



Tenants Neville, Chris and Joan with staff Nicole



Are you fire safe?

Did you know that the areas of the house where most fires occur are the kitchen, sleeping areas, and lounge area? We recommend this simple safety checklist to assist in keeping your home safe:

Inside

- When setting up fairy lights and other electrical displays use only one item per power socket and don't overload power boards.
- For maximum safety if you use a power board, ensure it has both overload protection and earth leakage protection devices.
- Only use decorative lights that have an Australian Standards label and follow manufacturer's instructions on setting up and operating.
- Check lights and electronic decorations for faults, worn plugs and frayed cords.
- Inspect the plugs and leads to ensure they are in good working order.
- Decorative lights may become very hot so keep away from children and flammable materials and don't leave burning candles unattended.
- Candles should be used in a safe position away from flammable material and out of reach of children. Extinguish them if you leave the room and always before going to bed.

- Switch off all electrical displays and decorative lights before going to bed.
- Make sure you have a sufficient number of working smoke alarms throughout your home.

Outside

- If you have a gas, electric or wood BBQ always check that it is in safe working order before lighting.
- Always keep lighters and matches away from children.
- If you have a garage or shed remember to take extra care with any stored chemicals and fuels and only refuel mowers, edgers etc when they are cold and in the open.
- If you live in a bushfire prone area keep the ground around your home clear of leaves and other litter and remember to clean your gutters regularly.

Bushfire safety

With the recent devastation of bushfires, we want to equip you with information to keep your home and family safe over Christmas.

1. **Discuss what to do if a bush fire threatens your home.**
2. **Prepare your home.**
3. **Know the bush fire alert levels.**
4. **Keep all the bush fire numbers, websites and smartphone apps readily available.**

By taking 20 minutes with your family to discuss your plans, you can save their lives as well as your home. For more information on how to prepare for bush fires this summer, visit the NSW Fire Service website: www.fire.nsw.gov.au

To keep track of fires in your area visit the 'Fires near me' page www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/fire-information/fires-near-me, it updates every 10 minutes to give you the most up to date information.

The **Crime Stoppers Hotline** allows you to report information about crime and criminal activity anonymously. **It is important that you inform the Crime Stoppers Hotline if you see something suspicious.**

Sometimes it is the add up of small incidents that eventually makes the difference.

Is your information urgent or about criminal activity including children that may be at risk of harm?

Crime Stoppers will review your on-line report within 48 hours. If the information is urgent, call **Crime Stoppers Hotline 1800 333 000.**

Contact us



Mission Australia Housing hotline: **1800 269 672**



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missionaustralia.com.au/housing



What do you want to read about?

Contact us! P.O. Box 274 Coffs Harbour, mncenquiries@missionaustralia.com.au or by calling **1800 269 672**

From our Executive



Summer is finally upon us and another year is coming to an end. As we reflect back, we are reminded of all the incredible achievements we have accomplished together.

We play a much larger role in communities than just housing people. In addition to increasing the needed supply of social and affordable homes, we worked with partners dedicated to delivering outstanding community activities in your region.

At Mission Australia Housing, our priority is your wellbeing and safety.

This time of year can be extremely hot and prone to dangerous bushfires (**please look ahead for tips on heat and bushfire safety**), we urge you all to be safe, stay cool and healthy during the summer.

Thank you to all the tenants who have taken the time to work with us over the past year and gave us feedback through this year's Annual Tenant Survey. Your help and feedback is invaluable to our ability to deliver to you the best services possible. We will be working very closely with Resident and Community Steering Committees to tailor and improve our services to you.

In response to the increased demand for composting and recycling initiatives, we have been busy working on an exciting new eco-friendly project. Keep an eye out on this space next year, as we will be introducing the newest members of the Mission Australia Housing family to you.

From all of us at Mission Australia Housing, we wish you a merry Christmas and a happy new year!

Best wishes,

Chris Bratchford
Executive, Mission Australia Housing

Things to be thankful for

We all have things in our lives that we're thankful for.

Try making a list of all the positive things that you're grateful for. It's often the little things that lift your spirits and remind you of all the good in your life.

Mission Australia Housing (MAH) is grateful for a new fence added to one of our complexes in Boambee East in recent weeks... **why are tenants thankful I hear you say?**

The complex saw their fair share of unwanted wanderers using the grounds as a thoroughfare. It was disruptive to the quiet enjoyment of their homes and residents didn't feel safe. The fence was put in place and residents have since provided positive feedback to the Asset Management Team. Neville visited the office this week and said he was so thrilled with the addition of the fence. It was the best night sleep he's had in a long time!



How to keep unwanted visitors at bay

No one likes unwanted visitors in their home and we want to equip you with all the information you need to tackle them.

Keeping the dust away:

Finding dust in your home is no fun, and it often seems that no matter how much you clean, it keeps coming back. When dust accumulates, it's annoying and can wreak havoc on asthma and allergy sufferers. While it's impossible to completely rid your home of dust, here are five easy tips for keeping it at bay:

- 1. Change your bedding once a week.** Dust mites love to dwell in sheets, pillows and mattresses, washing your bedding once a week, should be enough to keep bug-a-boos at bay.
- 2. Keep your closets tidy.** Unless you want a blast of dust confetti each time you open the closet door, it's

best to store things in garment bags, plastic containers and boxes.

- 3. Remove clutter from floors.** Don't ignore piles of clothing, toys, magazines, books or anything else on the floor.
- 4. Use a damp cloth or moist towelette to wipe down surfaces.** This will prevent dust from going everywhere
- 5. Clean from top to bottom.** Clean the highest surfaces first and work your way down, so you capture any dust you missed.

A mould free home:

Mould. The very word is enough to make a person cringe. It can grow anywhere: on carpet, clothing, food, paper, and even in places you can't see, such as the backside of wall linings and above ceiling tiles. Not only is a mould problem difficult and costly to fix, but it can also produce allergens and irritants that may

compromise your health. So what can you do if you're concerned about mould growing in your home?

The key to mould prevention is simple – moisture control, so here are six ways to curb moisture indoors:

- 1. Identify problem areas in your home:** You can't mould-proof your home, but you can make it mould-resistant. Whatever the case, address the problem now. It might cost some money up front, but it will surely be more costly down the road.
- 2. Dry wet areas immediately:** Mould can't grow without moisture, so tackle those wet areas right away.
- 3. Prevent moisture with proper ventilation:** Make sure an activity as simple as cooking dinner, taking a shower, or doing a load of laundry don't invite mould by providing proper ventilation in your house.



The Annual Tenant Survey results are in!

Top priorities:



Repairs and maintenance



Continue to strengthen & improve the neighbourhood



Satisfied with MAH's complaint handling

5 lucky tenants won a \$100 gift voucher for participating in the survey and providing their valuable feedback.

Thank you for all of you who completed the survey!

Results of the our recent tenant surveys are in! Your opinions on the service Mission Australia Housing provide and areas we can improve upon is very important to us.



What are we doing about the survey results?

We recognise that there's room for improvement, and repairs and maintenance will therefore remain as a primary focus for us. We recognise that there is an appetite amongst residents for being involved in community activities and we are planning multiple community engagement opportunities in the year ahead, so keep an eye out in your mailboxes for activities near you.



Photos above: 1. Reginald Waters and Housing Officer Christine Ellison. 2. Danielle McCabe and Housing Officer Phanessa Rossiter. 4. Emily Small and Housing Officer Phanessa Rossiter. Left: 3. Steven Townsend and Team Leader Brain Cropper.

Continued...

- 4. Equip your home with mould-resistant products:** Use mould-resistant products like mould-resistant gyprock or Sheetrock, and mould inhibitors for paints.
- 5. Improve airflow in your home:** To increase circulation, open doors between rooms and move furniture away from walls, let fresh air in to reduce moisture and keep mould at bay.
- 6. Educate yourself on your region's climate!** There is no one-size-fits-all solution when it comes to mould prevention. Knowing what works for your climate and your home is an important first step.

If you want more information, visit the NSW Health Department website: www.health.nsw.gov.au/environment/factsheets/pages/default.aspx

Tips for the summer!

With summer just around the corner, it is important to be prepared for the extreme heat to stay healthy. Here are five tips on how you can have a headache-free summer:

- 1. Stay hydrated.** Drink plenty of water – even when you don't feel thirsty!
- 2. Wear lightweight, comfortable clothing** to stay cool during those extra hot days.
- 3. Minimise sun exposure.** Keep out of the sun as much as possible, but if you cannot resist a good outdoor BBQ, make sure you wear lots of sunscreen to protect yourself.
- 4. Prepare your house.** Open your windows, draw blinds and curtains to keep the heat out, and if you

have a fan or AC unit check now to make sure it is working.

- 5. Check in on others.** Check regularly on your neighbours and friends to see how they are.

Remember, summer is fun but we still need to make sure we are taking precautions to stay safe in the heat. If you want more information on what you can do to cope under extreme heat visit the NSW Department of Health website www.health.nsw.gov.au/environment/beattheheat or contact one of our team members, we are always happy to help!



1

Drink plenty of water



2

Keep cool



3

Minimise sun exposure



4

Have a plan!



5

Take care of others

Saving tips – Christmas is coming!



The key to saving money is good savings habits.

Saving, even small amounts, eases financial shocks and builds confidence in managing money and dealing with banks and other financial institutions.

Christmas is fast approaching! Christmas is generally a time when we get into debt, easily forgetting to prioritise ordinary living costs like rent.

Make small changes that add up

There are choices in the way we do almost everything. Dedicated saving can involve being mindful of everyday spending, co-ordinating shopping

and errands to save on fuel costs, keeping loose change and cashing it in periodically, restricting household appliance use, or even learning basic home and car maintenance. Small changes ultimately add up to big savings along with improved overall household efficiency and productivity.

Set up direct debits or Centrepay

Set up deductions for everything you can to ensure all of your priority payments are made like rent, water, electricity, phone charges, school fees and internet. These are all the necessary things we all need and not paying these things first, can lead to using money for something that isn't a priority.

Diligence is the key

Of course there are plenty of ways to save money if you put your mind to it and get creative. But when it comes down to it, diligence is the key to save money on a low income. When you use any of these techniques mentioned above, you have to be sure to stick with them for the long term, and when you determine how much you're saving from each one, put that money in the bank.



Xmas gifts and food costs are adding up

Phone bill repayment is overdue!

Electricity is overdue... what do I do?

How am I going to pay rent?



Tailored Support Coordination Service (TSCS)

'Garry was referred to Fiona at the time of being offered a property by Mission Australia Housing as he was facing a number of difficult challenges. Fiona worked with Garry and supported him through these challenges to ensure the start of his tenancy was smooth and he had the ability to sustain his tenancy. Garry is very happy and now settling into his new home'.



TSCS is a voluntary support coordination program offered to residents of Mission Australia Housing properties in the Coffs Harbour and Bellingen local government areas to help tenants make positive life changes.

TSCS aims to:

- **Stabilise tenancies** at risk
- Develop capacity to **live independently**
- **Increase protective factors and reduce tenancy risk** in new households
- **Create pathways** out of social housing

New tenant Garry Williams, his mother Betty Wilson, TSCS Fiona McLeod and Kerrie Wells



- **Increase wellbeing and social participation**
- **Support families** with school age children to break the cycle of intergenerational dependence on income support

Contact Jesse and Fiona on 1800 269 672 or mncenquiries@missionaustralia.com.au