

Use licensed professionals to stay cool

With the arrival of warm weather, the Victorian Building Authority (VBA) and Energy Safe Victoria (ESV) are urging Victorians to only use licensed plumbers and electricians to install and connect refrigerated air-conditioning units.

Installing a refrigerated air-conditioning unit in your home or business is a complicated task and can easily cause unwanted stress and added costs if it's installed by an unqualified person.

The VBA's Executive Director, Operations, Lynda McAlary-Smith said it was important to use a [licensed practitioner](#) to install the system, to ensure things are done properly, saving you time and money.

"Installing a refrigerated air-conditioning system is not a do-it-yourself job. The consequences for getting the installation wrong could result in extensive damage to your property, not to mention potential safety risks."

"You must use a practitioner who is licensed in the appropriate class of plumbing to carry out the work to make sure things go smoothly," Ms McAlary-Smith said.

ESV General Manager Electrical Safety & Technical Regulation, Ian Burgwin, said that installers were also required to be a licensed electrical worker.

"Any electrical work involved in the installation must hold electrician's licence (A grade). Some plumbers hold both plumbing and electrical licences," he said.

"If they don't, the tradesperson must engage a Registered Electrical Contractor (REC), licensed by Energy Safe Victoria."

If refrigerated air-conditioning is being installed on upper-storey balconies, it's important to consider the placement of the outdoor unit, to prevent children climbing on them which could result in tragic consequences.

After the work is completed, the plumber must provide a compliance certificate within five days of completion, which is required for all plumbing works costing \$750 or more. The installer must also provide a Certificate of Electrical Safety if the installation includes electrical work.

A compliance certificate is evidence of certification by the licensed practitioner that the work carried out complies with the relevant standards, codes and regulations. It also provides a warranty for the installation for six years.

"There are significant penalties for people who conduct work without being appropriately licensed or registered with the VBA," Ms McAlary-Smith said.

"It's also an offence for licensed plumbers to refuse or fail to provide a client with a compliance certificate when one is required. Failing to issue a compliance certificate can lead to financial penalties and, where the conduct is repeated in nature, could even result in suspension of a plumber's licence."

A fact sheet on air conditioner installation is [here](#).

To report a case where plumbing work has been done by someone who is not a registered or licensed practitioner, or you believe you should have received a compliance certificate, you can visit vba.vic.gov.au.

You can also visit vba.vic.gov.au/check to find a registered or licensed plumber and esv.vic.gov.au to find a licensed electrician.

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