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MEDIA RELEASE

Safety down to the wire in older homes

Energy Safe Victoria is reminding Victorians that any home built before the 1980s could contain old, deteriorated wiring that is inadequate, dangerous and can kill.

Homeowners, renovators and prospective buyers should beware of old wiring that has degraded or isn't suitable for the demands of modern use.

Victoria's Director of Energy Safety, Paul Fearon, said each year fire services respond to an average of 300 house fires and many are caused by faulty switchboards or old electrical wiring.

"Old wiring and switchboards were not designed to cope with modern usage levels and appliances like flat screen televisions, computers and air conditioners," said Mr Fearon.

"Wiring doesn't last forever and it definitely needs to be checked and upgraded if more than 30 years old."

The current popularity of old homes and do-it-yourself renovations mean that homeowners should take extra care and have their wiring checked by a licensed electrical contractor or inspector.

In one incident a Victorian man died after he touched an old split metal conduit while installing an aerial in his roof.

"If you are looking to buy a home – or if your current home is more than 30 years old – ask a licensed electrician to come and check the wiring," said Mr Fearon.

"Don't put your home or your family's lives at risk because of old wiring."

"Never check it yourself or muck around with electrical wiring – always call in a registered professional."

Registered electrical contractors and licensed electrical inspectors may be found in your local newspaper or the Yellow Pages.

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Picture: Old, degraded household wiring like this can cause fires and electrocution.

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