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ENERGY SAFE VICTORIA (ESV) ADVICE ON DOWNLIGHTS FOR PROPERTY OWNERS

As the State's electricity, gas and pipeline safety and technical regulator, ESV shares the concern of fire authorities and other safety agencies at the number of fires caused by downlights in properties.

Property owners can be assured that downlights, when correctly installed, do not pose a problem. Similarly insulation material in the roof does not pose a problem.

But, if downlights are installed incorrectly – for example they are placed close to structural timber or covered by insulation or ceiling debris – they are dangerous and pose a substantial fire risk.

Property owners are advised to take note of the following:

- Never allow electrical equipment such as downlights to be installed close to insulation material or structural components of the property.
- Regularly inspect downlights and transformers to ensure there is a non flammable / mechanical barrier installed around them to prevent insulation or other material covering them.
- Clearance of material around downlights and transformers must be equivalent to at least a hand span in width.
- When downlights are installed, insist on the use of the best quality fittings and guards.
- Following any work in the roof space ensure that all the down lights and transformers are clear of insulation or other material.
- If in doubt, contact your local registered electrical contractor or contact ESV directly on **1800 800 158**.
- To ensure there is no danger from downlights, arrange an ESV electrical Home Safety Inspection. Find out more on this website or by calling **1800 800 158**.
- For any electrical work around the home, always engage a registered electrical contractor for all electrical work, and insist on a certificate of electrical safety when the work is complete.
- Ensure there are safety switches installed on both the power and lighting circuits in properties.

New Wiring Rules covering the installation of downlights will be introduced across Australia in the next few months. The Rules will specify the minimum clearances which must be observed around downlights both for incandescent and halogen lighting products.