

MEDIA RELEASE

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Barbecue laughs without the burns

Victoria's energy safety regulator, Energy Safe Victoria (ESV) has partnered with the Clown Doctors who use humour to support children and young people as they go through treatment in The Royal Children's Hospital. The partnership will support ESV's summer barbecue safety campaign, *Look Before You Cook*.

"Often kids in hospital are scared and feel vulnerable even with the support of medical professionals and their families," Victoria's Director of Energy Safety, Paul Fearon said.

"Many parents have had the distressing experience of taking their children to hospital including quite a few ESV employees. So, it is fitting that we are able to support a charity that helps to relieve their pain.

"As part of the partnership, ESV will sponsor a special Clown Doctor clinic specifically for burns victims at the Royal Children's Hospital. We will fund two Clown Doctors to attend the clinic once a week for 50 weeks of the year."

Director of Trauma and Burns Surgeon at The Royal Children's Hospital, Warwick Teague said Clown Doctors were essential for the child and family-focused burns care provided by the hospital.

"Thanks to the art of Clown Doctors, so many kids are examined and have painful dressing changes with otherwise impossible peace, comfort, smiles and even giggles. It is magic to watch them at work," he said.

Mr Fearon said the partnership would be key to ESV's summer barbecue safety campaign *Look Before You Cook*.

"We want to see kids enjoying the summer, not laid up in hospital particularly as a result of preventable accidents such as a barbecue fire," he said.

According to ESV statistics there were as many as one barbecue fire a day during the summer months. 40 per cent of barbecue fires throughout the year are caused by gas leaks.

"Barbecues are a summertime mainstay. A simple check of the gas connections ensures you don't have leaks which can cause fires and result in nasty injuries, especially to children," Mr Fearon said.

"It is as simple as spraying soapy water on your gas connections before you start cooking. If it doesn't bubble, everything is fine. If it does then replace your gas connections, the hose, or the gas bottle."

For more information, visit the Energy Safe Victoria [website](#).

ESV barbecue safety advice:

- Use gas cylinders that are less than 10 years old

- Regularly check the gas hose/pipe connections are tight and in good condition
- Get into the habit of checking for gas leaks using soapy water
- When you have finished cooking or when the barbecue is not in use make sure the cylinder valve is firmly closed
- Never use home-made gas hoses or connections
- Store gas cylinders upright and away from heat
- Check the O-rings and rubber bull noses
- Never barbecue indoors – always ensure adequate ventilation
- Limit alcohol consumption when operating a barbecue
- Keep a fire extinguisher or fire blanket nearby

- **Ends -**

Pics available

For further information or to arrange an interview:
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