

Media Release

The Hon Melissa Horne MP

Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation

Minister for Ports and Freight

Minister for Local Government

Minister for Suburban Development



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KEEP SAFETY IN MIND WHEN KEEPING WARM THIS WINTER

The Andrews Labor Government is reminding Victorians to keep safety at the forefront of their minds when using heating products such as hot water bottles, fireplaces and wheat bags this winter.

As the colder months have settled in and with energy prices rising, it's understandable some Victorians are using cheaper alternatives to stay warm – which is why it's critical to always read safety labels and only use products as directed to prevent serious injury.

Greg Parsons and his wife experienced severe burns to their bodies after the hot water bottle they were using in bed exploded recently.

They were taken to the Alfred Hospital for treatment and Greg later experienced further complications – while fortunately he did not require skin grafts, he still has a long recovery ahead.

Greg has been using hot water bottles since he was a child but did not realise how dangerous they could be when used past their expiry date. He urges Victorians to consider how long they've owned their hot water bottle and when in doubt, throw it out.

To help avoid hot water bottle injuries, Victorians are urged not to use boiling water when filling up, replace the bottle as soon as it starts to look cracked or worn and never leave it on one body part for more than 20 minutes.

In addition to hot water bottle safety, it's important to be diligent around all heating products to ensure your safety this winter. This includes cleaning chimneys, checking electric blankets and using wheat bags as directed.

These measures aren't difficult or time-consuming and can mean the difference between a staying warm safely or serious injury.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Consumer Affairs Melissa Horne

"Taking a few moments to read warning labels properly could be the difference between a warm night at home or a trip to the emergency room."

"Cheap winter warmers like hot water bottles can be a great cost-effective way to stay warm during winter, but it's important to ensure you're using them safely."

Quote attributable to Alfred Health Burns Surgeon Dr Dane Holden

"A few safety precautions such as never filling your hot water bottle with boiling water, hanging it up to dry before reusing it and replacing it every 12 months will go a long way to avoiding putting yourself in danger."