



Community Housing

NEWSLETTER

Winter Edition 2022

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GENERAL MANAGER'S UPDATE

Hi Everyone,

Welcome to the Winter edition of our quarterly newsletter. It contains some information to help get you through extreme weather conditions.

There are more **house fires** during winter than in any other time of the year, with most fires commencing in the kitchen. Please read the home fire prevention and safety guidelines that we have included in our newsletter. Following these simple instructions and tips can save the lives of you and your loved ones.

The floods, the consistent heavy rains, and now the colder temperatures have led to **mould and mildew** problems in many Queensland and New South Wales homes. We have also included some information for you in this newsletter about this specific issue. If you have a mould problem that doesn't seem to improve as you treat it, please call our office and speak to one of our friendly staff for further advice.

The NSW Government has a new scheme that enables community housing tenants to purchase a **new front-loading washing machine** at a significantly reduced cost. Front-loading washing machines can use up to 70% less water than the same-size top-loader. So, if you currently have a top-loader, you use much more water than you need. Please read about the assistance provided to social housing tenants to replace their top-loaders in this newsletter.

Many of our tenants will be sorry to learn that **Craig Salvatori** left Momentum recently. Craig has set up his own business, and we all wish him well and thank him for his contributions to Momentum during his four years with us. Our new **Property Services Manager Mark Ainsworth** has joined the team and brings a wealth of knowledge about property maintenance and management services. He will become familiar with most tenants in the coming months.

Momentum conducts a comprehensive **tenant survey** every two years, where we seek the views and opinions of our tenants about the services we provide. The following survey will commence in September, and we encourage all tenants to participate. Your opinion and feedback are valuable! It is a vital part of our efforts to improve what we do by telling us what is most important to us and identifying the areas where we are doing well and where we need to improve.

Stay safe and well, everyone!

Colin Jones

General Manager Housing

NOTICEBOARD



Staff changes

Our new Property Services Manager **Mark Ainsworth** has commenced in his new role. Mark will have management oversight of Momentum's property maintenance programs, and we look forward to the experience he will bring to the role.

We also welcome **Heather Marsh** to our Ballina-based team. Heather was previously with our mental health team in Lismore and moved into her new role as part of Momentum's Housing Pathways team.



Contacting the Housing Team

Momentum Collective will soon change its phone system to focus on a more client service needs approach. You will have one number to remember when contacting Momentum Collective. You will be greeted by our very friendly and helpful Customer Relationship Officer who will be able to transfer you to the housing team, or perhaps you may be interested in another Momentum Collective service.

The contact number for Momentum Collective is **1300 900 091**.

THIS MONTH'S HANDY TIP

Our 8 bathroom cleaning tips will have your bathroom sparkling in no time!

1. CLEANING MOULD

Add about ¼ teaspoon of clove oil with 1 litre of water in a spray bottle and apply to affected areas. Leave for one hour, then wipe over with a cloth.

2. CLEANING SHOWER SCUM

Put white vinegar into a spray bottle and spray onto the shower door, scrub the shower screen with a soft bristled brush. Rinse off with warm water. Dry with a microfiber cloth or soft towel for a sparkling clean.

3. CLEANING MIRRORS

When it comes to cleaning your mirrors, a microfiber cloth (preferably flat weave especially for glass) and a mix of water and vinegar does the trick. No streaks, environmentally friendly and easy.

4. CLEANING HAIR

Bicarb soda and a sink plunger will do the trick here. Simply pour a little bi-carb soda down your sink, let it sit and use a plunger to remove the hair.

5. CLEANING SHOWER DOORS

Use a good all-purpose bathroom cleaner and a sponge. Apply the bathroom cleaner and scrub the entire length of the shower door then let it sit for about 5 minutes. Rinse clean using hot water and a sponge.

6. CLEANING BATH TUBS

Sprinkle bi-carb soda over the bathtub, spray with white vinegar and wait for the two to foam. Use a sponge and warm water to prevent or remove bathtub rings.

7. CLEANING WATER STAINS

Hard water stains can be easily cleaned with lemon. Simply rub a fresh lemon over the water stains and not only will shine, it will smell great too!

8. CLEANING TOILETS

Keep your toilet clean and fresh by scrubbing the inside bowl with toilet cleaner, white vinegar or bi-carb soda, let it soak. Give it a good scrub with the toilet brush, then flush, rinse off your toilet brush when flushing.

Smart ways to save on your energy

It's easy...

You don't have to give up on comfort to keep your energy bills down. We'll show you how making small changes can make a big difference.

Washing clothes

- Dry your clothes on the line instead of in the dryer, this can save you up to \$70 per year
- Washing in cold water can save you approx. \$140 per year
- A front loader washing machine uses less than a top loading washing machine

In the bathroom

- On a 4 minute shower, you could save up to \$650 a year
- A 3 star water efficient showerhead, could save you between \$190 to \$715 a year

Heating

- Keep your doors and windows closed when the heater is on
- Use draft stoppers to prevent drafts - coming under the doors
- Keep your temperature between 18 and 20°C - each degree over 20°C uses 10% more energy

Cooling

- Open your doors and windows
- Closing doors to rooms you're not using much will keep the rooms you are using cool
- Try using your air-con only if it is over 28°C outside and this could save you up to \$340 a year

Lighting

- Turn off lights when you leave a room
- If you don't need much light, use a lamp

Appliances

- Switch things off at the wall when not in use
- Cook with a fry pan, microwave or pressure cooker instead of your oven
- Use a lid on saucepans can save up to 70%



What is Power On?

Staying on top of bills can be really hard at times, and that's where our Power On Program comes in. Power On is our way of helping customers manage their energy use and bills, and making debt collection and disconnection our last resort.

NSW Phone: 1300 138 638

Email: esic@deus.nsw.gov.au
www.environment.nsw.gov.au

QLD Phone: 1300 369 388

www.dews.qld.gov.au/electricity/saving

Our Power On commitments

- To have respect, empathy and sensitivity for a Power On customer's circumstances
- While a customer remains in Power On we won't disconnect their energy supply or follow normal debt collection process

Power On customer commitments

- To work with us towards a sustainable energy use and repaying their energy account debt
- To stay in touch, letting us know about any change in their circumstances
- To make all scheduled Power on pay repayments, in full and on time

Washing machine replacement trial

The NSW Government has announced the expansion of a scheme to assist social housing tenants to purchase front-loading washing machines.

Following the success of an initial trial of the scheme amongst public housing tenants, the second program stage has now been extended to all eligible community housing tenants across the state.

The program encourages eligible tenants to purchase a water efficient front-loading machine to replace an old top loader washing machine, reducing water and power use. This is great for the environment and also for the hip pockets of those who need it most.

How many top loading washing machines will the program replace?

- Around 5,500 top-loading washing machines will be replaced.
- Eligible social housing residents who apply after all the machines have been allocated are welcome to register their email address at washingmachines@dpie.nsw.gov.au to receive updates about any future programs.

Replacement washing machines will save more than 25,000 litres (25 kilolitres) of water each year per machine, while reducing annual household water, electricity and detergent costs by \$200 - \$246 on average.

Who is eligible to apply?

The program is open to eligible social housing residents who:

- are a NSW resident and over 18 years old
- hold a valid Pensioner Concession Card, Health Care Card* or Low-income Health Care Card from Centrelink (A Commonwealth Seniors Health Card is not sufficient for this offer)
- have an existing top loading washing machine to replace.

How much will this cost tenants?

Successful social housing applicants can choose between three different size machines and will pay a contribution payment which covers delivery and installation for \$150, \$200 or \$250, depending on the chosen machine. We will remove and recycle your old top loader washing machine.

When do applications open and close?

Applications opened 16 June 2022 and will close 30 September 2022, or before then if all machines are allocated.

How long does it take to process applications?

It will take about 5 to 10 minutes to lodge an application online. Applications should be processed within 3 to 5 business days. Once an applicant's eligibility is confirmed, and if their application is approved, the applicant will receive an approval code via email to be used to place their order on our website.

How do eligible social housing residents apply?

Visit the department's website at water.nsw.gov.au/washing-machine to complete an application. Tenants will need an image of their concession card to confirm it is valid and up to date.

Mould in properties

Many parts of Australia's east coast are enduring a record wet start to the year, with frequent deluges and storms. Thousands of homes have been flooded in Queensland and New South Wales, while many more residents are noticing the effects of the damp and humid weather.

In these conditions, mould thrives. And if not dealt with, mould growth can have adverse effects on health.

How do I remove mould from the property?

Personal protective equipment, including half-face disposable respirators with P1 or P2 filters are available at hardware stores, and should be used to avoid possible mould spore inhalation when cleaning.

Take additional precautions to prevent mould spore release and transmission by using of drop sheets and exclude persons not performing the work from the area that is being cleaned.

Remove mould by using a suitable mould remover, such as:

- A solution of 3 parts vinegar with 2 parts water
- A solution of 70% methylated spirits and 30% water
- A solution of tea tree oil and water, or
- Commercial products available from supermarkets



Ensure that you comply with the safety precautions provided by the manufacturer to protect your eyes and skin from the solution or mould remover.

Wipe clean the affected area using a microfiber cloth with the cleaning solution. Use a two bucket system – one bucket with the solution and the other with clean water. Do not put the dirty cloth back in the solution – wash in the clean water bucket first. This avoids cross contamination.

After cleaning the mould affected areas with the solution, wipe the surfaces with a damp cloth. Do not use the same cloth used with the solution.

Wipe all surfaces dry with a clean cloth.

It is important to use a different cloth with each process and dispose of them immediately.

What the Residential Tenancies Authority says about mould *Current as at 26 June 2012*

The Residential Tenancies Act does not make specific reference to mould, but it does detail requirements about the standard maintenance of a property throughout the Tenancy Agreement.

Some fast facts:

- It is the responsibility of the Tenant to notify the Agent or Lessor of any serious/extensive mould problems.
- If the mould is a result of an issue in the premises, such as a roof leak, it is generally the Lessor's responsibility to clean the mould and make any repairs necessary to maintain the property in good repair.
- If the Tenant caused the mould, they are responsible for its removal and may have to pay for to repair any damage caused.
- At the first sign of any problem, the Lessor/Agent and Tenant should discuss the issue.

Flood Recovery Back Home Grant

Suppose your home was damaged in the February and March 2022 storms and floods. In that case, you may be eligible for a one-off payment to help cover the costs of restoring your property to a habitable condition or replacing essential household items.

Eligibility

You're eligible to apply if you are:

- a tenant that lives in (or lived in at the time of the floods) a damaged property located within a suburb of the following highly impacted local government areas: Armidale, Ballina, Bellingen, Blacktown, Blue Mountains, Byron, Central Coast, Cessnock, Clarence Valley, Coffs Harbour, Glen Innes Severn, Hawkesbury, Hornsby, Kyogle, Lismore, Lithgow, Penrith, Richmond Valley, Singleton, Tenterfield, The Hills, and Tweed.
- unable to claim the costs of restoring the damaged property to a habitable condition or replacing essential household contents under an insurance policy, including if you're:
 - uninsured for severe weather and/or flood damage;
 - insured for severe weather and/or flood damage but do not have sufficient funding from your insurance claim; or
 - unable to claim for severe weather and/or flood damage
- ineligible for other, more comprehensive support measures available for those on low incomes and with limited assets.

You are **not** eligible to apply if your insurance covers you completely for structural repairs or to replace essential household items.

Note: You can only receive either the disaster relief grant or the Back Home grant. If you apply for the Back Home grant, and are also successful in your application for the disaster relief grant, the Back Home grant amount you receive will be deducted from the overall support.

What you need

- a MyServiceNSW account (you can create one)
- evidence that you live in the damaged property
- copy of your current rental agreement or a screenshot from the Rental Bond Database showing the details of the relevant lease, and
- utility bill that is no more than 4 months old

How to apply

1. Check you meet the [eligibility criteria](#).
2. Have your [documentation and evidence](#) ready for uploading.
3. Select the 'Apply online' button.
4. Log in, or create your MyServiceNSW Account.
5. Follow the prompts to apply for the grant.

When you submit your application, you'll receive a confirmation email with an application reference number.

After your application is received, it will be reviewed. You will be contacted if additional information to support your application is required.

If you're not able to apply online, please call [13 77 88](tel:137788) for more information, or visit a [Service NSW Centre](#) or [Recovery Centre](#) with your supporting documents.

Fire Safety!

Winter is a critical time for fire prevention due to the spike in home fires, fire-related fatalities and injuries. During winter, Fire and Rescue NSW attends more than 1100 home fires – this is roughly one third of reported home fires annually.

Here's some fire safety rules that Fire and Rescue NSW want everyone to follow:

Kitchen

- More than half of all fires start in the kitchen where cooking is left unattended.
- Never use water to put out an oil or fat fire. If you can do so safely, use a lid to cover and smother the flames.

Smoke alarms

- You are half as likely to die in a fire in you have a working smoke alarm.
- Check that your smoke alarm is working and please call Momentum immediately if it is not functioning correctly.

Escape plan

- It is highly recommended that all households have an escape plan in the event of fire.
- The plan should be known by everyone living in the home.

Heaters and electrics

- If you suspect any fault with a heater, you should get it checked or have it replaced. Keep everything at least 1 meter away from your heater and they should only be placed in level and well-ventilated places.
- Check your electric blanket for any uneven hotspots and replace it if there are any abnormalities
- Check that electrical cords are not fraying.
- Do not overload power boards.

Other ways to keep safe

- Never leave candles unattended or in places where they can fall or set alight flammable items such as curtains or upholstery.
- Ensure matches or lighters are stored in a secure place out of reach and sight of children
- NSW Fire have attended to numerous fires that have been caused by the use of wheat bags in bedding or from overheating in microwaves. Wheat bags should only ever be used by following the instructions that come with it and should never be used to replace hot water bottles





Pea and Ham Soup

Ingredients

- 500g / 1lb dried split peas (Note 1)
- 1.2-1.5kg / 2.4-3lb ham hock (aka ham bone), bacon hock or MEATY leftover ham bone (Note 2)
- 1/4 tsp salt (start with less, adjust later)
- 3/4 tsp black pepper
- 2 garlic cloves , minced
- 2 bay leaves , dried or fresh
- 1 onion , finely chopped
- 1 carrot , peeled and finely chopped
- 2 celery sticks , finely chopped
- 8 cups (2 litres/qts) water

Instructions

1. Place peas in slow cooker, push ham in.
2. Scatter all ingredients around the ham bone, then pour over water.
3. Slow cook 8 to 10 hours on LOW or 6 hours on HIGH. (Or 2.5 hours on low on stove, 1 h – 1 hr 20 min pressure cooker/Instant Pot on HIGH)
4. Remove ham bone, shred ham meat. Discard bone and fatty skin
5. Remove bay leaves
6. Return ham into slow cooker, stir
7. Taste and add more salt if needed (soup gets lots of salt from ham)

SUDOKU

Sudoku is played on a grid of 9 x 9 spaces.

Within the rows and columns are 9 "squares" (made up of 3 x 3 spaces).

Each row, column and square (9 spaces each) needs to be filled out with the numbers 1-9, without repeating any numbers within the row, column or square.

Sudoku grid comes with a few spaces already filled in; the more spaces filled in, the easier the game – the more difficult Sudoku puzzles have very few spaces that are already filled in.

5			4		7			9
7			3	5		2	6	
3	8						1	
				6	4	7	5	
		9	7		1	4		
	7	8	2	3				
	6						8	2
	4	2		9	6			5
9			8		2			1