



# BeWell news



## Welcome to BeWell News for August 2023

In this bumper edition, we explore how to be safe around the home, whether it's managing clutter, browsing safely online, reducing the risk of electric shock or stopping the spread of infection. You'll also find advice from the World Health Organization on the importance of staying as active as you can. Any form of movement counts towards better health and can benefit your heart, body and mind.

August usually brings more frequent storms and severe weather, so follow our handy flowchart on the back page for advice on when to call the Victorian SES. Finally, we're delighted to announce we have renewed the contract with the Federal Government, and will continue to provide Commonwealth Home Support Programme services for the next 12 months.

### IN THIS EDITION

- Carbon monoxide at home
- Top tips for shopping safely online
- Ask the Nurse: Are you getting enough fibre?
- Every move counts towards better health
- A guide to preventing falls for older people
- Reduce the risk of electric shock
- Managing clutter
- LGBTQIA+ Connection Group

- Keep your information up to date
- Stop the spread of infection
- Monash Seniors Festival
- VICSES: When to call

Feedback on  9518 3553

 [communitysupport@monash.vic.gov.au](mailto:communitysupport@monash.vic.gov.au)

**Next edition: December 2023**

#### Public Holidays 2023

- AFL Grand Final Friday: 29 September
- Melbourne Cup Day: Tuesday 7 November

**Council's Domestic Assistance and Respite Services are not available on public holidays.**

**HOT OFF  
THE PRESS**

**Monash  
Seniors  
Festival**  
PROGRAM



CITY OF  
**MONASH**

## CARBON MONOXIDE AT HOME

**Carbon monoxide is an odourless, colourless gas produced by burning substances such as gas, oil, kerosene, diesel, petrol, wood and tobacco.**

Household equipment powered by gas and these other substances have the potential to leak carbon monoxide, especially if they are used incorrectly or are faulty, leading to health risks.

### Sources of carbon monoxide include:

- **gas heaters**
- **wood-fired heaters and decorative gas log fires**
- **gas cooking appliances**
- **indoor hot-water services**
- **barbecues, heat beds and patio heaters**
- **portable power generators**
- **car exhausts.**



### Symptoms

Symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning are hard to identify, and can be mistaken for flu-like illness or food poisoning. Symptoms can include headache, nausea and vomiting, skin flushing, muscle pain, weakness, shortness of breath, dizziness, loss of coordination, confusion and chest pain.

Very high levels of carbon monoxide can cause loss of consciousness, seizures and death.

### What to do

**Anyone concerned that they may have carbon monoxide poisoning should:**

- **Immediately turn off all gas appliances**
- **Open doors and windows to ventilate the area**
- **Leave the property, keeping the doors and windows open if possible**
- **Seek medical advice immediately or call NURSE-ON-CALL on 1300 606 024 (24/7)**
- **In an emergency call 000.**

**IF SOMEONE HAS COLLAPSED, STOPPED BREATHING OR IS HAVING A SEIZURE OR ANAPHYLACTIC REACTION, CALL 000 FOR AN AMBULANCE.**

### Remember

Any gas appliance can become faulty at any time. Energy Safe Victoria recommends all gas heaters are serviced and tested at least once every two years by a licensed or registered gas fitter. For models of gas heaters that should be checked by a qualified gas fitter immediately, refer to Energy Safe Victoria's safety alert list: [www.esv.vic.gov.au/update/safety/gas-open-flued-gas-heaters](http://www.esv.vic.gov.au/update/safety/gas-open-flued-gas-heaters)

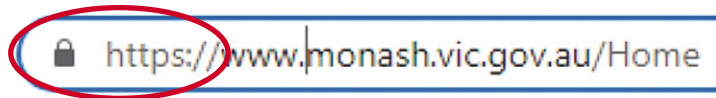
More information

[www.health.vic.gov.au/health-advisories/carbon-monoxide-poisoning](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/health-advisories/carbon-monoxide-poisoning)

# TOP TIPS FOR SHOPPING SAFELY ONLINE

## 1 Make sure the website is secure

When shopping online and trusting someone with your credit card details, look at the web address and make sure the website is using “**https://**”. This means a higher level of security for your personal data and credit card details. Most browsers will also show a lock icon to highlight the more secure system:

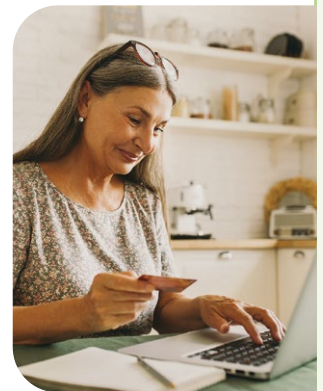


## 2 When you create an account, make sure you have a strong password

While you often do not **need** to create an account when shopping online, if you are going to be regularly buying from the same online store, it means your address and other details can be saved for quick access in the future. If you are creating an account, make sure you have a strong password to protect your private data.

## 3 Do your research – know who you are buying from

The same rules for new purchases apply online: know who you are buying from and what recourse you have if you are unhappy with the product. Buying from bigger brands often means problems can be resolved more easily, but sometimes a smaller company may be the only stockist for the particular item you're after. Check the refunds and return policy to make sure you won't have any problems returning an item. Keep in mind that if you are returning items overseas, you often need to pay return postage, which can rapidly become expensive!



## 4 Be aware of extra costs!

When you buy from a store in person, you are only paying the cost of the item. When buying online, make sure you check the postage or delivery cost before paying, as sometimes this can be very expensive - possibly even more than the cost of the item, depending on where it is shipping from. Keep an eye out for other charges and always make sure you are double checking the total before you pay for the item.

## 5 Pay with protection

Depending on your payment method, you may have varying levels of protection available to you. Most credit cards have a level of fraud protection, but it is best to check with your bank. You can also get a prepaid credit card which can be used for online shopping. Finally, if anyone ever asks for payment in cryptocurrency or gift cards, it is a scam.

## Online shopping websites

If you can't get to the shops, there are online shopping options that might save you a trip. For food shopping, some major supermarkets will deliver your order to your home. For pharmacy supplies, call up your local chemist to see if they offer a delivery service. Other grocery shops and retailers may also have home delivery options.



## ASK THE NURSE: ARE YOU GETTING ENOUGH FIBRE?

**Fibre is important for our bodies, especially for our gut health and regular bowel actions.**

Fibre is digested by the bacteria in your gut to produce substances that keep you healthy and avoid constipation. You can introduce fibre to your diet by eating a combination of the below foods regularly:



- **oats**
- **legumes (split peas, lentils, baked beans and dried beans such as red kidney beans)**
- **oats**
- **vegetables**
- **fruit**
- **seeds and nuts**
- **barley**
- **psyllium**
- **breads, cereals and pasta**

### More specific foods that aid with regular bowel movements:

#### Fruit:

- Pears, prunes and stone fruits (pears are better for long-term use than prunes)
- Tinned fruits and pear or prune juice
- Bananas can be constipating for some people.

#### Vegetables:

- Peas and corn.

#### Breads, cereals and pasta:

- Wholegrains and high-fibre are better than white
- Warm porridge in the morning helps people be regular.



**Many people find a warm cup of tea in the morning assists bowel actions.**

### If you become constipated:

- Increase your fibre intake.
- Ensure you are drinking enough water and getting enough fluids (including soups, custard, yoghurts, jelly and ice creams). Aim for 2-3 litres a day of fluid intake especially in warm weather, unless your doctor has told you to restrict your fluid intake.
- Ensure you are moving and exercising regularly, sit up properly for meals and limit lying down.
- Sit on the toilet with your feet flat on the floor. (You may need to put a stool underneath you if you are very short!)
- Reduce stress.
- Do not rush sitting on the toilet. Give yourself time.

**If the constipation continues or becomes a regular problem, please speak to your doctor about appropriate aperients/laxatives for you to use.** Coloxyl with Senna is a safe tablet that you can take to soften your faeces and assist with moving them out of your body. Movicol is a sachet medication, that is also very safe. Mix it with water to drink. Both are over the counter medications. Please see your doctor urgently or go to the hospital if the constipation worsens or you experience strong abdominal pain, as this could be an indication of a serious medical issue such as a bowel obstruction.

## EVERY MOVE COUNTS TOWARDS BETTER HEALTH

Everyone can benefit from doing a moderate amount of activity. In 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) released its 'Every move counts towards better health' campaign, with recommended guidelines on how people of all ages and abilities, including those living with chronic conditions or disability, can tackle sedentary behaviour.

Some of the key recommendations include:

**More than 300 minutes of moderate exercise every week**



**Limit too much time sitting and replace it with being active**



**Any movement counts**



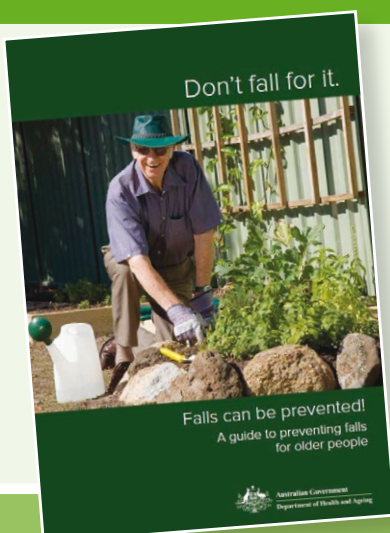
**The benefits of increased physical activity include preventing falls and fall-related injuries, as well as improving physical function, frailty and osteoporosis.**

Source: WHO guidelines on physical activity and sedentary behaviour. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2020. Licence: CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO

Read more recommendations and tips at:

[www.who.int/news/item/25-11-2020-every-move-counts-towards-better-health-says-who](http://www.who.int/news/item/25-11-2020-every-move-counts-towards-better-health-says-who)

## A GUIDE TO PREVENTING FALLS FOR OLDER PEOPLE



**Slips, trips and falls can happen to anyone but are more common and more significant as people get older. However, many falls are preventable.**

The Federal Government's *Don't Fall for It* booklet shares useful information on how to prevent falls, including:

- fall-proofing yourself
- fall-proofing your surroundings
- having a back-up plan to get help – just in case
- additional resources.

Read the full booklet:

[www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/dont-fall-for-it-falls-can-be-prevented](http://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/dont-fall-for-it-falls-can-be-prevented)

## REDUCE THE RISK OF ELECTRIC SHOCK

You can reduce the risk of electric shock in your home by taking a few precautions:

- Don't be tempted to do your own electrical work. Although you may think it looks easy to do jobs yourself, such as changing power points or switches, always hire a licensed electrician. Check Energy Safe Victoria for a list of registered tradespeople:  
 🌐 [www.esv.vic.gov.au/community-safety/working-tradespeople](http://www.esv.vic.gov.au/community-safety/working-tradespeople)
- Do not use extension leads or appliances if the cords are damaged or frayed. Throw them away if they are damaged in any way.
- Do not remove a plug from a power point by pulling on the cord – pull the plug instead.
- Keep electrical appliances away from wet areas. Electricity and water don't mix.
- Wear rubber or plastic-soled shoes when using electrical appliances, especially in wet areas, on concrete or outdoors.
- Have safety switches installed by an electrician.
- Buy portable power boards with built-in safety switches.
- Insert safety plugs into unused power points to stop children from inserting objects into them.
- If you have children, turn off and unplug electric appliances and keep them out of reach (this includes electrical cords).
- Get household wiring checked by a registered electrician, especially if your house is more than 30 years old.
- When buying electrical appliances, check they meet Australian safety standards. Be extra cautious when shopping online. Visit the Energy Safe Victoria website for how to identify the Regulatory Compliance Mark.  
 🌐 [www.esv.vic.gov.au/community-safety/buying-safe-appliances/electrical-appliances](http://www.esv.vic.gov.au/community-safety/buying-safe-appliances/electrical-appliances)
- If you plan to buy second-hand appliances, check they meet Australian standards and are not damaged. It is a good idea to have them checked by someone who is qualified in electrical repairs such as a licensed electrician.
- If you use a metal ladder, make sure it has rubber feet. When metal contacts the ground it can increase the risk of electric shock.



## MANAGING CLUTTER

**Decluttering your home can seem daunting, but it doesn't need to be. With some simple tips, anyone can reduce clutter in their home.**

**The key tip to decluttering is breaking down a big task into smaller, more manageable tasks. Breaking the task down into smaller chunks stops you from getting overwhelmed. Going room by room is also helpful.**

Try starting with a small number of items that you're not sure you want to keep. Create piles or boxes labelled 'Keep', 'Donate', 'Recycle' and 'Unsure'.

Try to use cardboard boxes, reusable shopping bags or plastic bags you already have at home. Some grocery and hardware stores have cardboard boxes you can take for free (take only what you need, a couple at a time).

### 1 Keep

- If you realise you can't remember the last time you used an item, it could be a sign that you should donate it so someone else can make use of it.
- For sentimental items, it's worth taking the advice of famous tidying guru Marie Kondo and asking yourself if the item sparks joy. If it does not, it might be a good idea to donate it to charity, or give it to friends or family, so someone else can find joy in it.

🌐 [www.youtube.com/@MarieKondoTV](https://www.youtube.com/@MarieKondoTV)

- How much storage space do you have and where in your house does each item belong? To keep track of where your 'keep' items should go, label boxes with a room or destination, such as 'kitchen', 'hallway cupboard' or 'bedroom'. Through this system, you can move things to the place they are most useful and sort out things you no longer need.

### 2 Donate

- Ask yourself whether the item you are donating is good enough quality to gift to a friend. If not, move these items to the recycle pile.
- Collect the items you want to donate until you have enough to make a trip down to your local charity or op shop worth it. Each time you fill a bag or box, leave it at your front door or in your car to remind yourself to take it on your next trip. You don't need to go through everything to start moving items out of your house.
- You can find op shops and other options for donating clothing in the Monash A-Z guide to recycling and the community directory.

🌐 [www.monash.vic.gov.au/recycling-guide](https://www.monash.vic.gov.au/recycling-guide)

🌐 [www.monash.vic.gov.au/community-directory](https://www.monash.vic.gov.au/community-directory)



**For more information or advice, please contact:**

✉ [sustainability@monash.vic.gov.au](mailto:sustainability@monash.vic.gov.au)

## MANAGING CLUTTER (CONTINUED)

### 3 Recycle

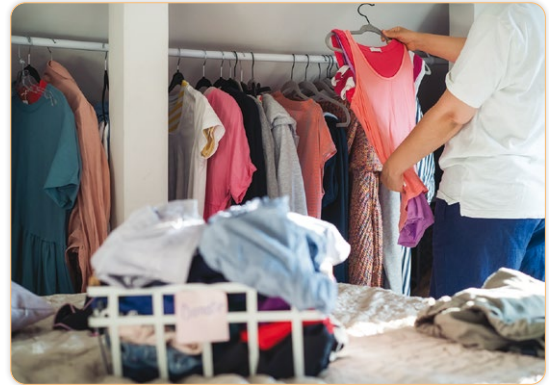
- Many household items can be recycled for free at the Monash Recycling and Waste Centre (including electronic items, paint, metal, cardboard, CFL bulbs and fluorescent light globes, batteries, polystyrene and more).

🌐 [www.monash.vic.gov.au/recycling-centre](http://www.monash.vic.gov.au/recycling-centre)

- Some clothing brands have recycling schemes in place to take back clothes.

🌐 [www.recyclingnearyou.com.au/clothing](http://www.recyclingnearyou.com.au/clothing)

- Companies can recycle clothing and textiles into new items made in Australia, guaranteeing no landfill and no textile exports (paid services).



### 4 Unsure

- Sort all the items you're unsure about into their own pile to avoid being side-tracked and get through items you are sure about quicker. Once you have sorted through everything else, then you can take as long as you need to figure out the items in the unsure pile.

**Hopefully these tips can make the journey to decluttering more achievable, while helping the planet by giving a new life to things you no longer need.**

For more information or advice, please contact:

✉ [sustainability@monash.vic.gov.au](mailto:sustainability@monash.vic.gov.au)

## LGBTQIA+ CONNECTION GROUP

**Power Neighbourhood House's a new program, LGBTQIA+ Connection, is a monthly social get-together for LGBTI friends and allies over 40.**

It's free to attend and a great opportunity to make new friends and try new things. Free tea and coffee provided.

**Address:** 📍 54 Power Avenue, Ashwood

**Email:** ✉ [office@powernh.org.au](mailto:office@powernh.org.au)

#### Upcoming dates:

- Wednesday 16 August, 5.30pm-7pm
- Wednesday 20 September, 5.30pm-7pm
- Wednesday 18 October, 5.30pm-7pm
- Wednesday 15 November, 5.30pm-7pm
- Wednesday 6 December, 5.30pm-7pm



For more information, call Cara ☎ 8849 9707 or email ✉ [Cara@powerNH.org.au](mailto:Cara@powerNH.org.au)

You can also book online: 🌐 [www.trybooking.com/CJAFP](http://www.trybooking.com/CJAFP)



## KEEP YOUR INFORMATION UP TO DATE

### Things Monash Council staff and volunteers need to know that might affect your care:

- Hospital admission history
- Change of address or phone number
- Change in emergency contact phone number
- Change in living arrangements
- If you've accepted a Home Care Package
- If you or anyone in the household is unwell
- New wounds, plaster, brace (if you have personal care)
- New mobility aid, walking stick or frame (if you have personal care).



Please contact Monash Council on ☎ 9518 3553 if any of these changes occur.

## STOP THE SPREAD OF INFECTION

We can all play our part in stopping the spread of infection. Print or cut out this notice and pin it on your fridge to remind you.

When sick with flu, colds, COVID-19, fever, vomiting or diarrhoea, to stop the spread of infection, follow the below rules:

- ⊗ **CANCEL YOUR SERVICE** by calling ☎ 9518 3553 as soon as you feel ill.
- ⊕ **SEEK MEDICAL ADVICE** by contacting your General Practitioner or NURSE-ON-CALL ☎ 1300 606 024.
- 🏠 **STAY AWAY FROM OTHERS** and limit contact so you do not spread the infection.
- 👤 **WEAR A MASK** and cover coughs and sneezes.
- 🧼 **WASH YOUR HANDS** with soap frequently.
- 🧽 **CLEAN COMMON SURFACES** if sharing spaces with others.
- 🌡️ **MONITOR YOUR SYMPTOMS** and seek medical advice if your conditions get worse.

Contact Monash Council on ☎ 9518 3553 for more information.

### LANGUAGE ASSIST

普通话 4713 5001  
 廣東話 4713 5002  
 Việt Ngữ 4713 5003

Ελληνικά 4713 5004  
 हिंदी 4713 5005  
 Italiano 4713 5008

한국어 4713 5010  
 සිංහල 4713 5020

தமிழ் 4713 5021  
 Other 4713 5000  
 languages

2-31 October 2023

# Monash Seniors Festival



**Coming  
together,  
stronger  
than ever**

**Monash Seniors Festival is back with an exciting program of free and low-cost events for older adults in Monash to enjoy.**

Celebrated 2-31 October, the festival is filled with more than 50 activities, talks, workshops and events run by Council and other community organisations.

It all kicks off with the Positive Ageing Forum on Wednesday 4 October, a fun and informative day that explores the subject of how to live and age well. Highlights include keynotes from internationally renowned nutritionist Ngaire Hobbins and Dr Emily Rosenich, as well as a mental health workshop and information on healthy ageing, nutrition, physical activity and more.

Monash Seniors Festival runs alongside the Victorian Seniors Festival, which is held annually every October. From 1-8 October this year, all people with a Seniors Myki and Victorian Seniors Card can take advantage of free public transport. The Monash Seniors Festival program is out in mid-August. Printed copies are available at Monash library branches, Monash Civic Centre and our Positive Ageing Activity Centres.

**View the program and book in for your events:  
[www.monash.vic.gov.au/seniors-festival](http://www.monash.vic.gov.au/seniors-festival) or call 9518 3555.**

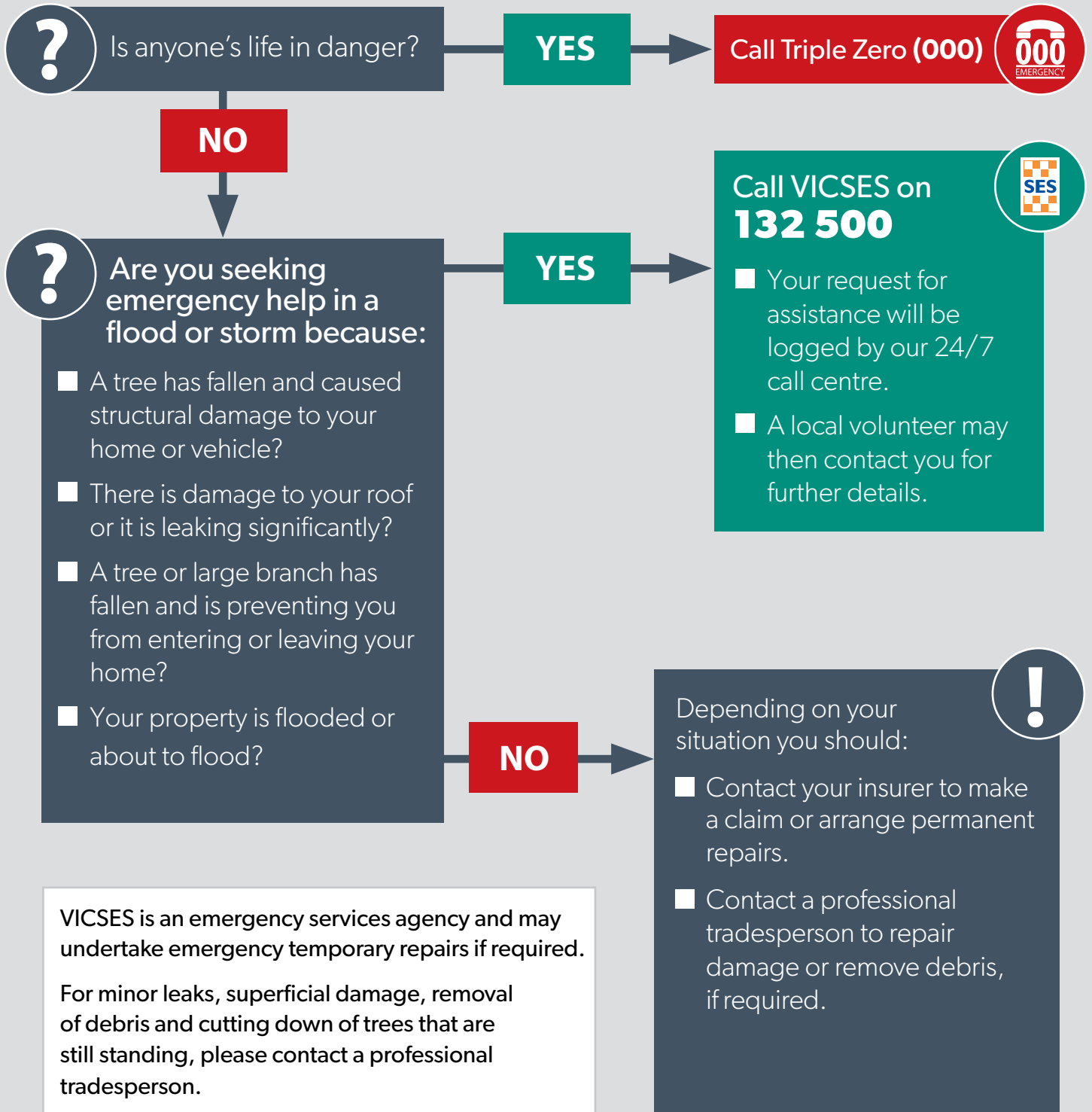
Victorian  
Seniors  
Festival  
2023





# When should I call VICSES during a flood or storm?

The demand on Victoria State Emergency Service (VICSES) volunteers during severe weather is huge. A large volume of calls mean that jobs need to be prioritised. Use this quick self-assessment guide to know when to call VICSES.



VICSES is an emergency services agency and may undertake emergency temporary repairs if required.

For minor leaks, superficial damage, removal of debris and cutting down of trees that are still standing, please contact a professional tradesperson.

