

## MEDIA RELEASE

1 August 2006

### WARNING ON SECOND-HAND ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

Victoria's electricity safety regulator, Energy Safe Victoria, urges the community to be very careful when obtaining second hand electrical goods of unknown history.

Director of Energy Safety, Mr Ken Gardner, said that ideally second hand electrical appliances should not be operated until they have been thoroughly checked for safety by a registered electrical contractor or licensed electrician or reputable appliance repairer.

The warning applies to whatever way people may acquire second hand electrical goods – whether they buy them at garage sales and “flea” markets, or pick them up for nothing from roadside hard rubbish collections or through community exchange arrangements.

Similar safety principles should be applied to appliances used every day. Check electrical equipment prior to use to ensure it is safe, and make sure homes are fitted with safety switches.

Director of Energy Safety, Mr Ken Gardner, said “Whether using a welder or a hairdryer, electrical appliances should not be operated when they show signs of damage or deterioration.

“It is important that such equipment as electrical leads, tools and equipment be visually inspected for damage before each use. If there is any doubt, they should be checked for safety by a registered electrical contractor, licensed electrician or reputable appliance repairer.

“If there is continuing doubt – don't risk it. Discard the equipment in question and make sure it cannot be recycled in any way for use by someone else.

“The simple message is: ensure second-hand appliances are safe, have been tested and are appropriately labeled. Never use damaged or modified electrical equipment and never attempt to repair damaged equipment.

“We appeal to everyone to ensure that their premises are fitted with a safety switch and to observe simple safety precautions to prevent the possibility of serious injury or electrocution,” said Mr Gardner.

#### Further inquiries:

David Guthrie-Jones / Carmel Pino  
(03) 9203 9700 or 0409 542 083

**Attachment:** *Selling second-hand electrical goods* information sheet.

For more information about electricity and gas safety visit [www.esv.vic.gov.au](http://www.esv.vic.gov.au)

## ELECTRICITY SAFETY ACT 1998

### SECOND HAND ELECTRICAL GOODS

Organisations and individuals supplying or offering to supply second hand electrical equipment should be aware of the important legal obligations imposed on them under electricity safety legislation; as follows:

- A person supplying or offering to supply second hand electrical equipment must have a label attached to the equipment stating that the equipment is second hand;
- A business – including major charitable organisations – supplying or offering to supply second hand electrical equipment must also attach a label stating that the equipment is second hand and that the equipment has been inspected and tested and that it complies with Australian/New Zealand Standard(AS/NZS) 3760; OR
- If it has not been tested, the business supplying or offering to supply second hand electrical equipment must include a clear statement on the label, stating the equipment is second hand, with additional words as follows:

**DANGER – DO NOT USE OR CONNECT TO SUPPLY – THIS ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT MAY BE FAULTY AND SHOULD BE INSPECTED AND TESTED BY A COMPETENT PERSON IN ACCORDANCE WITH AS/NZS 3760.**

This legislation is about protecting people from faulty and dangerous second hand electrical equipment, and has an important role to play in helping Victoria to maintain its excellent electrical safety record.

Energy Safe Victoria (ESV) advises people supplying, offering to supply or receiving second hand electrical equipment to use the services of a competent person, such as a licensed electrician or a qualified repairman, for the inspection and testing process.

People buying second hand electrical equipment should heed the general advice to have it checked for damage and have it tested before using it.

ESV will continue its education program and will continue to audit and monitor the activities of individuals and businesses to ensure compliance.

Individuals or businesses requiring further information about the legislation covering the supply of second hand electrical equipment can contact ESV on (03) 9203 9700, via email at [info@esv.vic.gov.au](mailto:info@esv.vic.gov.au) or at [www.esv.vic.gov.au](http://www.esv.vic.gov.au).