

# media release

SA Metropolitan Fire Service



## Have air cons serviced before summer heat hits

Thursday, 2 October 2014

With South Australia's weather heating up, the Metropolitan Fire Service (MFS) urges people to have their air cooling equipment serviced **NOW** before summer.

MFS Commander of Community Safety and Resilience, Greg Howard said it's important that air conditioners and evaporative coolers are serviced by a qualified tradesperson before long periods of hot weather hit.

"South Australia has experienced hot summers and a number of extended heatwaves in recent years, and there's potential for more this summer. If you have faulty or poorly maintained air cooling equipment, it carries the risk of overheating and causing a fire."

"It's vital that people have their air cooling equipment serviced **now**, so that it's ready to reliably withstand the months of hot weather ahead," MFS Commander, Greg Howard said.

In recent years, Metropolitan Fire Service (MFS) and Country Fire Service (CFS) firefighters have responded to more than 110 house fires caused by air conditioners, evaporative coolers and fans.

CALENDAR YEAR	FIRES CAUSED BY AIR COOLING EQUIPMENT
2014 (To date)	24 fires* (To date)
2013	29 fires*
2012	39 fires*
2011	21 fires*
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>113 fires* (2011 – 2014)</b>

\* Fire incidents responded to by MFS and CFS firefighters

The MFS **does not discourage** the use of electrical air cooling equipment over summer, as it can be a necessary health requirement. However, there are some simple tips people can follow to stay cool and comfortable safely.

The MFS advises that you can reduce the potential for fire in the following ways:

- Arrange to have your equipment serviced so that it is fully functional **before** hot weather begins.
- Electrical cooling equipment such as air conditioners and evaporative coolers should be installed by a qualified tradesperson in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- All electrical cooling equipment; both permanently installed systems and portable equipment, should be regularly serviced by a licensed tradesperson according to the manufacturer's specifications.
- Ask the tradesperson to check for faults, remove any build-up of dust or combustible material and ensure the equipment is in good working order.
- Do not leave your air cooling equipment running unattended while not at home.
- Watch for signs of your electrical cooling equipment overheating. Have a spare, well maintained fan that can keep you cool while resting overheated cooling equipment.
- If you have an older air conditioner without a regulating thermostat, consider replacing it with one that has a regulating thermostat.
- Children must be supervised when cooling equipment is in use. Keep an eye on children and pets, particularly when portable equipment is within reach.

The MFS urges householders to combine the above safety tips with interconnected photo-electric smoke alarms that are less than 10 years old and a Home Fire Escape Plan.

**For media enquiries and interviews call the MFS Media Line on (08) 8204 3770**

**Further information for the public:**

Call the MFS Community Education Department on (08) 8204 3611 during business hours.  
Country callers 1300 737 637.

[www.mfs.sa.gov.au](http://www.mfs.sa.gov.au)