

# What is Cladding Safety Victoria?

## Key messages

- The formation of Cladding Safety Victoria is **one of 35 actions recommended** in a report released by the Victorian Cladding Taskforce.
- The Taskforce allocated **nine specific recommendations that apply to the Victorian Building Authority (VBA)**. The VBA have accepted all recommendations and are already progressing this work.
- Cladding Safety Victoria will initially be established within the VBA, with **rectification work on 15 apartment buildings identified** by the Statewide Cladding Audit to start immediately.
- Rectification **applies only to Class 2 buildings** - three storeys or more, and privately owned buildings.
- **Cladding Safety Victoria will provide support and funding to apartment owners** to remove cladding on their buildings.
- While Cladding Safety Victoria supports owners and residents through the rectification process, the **VBA will continue its important work of identifying, inspecting and assessing multi-storey buildings** across the state.
- The VBA will continue to issue Building Notices and Orders, checking rectification work as it progresses and confirming that the completed works are safe and compliant with regulatory requirements.
- Since December 2017, the VBA's Statewide Cladding Audit team has **inspected over 2200 properties**, finding around 900 buildings that need to be rectified to some degree.
- The VBA is expecting to find more buildings that will need some work to limit fire safety risks. **Inspection of a further 500 sites will take place over the next 12 months.**
- The VBA has extensive monitoring and **enforcement programs under way**. Practitioners whose work does not meet building standards can expect the **VBA to use the full force of its regulatory powers** to stop them.

## For more information

- Call the Cladding Safety Victoria support line on 1300 456 542
- Email [support@claddingsafety.vic.gov.au](mailto:support@claddingsafety.vic.gov.au).

## Questions and answers

### What will Cladding Safety Victoria do?

Cladding Safety Victoria will provide help and support for people living with combustible cladding.

This includes:

- talking with affected owners corporations, owners and the public
- connecting owners corporations with industry professionals
- provide funding to owners corporations to complete rectification works
- monitoring rectification progress against agreed timelines.

Rectification work will start on up to 15 of Victoria's at most risk buildings. Work on all of the buildings requiring rectification is expected to take at least six years.

### What is combustible cladding rectification?

Combustible cladding doesn't start fires by itself, but it can be a factor in spreading them if they occur. Rectification means removing all or some of this cladding to reduce this risk.

### How will Cladding Safety Victoria help people who are living with combustible cladding? What's new/different?

Cladding Safety Victoria has been set up by the Victorian Government to provide a dedicated group of professionals to address this problem.

It will:

- support owners to appoint appropriate professionals
- provide funding for building works where this is approved
- provide technical and procurement support
- track rectification progress.
- work with the Victorian Building Authority as the regulator
- provide fire safety advice to builders and tenants.

### Eligibility for rectification

Buildings may be eligible for rectification if they are:

- a privately-owned apartment building (referred to as Class 2)
- audited by the Statewide Cladding Audit

Cladding Safety Victoria will fund work based on the recommendations of the independent panel of fire and building experts who originally assessed your building as part of the audit.

Every building is unique so the work required will vary in each case.

Not every building identified in the cladding audit will require government funded cladding removal.

If a building has cladding but hasn't been audited, we can refer you to the Victorian Building Authority (VBA) where you can request an inspection.

## How will Cladding Safety Victoria manage rectification?

Cladding Safety Victoria will:

- ensure all buildings referred get evaluated by a qualified fire safety engineer
- get approval from the Building Appeals Board and VBA for solutions that keep combustible cladding in place
- confirm cladding replacement designs have realistic and reliable safety measures
- certify rectification work meets legal and best practice requirements.
- manage removing combustible cladding and replacement with safe products recommended by engineers
- work with the VBA and the Relevant Building Surveyor (RBS) to inspect work
- provide funding for project management and rectification works.

## How will Cladding Safety Victoria choose the order of buildings to get fixed?

VBA will recommend priority buildings to Cladding Safety Victoria for rectification.

Recommendations are based on:

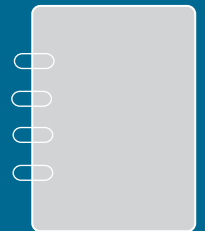
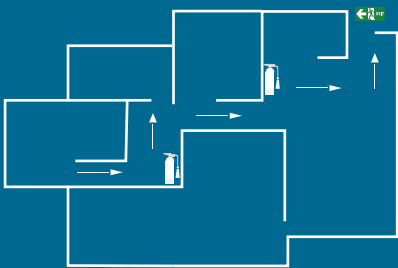
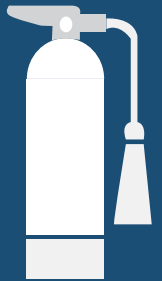
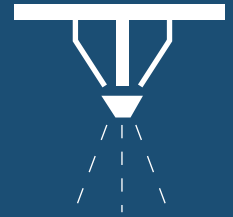
- risk
- readiness.

## For more information

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- Email [support@claddingsafety.vic.gov.au](mailto:support@claddingsafety.vic.gov.au)

# ESM Information Sheet

**What are essential safety measures (ESMs) and why are they important?**



## More information

For more information check out the VBA website at [vba.vic.gov.au/cladding](http://vba.vic.gov.au/cladding) or call us on 1300 815 127

# Essential safety measures

Essential Safety Measures (ESMs) are the safety features required in a building to protect occupants in the event of a fire.

ESMs may include fire detection and alarm systems, fire doors, emergency lighting and fire hydrants.

Owners Corporations are responsible for the maintenance of a building's ESMs. If a fire occurs, well maintained ESMs can provide residents with more time to exit the building and lessen the chance of fire spreading. ESMs require ongoing care and maintenance.

## Maintaining ESMs

All building occupants have an obligation to ensure all exits and paths of travel are kept readily accessible, functional and clear of obstructions.

Your Owners Corporation Manager, on behalf of owners, is responsible for ensuring ESMs are regularly tested and maintained. Maintenance and servicing must be completed by a professional with a good understanding of the building's ESMs.

## You should also know that:

- Annual ESM reports must be made available for inspection on request after 24 hours' notice has been given by the fire brigade's chief officer or your municipal building surveyor (MBS).
- If building work is proposed to alter an existing building it may have an impact on ESMs, so it's worth checking with a MBS or private building surveyor to see what needs to be done to comply with the Building Act 1993 and the Building Regulations 2018.

## What happens if an owner doesn't comply?

It's important to keep in mind that non-compliance not only puts occupants at risk, but also passers-by and adjoining buildings.

Logbooks need to be filled in and penalties apply for non-compliance.

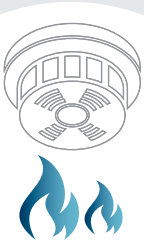
Non-compliance may result in an infringement notice being issued by your Council or the Fire Authority. Fines may range from \$290 to over \$17,000 for an individual and over \$88,000 if a company is prosecuted.

## Further information

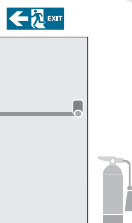
If you have any questions about how to maintain ESMs, please contact your local fire service's fire safety department or your local MBS.

# Essential safety measures

ESMs act as a first line of defence in the event of an emergency, such as a fire.



ESMs include fire safety systems installed to protect building occupants



They also include exit doors, emergency lighting, exit signs and fire hydrants



Adequate maintenance will ensure ESMs operate reliably if an emergency arises



Owners corporation managers, on behalf of owners, must ensure ESMs are kept up to date and regularly tested



Non-compliance puts occupants, passers-by and adjoining buildings at risk



Non-compliance may result in fines

All building occupants have an obligation to ensure all exits and paths of travel to exits are kept readily accessible, functional and clear of obstructions.

## For more information

Visit: [vba.vic.gov.au/cladding](https://vba.vic.gov.au/cladding)

Call: 1300 815 127


# Staying safe around combustibile cladding

Whether you are a resident, an owner, or a building manager, everyone has a part to play in fire safety.

Combustible cladding on the exterior of a building doesn't necessarily mean that your building is unsafe. However, once a fire starts combustibile cladding may contribute to the spread of fire. This not only affects building occupants, but also bystanders and adjoining buildings.

There are a few simple steps that you should follow to minimise the risk of fire and will keep you, your neighbours and your family safe.

## Plan ahead



**Check smoke alarms**  
Ensure they're not covered or disconnected



**Check fire doors**  
Ensure they're always kept clear, closed and unlocked



**Clear the clutter**  
Ensure balconies, hallways and evacuation routes are kept clear of clutter and rubbish



**Know your fire escape plan**  
Become familiar with your building's evacuation plan


## Reduce the risk of fire spreading by making your balcony safe



**Isolate your BBQ**  
Ensure your BBQ is at least 50cm from walls, clothing and other materials



**Fully extinguish your cigarette**  
Use a heavy, high-sided ashtray (made of glass, ceramic or metal)



**Isolate AC units**  
Ensure clothing and other materials are kept at least 1 meter away



**Isolate gas bottles**  
Ensure gas bottles are stored outside, upright and away from sources of heat

Most of these steps are straightforward, make good common sense and go a long way towards keeping everyone safe.

If there's a fire in your apartment, you need to alert all the residents and take the following safety measures:

- Safely evacuate the building and dial triple-zero. Tell the operator that there is an emergency taking place, what your location is, and that you require assistance.
- Meet at the evacuation point and wait there until the fire brigade arrives.
- If you feel capable in using a fire-extinguisher in the event of a fire, know where they are located and how to use them.