

MEDIA RELEASE

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TRAGIC DEATH SPARKS WARNING: NEVER USE OUTDOOR GAS HEATERS INSIDE

Energy Safe Victoria (ESV) is warning Victorians never to use gas patio heaters inside following the tragic death of a Ballarat man over the weekend from suspected carbon monoxide poisoning.

The man was found dead in his Newington home on Saturday after firefighters forced their way into his property. An LP gas patio heater was found in the livingroom and investigators believe it was being used to heat the home.

Victoria's Director of Energy Safety, Paul Fearon, said the death was a tragic example of why outdoor gas appliances, including heaters and barbecues, should never be used inside.

"Carbon monoxide is a silent killer," Mr Fearon said. "You can't see it, you can't smell it and you can't taste it.

"The golden rule is if an appliance is attached to a portable gas bottle, don't bring it inside. Outdoor gas appliances are not designed to be used in enclosed spaces. Without proper ventilation, carbon monoxide (CO) can build up and quickly reach fatal levels. And it's not just the risk of CO poisoning, if you bring those things inside you can also die from oxygen depletion."

Mr Fearon said an average of one Victorian dies every year from CO poisoning, but it was also responsible for hundreds of people suffering debilitating, long-term health issues.

The symptoms of CO poisoning can include headaches, fatigue and nausea.

Mr Fearon said CO poisoning was most commonly caused by faulty gas heaters and all Victorians were urged to get their gas heaters checked by a qualified gasfitter at least once every two years.

"Energy Safe Victoria recommends that all gas heaters – including ducted heaters, room heaters and decorative log fires – are serviced at least once every two years by a registered or licensed gasfitter to ensure both the heater and flue are working properly."

"Don't let your family fall victim to this silent killer."

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