



Under embargo until Wednesday 13 December 2024

Holiday mode activated – home unprotected

AAMI and VICSES warn Victorians to prepare homes for storms before heading off on holidays

Silly season is upon us, but national insurer AAMI and the Victoria State Emergency Service (VICSES) are warning homeowners to prepare now for ongoing wild weather this summer – especially if they're going away.

New research released today by AAMI, shows the majority (85 per cent) of Victorians are failing to plan and properly protect their biggest asset - their home - before heading off on holidays.

When preparing to leave for holidays, the research found 42 per cent of Victorians only check the weather for the location of where they're heading to – so they know what they need to pack, and what activities they'll be able to do – but fail to do this for where they live, leaving their home susceptible to damage from severe weather.

A further 27 per cent admit they don't bother checking the weather at all before they leave because it's 'out of their control' and they are in holiday mode.

AAMI's Executive General Manager Home Prevention and Protection Anna Cartwright said it's understandable that Victorians are excited about taking a well-earned summer break, but it's vital that as part of holiday planning they prepare their home for potential summer storms.

"It's been a big year and we're all ready for a holiday, but the last thing anyone wants is to come home to a disaster zone thanks to a severe storm," Ms Cartwright said.

"Failing to properly plan and prepare your home leaves it vulnerable to the elements while you're away, which is a huge risk, and one that can be reduced if you plan ahead."

"Our research shows Victorians are too focussed on where they are going, and not thinking enough about what they are leaving behind, and what could go wrong when they're not around.

"Before heading off on holidays make sure you trim trees and branches that could potentially fall onto your home or car, clean gutters, downpipes and drains of leaves and debris, and where possible inspect your roof for damaged or loose tiles.

"Most importantly, don't forget to secure and put away loose items around your backyard such as outdoor furniture and trampolines as these can turn into dangerous projectiles," Ms Cartwright said.

Wild Weather Hotspots Revealed

To highlight how important it is that homeowners ensure their home is properly prepared, AAMI has partnered with VICSES to release the state's top hotspots for weather-related callouts in the past financial year.

VICSES responded to 31,512 requests for assistance across the state in the financial year, 2023/24, with fallen trees, building damage and flooding the most common reason, and Mirboo North, Mulgrave and



Warrnambool the top three hotspots. This equates to over 308,000 volunteer hours! More than half of the VICSES' Top 10 storm hotspots were in Melbourne's South-East, with the remaining spots spread across Gippsland, Warrnambool, Lara and the South-West.

VICSES Storm Hotspots			
Rank	Location	Region	Requests for Assistance
1	Mirboo North	Gippsland - South West	287
2	Mulgrave	Melbourne - South East	266
3	Warrnambool	Warrnambool & South West	264
4	Mount Waverly	Melbourne - South East	248
5	Emerald	Melbourne - South East	234
6	Lara	Lara and South West	184
7	Oakleigh East	Melbourne - South East	149
8	Frankston	Melbourne - South East	142
9	Clayton	Melbourne - South East	135
10	Wheelers Hill	Melbourne - South East	133

VICSES Chief Officer, Operations Tim Wiebusch said Victorians need to ensure they heed the warnings and advice messages from emergency services and prepare for storm season.

"This higher risk season, preparedness is a shared responsibility and it's important for communities to act and understand their local risks.

"Our VICSES volunteers are highly trained and are at the ready to respond this high-risk season and we ask Victorian communities to prepare now to Be StormSafe. In summer we often continue to see and experience adverse weather conditions and the best defence against these storms and severe weather is early preparation, such as having an emergency plan in place, and knowing where to go for information," Mr Wiebusch said.

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Notes to Editor

The research findings were compiled through a national survey with a representative sample of 1,000 Australians aged 18+ and was conducted by Pure Profile in November 2024 on behalf of AAMI.

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