

Media Release

Energy Safe Victoria

13 May, 2022

Fire prompts ESV reminder to check electric blankets before winter

Energy Safe Victoria (ESV) and Fire Rescue Victoria (FRV) are urging the community to ensure their electric blankets are in safe working order this winter following a fire at a Mount Waverley home last month.

ESV and FRV were alerted to the fire early on Sunday, 10 April, which resulted in an elderly woman taken to hospital after suffering burns to her hands and feet.

The cause of the incident was believed to be due to a fault in the ageing electric blanket and its connections.

The incident has prompted ESV to call on Victorians to check their electric blankets before switching them on this winter, ensuring there are no creases, kinks or broken heating wires in the blanket, and the controller plugs or cords are in good condition.

If there is any damage to the electric blanket, ESV recommends that it is not turned on or used and that it is discarded. Operating damaged electric blankets can potentially result in fire, electric shock, electrocution or power disruptions.

To further prevent damage, Victorians are urged to ensure their electric blankets are not stored underneath heavy objects or in places where their heating cables and wires can be kinked, bent or broken.

FRV added that firefighters often responded to fires that could have been prevented with on average 18 lives lost in Victoria each year due to preventable house fires.

To check if a blanket has been recalled, go to the ACCC's recalls website [productsafety.gov.au/recalls](https://www.productsafety.gov.au/recalls).

For more information on electrical safety go to www.esv.vic.gov.au.

ESV Commissioner and Chairperson Marnie Williams

"We know that as winter sets in, many Victorians enjoy warming up in bed on top of their electric blankets."

"But it is important that electric blankets and their attached controllers, cords or plugs are kept in good working order."

"Damaged electric blankets can result in fire, electric shock, electrocution, power disruptions and product failure."

FRV Deputy Commissioner Michelle Young

"While the dangers of fire are very real, there is a lot you can do to protect yourself, your family and your home. People should always ensure that they turn off electric blankets prior to getting in to bed."

"Every household should consider their fire safety practices and work to reduce the potential risks around their home, particularly when winter hits."

Media contact: Adrian Bernecich 0437 729 194 | adrian.bernecich@energysafe.vic.gov.au