

Media Release

The Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP

Minister for Energy, the Environment and Climate Change
Minister for Solar Homes



Monday, 10 May 2021

HELPING VULNERABLE VICTORIANS STAY WARM, AND COOL, FOR LESS

Victoria's most vulnerable residents will be warmer in winter and cooler in summer thanks to rebates of \$1,000 from the Andrews Labor Government to replace old heaters with energy-efficient reverse-cycle air conditioners in homes managed by community housing organisations.

Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change Lily D'Ambrosio announced that the Home Heating and Cooling Upgrades Program is now open for community housing organisations to apply for rebates for their residents.

This is an important step in the Labor Government's \$335 million investment over four years to provide efficient, lower-cost heating and cooling for 250,000 low-income and vulnerable Victorian households.

The Labor Government also announced that any owner-occupied household with a concession card, or with a combined household income of less than \$90,000 can apply for their \$1,000 rebate directly from Solar Homes Victoria, from July this year.

As well as the rebate to install efficient reverse-cycle air conditioners, an additional \$200 is available to cap old gas heaters to ensure they are safe when they are no longer being used, and \$500 for households that need to upgrade their outdated electrical switchboard, so that this can work safely with these new appliances.

By replacing outdated, unsafe or inefficient electric, gas and wood-fired heaters with energy-efficient systems that provide heating and cooling, the Labor Government is increasing liveability and comfort levels in the homes of disadvantaged Victorians and helping them save money.

By replacing inefficient heating, participating community housing organisations are expected to save their tenants up to \$680 a year on energy bills while delivering major emissions reductions and contributing to Victoria's transition to a renewable energy future.

The Home Heating and Cooling Upgrades Program is a key initiative of the *Victorian Budget 2020/21* and has been developed in consultation with organisations including the Community Housing Industry Association, Victorian Council of Social Services (VCOSS), St Vincent de Paul, Uniting Church and the Brotherhood of St Laurence.

The rebates are open to eligible community housing providers from today. More information including eligibility criteria and the Approved Product List can be found at www.heatingupgrades.vic.gov.au.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Energy, Environment, Climate Change and Solar Homes Lily D'Ambrosio

"With winter on its way, these rebates will help community housing tenants to be more comfortable, while also saving money on their bills."

"This is a part of our plan to halve our emissions by 2030. Our \$1.6 billion energy efficiency package is the equivalent of taking 6.8 million cars off the road in the next decade."

Quote attributable to the Minister for Housing Richard Wynne

"By starting these upgrades through Victorian community housing, we are ensuring some of Victoria's most vulnerable people are being put first."

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