

Breaking News

A reminder of gas heating safety

This winter many Victorians are at home for longer periods due to the current circumstances of coronavirus (COVID-19) and may be running gas heaters for longer periods than usual. The Victoria State Government has reminded the Victorian about 'Carbon monoxide and gas heater safety', key messages are as follow:

- This could increase the risk of accidental carbon monoxide poisoning if domestic gas heaters are not regularly maintained or operated without adequate ventilation (fresh air).
- Carbon monoxide is an odourless, colourless gas that may cause symptoms including tiredness, shortness of breath, headaches, dizziness, nausea, weakness, confusion or chest pain if inhaled. Symptoms can be mistaken for a flu-like illness. Very high levels of carbon monoxide can be fatal.
- Before using a gas heater, check that any permanent ventilation in your home is clear and ensure there is fresh air flow into the room. Under certain conditions such as inadequate ventilation or running bathroom exhaust fans or kitchen rangehoods at the same time as an open-flued space heater can result in negative pressure which draws carbon monoxide into the room instead of discharging outside through the flue or chimney
- Gas heating should not be left running continuously overnight or for extended periods.
- Portable outdoor gas appliances should never be used indoors. Heat beads produce carbon monoxide and should never be used inside for cooking or heating purposes.
- Energy Safe Victoria recommends that all gas heaters are serviced at least once every two years by a qualified gasfitter. Some models of open-flued gas space heaters are subject to a safety alert and must be rectified as well as serviced before use
- Installing a carbon monoxide alarm is a useful back-up measure but does not replace the need for regular servicing of gas heaters.
- If carbon monoxide poisoning is suspected, turn off all gas appliances and fans, open windows and doors, leave the property and seek medical advice.

Victorian Premier statement on easing restrictions

Victoria Premier, The Hon. Daniel Andrews released a new statement on 17 May 2020 about easing restrictions in Victoria. Key messages are as follow:

- More than 50,000 tests were conducted last week. The continuing low numbers of community transmission and the high rates of testing has increased government confidence to plan to slowly start lifting some more restrictions.
- Premier asked Victorians to use common sense when it came to decide what they could do, and who they could do it with.
- From 1 June – cafes, restaurants and pubs will be able to reopen their doors to serve meals to up to 20 customers at a time per enclosed space.
- From 22 June – this could increase to up to 50 patrons.
- During the second half of July, up to 100.
- The timelines are reliant on Victorians continuing to get tested when they show even mild symptoms and, on those tests, continuing to show low numbers of positive cases around the state. Before each of these dates, the Chief Health Officer will review the rates of community transmission in Victoria, to confirm the ability to test, trace and respond to possible outbreaks and make sure an adequate safety net in the health system before the state government takes the steps outlined.
- Several precautions will be put in place to guide these changes. All venues will need to abide by existing physical distancing requirements of one person per four square metres. Tables will also need to be spaced at least 1.5 metres apart. Venues will be required to take the contact details of every customer to assist in rapid contact tracing. And there'll be other safety requirements too, including extra cleaning, staff health screening and temperature checks.
- Restrictions on other spaces within these kinds of venues – including public bars and gaming areas – will remain in place throughout June, as will restrictions on food courts.
- If you can work from home – you must work from home.

Five reasons that you can leave home:

1. hop for food and other necessary goods and services
2. access medical services or provide caregiving – for example, this includes shared parenting obligations or providing care and support to an unwell, disabled, elderly or pregnant friend or relative
3. attend work or education where you can't do those things from home
4. exercise and participate in some recreational activities adhering to the rules
5. visit friends, family and loved ones while adhering to the rules

To protect yourselves and others, please maintain proper social distance, maintain personal hygiene (especially hand hygiene) and maintain cough etiquette.

Reference:

<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/about/news-and-events/healthalerts/carbon-monoxide-gas-heater-safety>

<https://www.premier.vic.gov.au/statement-from-the-premier-39/>

Stay Home, Stay Safe, Stay Healthy!

