

13 February 2009

SAFETY ADVICE: CHECK INSTALLATIONS BEFORE GAS IS USED

Gas safety regulator, Energy Safe Victoria (ESV) recommends that gas supplies – both natural gas and liquefied petroleum gas – to properties in bushfire affected areas should be checked for safety by experts before being used.

It is strongly recommended that prior to using any existing gas installation a Licensed/Registered Plumber Gasfitter should be engaged to make an overall inspection of the installation and in particular carry out pressure testing.

Heat, whether it is direct or radiated, can reduce the integrity of joints in the pipe work or fittings of a gas installation and cause leaks.

The installation may also require the pipe work to be cleared of any internal debris caused by heat reaction causing scaling within pipe work.

The scaling can cause blockages in pipe work and/or long term problems with appliances in the installation.

Licensed/Registered Plumbers and Gasfitters will be able to safely determine whether there is a problem particularly when carrying out any purging or relighting appliances.

Households are also warned that Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) is heavier than air and where it escapes it will remain in depressions or within confined areas rather than dispersing.

LPG installations include the use of bullet tanks, and multiple or singular cylinders. If they have been affected by any heat whether direct or radiated, the supplier should be contacted and where necessary the cylinders replaced.

All associated valves, regulators, and the general security of the cylinder installation should also be checked by a Licensed/Registered Plumber Gasfitter.

Licensed/Registered Plumbers and Gasfitters should also check that all appliances and their associated supply and flue systems have not been damaged or blocked due to fallen tree branches and other contaminants that may have entered the flues.

Restoration work must be carried out by a Licensed/Registered Plumber Gasfitter to meet the requirements of Plumbing Industry Commission (PIC) and all associated Compliance Certificates must be issued

Plumbers and gasfitters should phone the ESV Gas Safety Technical Information Line on 1800 652 563 if they require further information.