



A MESSAGE FROM THE MANAGING DIRECTOR

Attention Building Owners in Country Victoria

Following a number of recent building inspections by AESI in Victoria's Colac- Otway area it was brought to my notice that many other Municipal Councils across Victoria are now moving to ensure commercial buildings are compliant with the 2006 Building Code. Commercial properties needing to comply with this legislation include shops, offices, warehouses, factories, and any public buildings.

Generally, a Council building inspection will be carried out when a community complaint is received or on a specific request from the Local Fire Authority. The inspection priorities are related to types of buildings with high potential for fire safety risk as follows:

- Hotels / Motels;
- Caravan Parks and Supported Residential Facilities;
- Class 6, 7, 8 and 9b buildings.

The owners of all these commercial and industrial buildings are responsible for maintaining all Essential Safety Measures contained within that building for the life of the building. Proper maintenance will ensure the building, its occupants, adjoining buildings and the public are well protected from dangers such as fire or other emergencies and is looked on favourably by insurance companies. These safety measures are required to be maintained and serviced at regular periods by a licensed tester and appropriate maintenance records kept.

I know that many of our clients have properties in country Victoria and if you need further understanding of the above please feel free to contact me to discuss.

David Hassett



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COSTLY LESSON IN BUILDING FIRE SAFETY

A group of property owners is facing a bill of almost \$500,000 to fix problems with their Noble Park apartment building, after the Victorian Building Authority (VBA) issued a building order in response to fire safety concerns.

The order was issued after an inspection revealed that the building did not have adequate fire safety measures, such as portable fire extinguishers, suitable fire exit doors, a compliant fire hydrant system and sufficient smoke detection and alarm systems. The three-storey residential building was constructed by a developer, with the 55 apartments sold to individual owners. The VBA's Director Compliance and Performance, Mr. Murray Smith, said nearly all buildings in Victoria, including houses, must meet fire safety requirements under the Building Regulations 2006.

"The problems identified with the building meant that there was a risk to life and safety for the occupants," Mr. Smith said. To comply with the building order, the owners must arrange for work to be carried out and appropriate fire safety equipment and systems installed. When the plans for the building were developed, there was little consideration for fire safety. As a result, the owners are now fixing the problem, at a cost of almost \$500,000," Mr. Smith said.

Autumn Tip.....

TIME CHANGES MEAN WORKPLACE SAFETY CHECKS.



When changing the clocks for daylight saving it's a good habit to change smoke alarm batteries and verify that fire extinguishers are fully charged and in working order

LANDLORD NEWS

WHY COMMERCIAL LANDLORDS CAN'T "LOVE" THEIR RENTAL PROPERTIES

It is vital that when making a property investment purchase, the heart doesn't rule the head..

You may love an area and think it is the perfect place to work, but will your tenants? – consider who will rent the type of building you purchase; what type of business's will it suit, public transport availability, car parking, neighbours and so on.

Commercial property is more likely to be a long-term investment than more traditional asset classes. Its success is measured over decades rather than years, and this permanence can give a sense of security. But remember, the type of property you buy, the location it is in and your target tenant must all match up.

Buying a property often requires a large loan and there are many regulations that you must follow when operating as a private landlord. You must consider the cost and likelihood of maintenance and ensure the property is suitable and safe for renters and complies with the Essential Safety Measures required by the Building Code of 2006.

While all of this is possible, you still need to have your "business head" on to ensure your investment delivers long-term tenants and strong returns.

Did You Know?



In case of fire and by law every workplace must have enough exits suitably located to enable everyone to get out of the building quickly. Considerations include the type of building structure, the number of persons likely to be exposed, the fire protection available and the type of industry involved.

Remember smoke caused by fire can greatly restrict vision and breathing so exit routes and doors must be free of obstructions and properly marked with exit signs.

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BIRTHDAY BBQ GONE WRONG!

A 29 year old man will be spending his birthday in hospital following a BBQ mishap!

Using a piece of paper to light a flame the man then quickly discarded it into an empty packaging box. The box was placed inside the building where it unexpectedly caught fire. Fortunately fire fighters managed to contain the blaze, quickly preventing it from spreading but the worker was taken to hospital with serious smoke inhalation and the fire caused \$40,000 worth of damage to the property.

LANDLORD RESPONSIBILITIES AND OBLIGATIONS

Common law dictates that landlords have a duty to guarantee the safety of rented property and its contents. Of utmost importance is that no injury or damage is caused to the tenants, neighbours or public as a direct result of the landlord neglecting his/her responsibilities such as:

- Maintaining the structure and exterior of the property.
- Ensuring all 'installations' are working, such as gas, electricity and heating.
- Anything else that's stipulated in the tenancy agreement.

In Victoria If the landlord wishes to enter the property he must give the tenant 24 hours notice of intent to enter for any of the following reasons:

- Carry out duties listed in the tenancy agreement or the state's Tenancy Act.
- Value the property or show the property to prospective buyers or tenants.
- Confirm a reasonable belief that the tenant's remiss in their duties outlined in the rental agreement.
- Make one general inspection in any six-month period.

AUSTRALIAN ESSENTIAL SAFETY INSPECTIONS

Suite 13, 118 Church St, Hawthorn VIC 3122

Phone: 9815 2085 Fax: 9815 1842

Email: office@aesi.com.au

Website: www.aesi.com.au