



Decent not dodgy: VCOSS campaign for liveable rental homes

VCOSS is campaigning to ensure that all rental homes are safe, healthy and save energy.

There are currently no minimum standards for rental properties in Victoria.

This makes it perfectly legal for a landlord to rent out a property that does not have heating, that is not weatherproof, that has no window coverings or that has no hot water. It does not have to be possible or affordable to keep the property warm in winter or cool in summer. There also is no requirement for landlords or real estate agents to inform prospective tenants about the standard of their properties. Properties can be let sight unseen.

For more and more low income households appalling rental conditions threaten their health, safety and make heating and cooling their homes unaffordable.

VCOSS is calling on the Victorian Government to reform the *Residential Tenancies Act* ensure that all rental properties are healthy safe and affordable to live in.

Healthy living environments

This means properties should be:

- free of damp,
- weather proof without holes or gaps in the roof or walls,
- properly insulated properly ventilated, and;
- be connected to hot and cold running water and provide a fixed heater and cooking facilities.

Safe

Houses should not risk a tenant's safety. They should:

- be structurally sound,
- have windows that open and shut and can be locked,
- have external doors that have deadlocks and;
- have safe wiring including a safety switch and hard wired smoke detectors.

Affordable to live in

Old and faulty appliances, like hot water services and heaters contribute to high bills for tenants over which they have no control. Houses that are affordable to run have:

- hot water and fixed space heating that is as energy efficient as possible to make sure that it is affordable for people to heat their homes, shower and wash their clothes, and;
- low flow shower heads and dual flush toilets will help keep costs down as water prices rise.