enables consumers to confirm the gas heater is compliant.

The VBA website has a list of safety guides for consumers on the importance of smoke alarms, the risk of carbon monoxide and tips on maintaining wood heaters.

In 2018, the Victorian Coroner recommended the phase out of open flued gas space heaters without safety shutdown features. Any open flued gas space heater sold or installed in Victoria must now automatically shut down if it starts spilling carbon monoxide in a negative pressure environment.

In response, Energy Safe Victoria (ESV) have prohibited the sale of certain types of open flued gas space heaters that do not meet safety standards.

Visit vba.vic.gov.au/check to check if the gasfitter you are looking to hire is registered or licensed.

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