



A word from our CEO

A warm hello! The long weekend is nearly upon us and another round of school holidays to mark the arrival of the cooler months. How that time has flown!

In this issue we've included information and tips to help you keep healthy and safe as well as some ideas for keeping children and grandchildren entertained without breaking the budget.

We've included an article on Reporting Repairs which gives guidance on which repairs are urgent. If these urgent repairs happen out of our working hours, they need to be reported to the After-Hours phone line.

We hope you find this issue interesting, and we wish you a safe and happy holiday.

Kathryn

Kathryn Moorey, Chief Executive Officer

Holiday period office closure

Our office will close during the holiday period, **from Friday 7th April through to Monday 10th April 2023**. During this time, our team will not be available to take phone calls or respond to emails, but we will respond to your enquiries as soon as possible when we return.

Urgent Maintenance - If you need to report an **urgent repair** while we are closed, please call our **Emergency After Hours** phone number on **1800 125 430**. All other maintenance requests can be reported when the office reopens on Tuesday, April 11th 2023.

Please read our article on **Page 4** about Reporting Repairs, which includes some examples of **urgent repairs**.

Are you caring for someone?

Caring for someone can be a challenging and often isolating experience.

The Carer Gateway Services is a free national program which offers a range of services to help carers maintain their own physical and mental health, as well as support the person they're caring for.

Services include counselling, peer support, respite care, and financial assistance and are available online, by telephone and in person.

As it is a single point of entry for accessing a range of government-funded services and support programs, it can help simplify the process of finding and accessing the right support for you and your loved one.

To access Carer Gateway services, call **1800 422 737** or request a callback by completing the online form at www.carerswa.asn.au/request-callback/



Preventing mould

As we head into the wetter months of the year, it's important to be aware of the potential for mould growth in our homes. Not only can mould be unsightly and cause unpleasant odours, but it can also have negative effects on our health. Here are some tips to help prevent mould from growing in your home:

1. **Reduce moisture** - mould thrives in damp environments, so reducing moisture levels is key to preventing its growth. You can do this by opening windows and doors to increase ventilation, using extractor fans in kitchens while cooking, in bathrooms while showering, while drying clothes indoors and wiping down surfaces that become damp, such as windowsills and shower screens.
2. **Fix leaks** - If you notice any leaks in your home, it's important to report them to us as soon as possible. Even small leaks can lead to a build-up of moisture, which can create an environment in which mould can thrive.
3. **Keep your home warm** - mould grows best in cold, damp environments, so it's important to keep your home warm, especially during the colder months of the year.
4. **Use anti-mould products** - there are commercial mould removers available in the shops but more natural remedies such as soapy water, vinegar and tea-tree oil are also effective.

We will respond promptly to reports of leaks and structural damages. Exhaust fans and vents that are not working and windows that do not open should be reported to us as these issues prevent the property being aired.



If you see mould forming, it is important to remove it safely, as it can be hazardous to your health if not done properly:

- Wear protective gear such as gloves, a mask, and safety goggles to avoid inhaling mould spores or getting them on your skin.
- Scrub mould off hard surfaces using soapy water. The physical action of scrubbing is the most important component as all the mould must be physically removed to prevent regrowth. Avoid brushing the surface dry, as this can release mould spores into the air.
- Make sure you scrub up to 50cm from the edge of the visible mould as there may be new growth that is not visible to the naked eye.
- Clean up any mould residue caused by the scrubbing. Use a damp cloth or vacuum cleaner with a HEPA filter.
- Dry the area.
- Dispose of any cleaning materials and protective gear safely, as mould spores can still be present on these items.
- Properly ventilate the area after cleaning to help dry out the space and prevent mould from returning.

If you notice any signs of mould and you cannot safely remove it or identify the cause, ask for our help as soon as possible. We can check that the cause is not a structural problem or leak and offer advice on removal and prevention.

Cheap family fun ideas

Will you be entertaining your children or grandchildren over the holidays or just need ideas for activities for the weekend? Here are some great inexpensive ideas for some family fun:

Movie marathon

Organize a movie marathon with your kids. You can stream a series of movies or visit an Op Shop for cheap DVDs. Create a cozy atmosphere with blankets and snacks.

Choosing a theme such as Space or Animals then matching food and drinks to go with that theme can add extra fun.



Scavenger hunt

Create a scavenger hunt for your kids. You can hide clues around the house or in the backyard, and let your kids search for the hidden items. The next clue should be on the found item. Stick to common items such as paper clips, pebbles, flowers and toys.

For very young children, use picture clues instead of words. Older kids can be engaged with brain teasers such as using riddles or scrambling the letters of the clue word.

For something different, have the kids take photos with the items and award extra points for the most creative ones – children will love sharing silly photos.



Crafts

Kids love to create, and there are inexpensive craft ideas that you can do with your children at home. You can make paper flowers, create bubble blowers using pipe cleaners, foam stamps for painting, funny fold up paper fans or get messy with finger-painting.

Make finger or hand puppets and then hold your own puppet show!

Board game tournament

Board games are a great way to spend time together as a family. Organize a board game tournament and let your kids choose the games they want to play. They can work individually or in teams.

Classic family card games like Snap and Go Fish can also be used. Op Shops are a great source for cheap, pre-loved games and jigsaw puzzles. You can award prizes for the winner of each game, such as a special treat or a small gift.

Baking

Baking is a fun activity that kids can do with adults, and it's a great way to create memories together. Choose a simple recipe that your kids can help with, such as biscuits, gingerbread or cupcakes.



Reporting Repairs



Maintenance requests can be made by ringing **9452 9200** between 8.30 am – 4.30 pm Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays). You can also phone **1800 125 430** during office hours for all repairs

Urgent repairs that cannot be reported during normal business hours (before 8.30am and after 4.30pm during the week, and Saturday, Sunday and public holidays), must be reported by ringing the After-Hours Number which is 1800 125 430.

Please **do not** use the After-Hours Number to report routine repairs as you may be charged the cost of the non-urgent repair.

An urgent repair is one that needs to be done to:

- avoid exposing someone to the risk or injury, exposing the property to damage or causing you undue hardship or inconvenience.
- restore an essential service such as gas, electricity, sewerage or water (including the supply of hot water).

Some examples of an urgent repair are:

- A fault relating to, or loss of, your electricity, gas or water
- A suspected gas leak
- A faulty smoke detector
- Something that makes your home vulnerable to a break-in, such as a broken window or door
- A flood, burst water pipe or major leak
- A fire
- Serious storm damage
- Major sewerage problems
- A faulty Residual Current Device (RCD)
- If there is only one toilet in your home and that toilet is not working

These are all example of urgent repairs which if they happen out of normal business hours, cannot wait until the next working day.



If you report an urgent repair, please remember that someone must be home to allow access for the emergency contractor or you may be charged a call-out fee.

Response times for urgent repairs

By law, you must inform us as soon as possible if an urgent repair is needed. When we receive your report, we must contact a contractor to arrange (not complete) urgent repairs to essential services within 24 hours and other urgent repairs within 48 hours.

Wherever possible, and subject to contractor availability and location, we aim to have the urgent repair **completed** with 24 hours of being notified (as opposed to contacting the contractor) or made safe until a full repair can be carried out.

All non-urgent (routine) repairs will be completed in a reasonable timeframe.

Keys

If you have ever locked yourself out of your home accidentally, you'll know how frustrating and expensive it can be to get back in.

Although Stellar Living keeps a set of office keys for each property, copying keys and changing locks is a tenant liability charge if keys are lost or mislaid.



If you have a trusted friend, relative or neighbour, consider giving them a spare key. It can be a lifesaver in case of an emergency, such as a fall or sudden health issue. The trusted person can give access to emergency services or the Police if they have been asked to carry out a Welfare Check, without causing damage to your home to gain entry.

Another advantage of leaving a spare house key with a trusted person is the added security it provides. Instead of hiding a key under a doormat or in a fake rock (which can be easily found by intruders), having a spare key with someone you trust can help keep your home secure. You can ensure that your key is safe and only accessible by someone you have approved.

When considering who to leave your spare key with, it is important to choose someone you trust and have a good relationship with.

This person should be responsible, reliable, and ideally live nearby so that they can quickly access your home if needed. It is also important to have a clear plan in place for how, and when, they will access your home.

An alternative to providing a spare key to a trusted person is using a key safe (also known as a lock box). This is a small metal box which holds one or two keys, is securely bolted to somewhere outside and can only be opened using a code. There are many types on the market. Some cheaper models may not attach securely and can be pulled off walls or can be forced open.

If you are thinking of purchasing a key safe, we suggest that you talk to your local Police or a reputable supplier about types they recommend.

Easy veggies to grow in Autumn/Winter

When you grow your own vegetables, you know exactly where your food comes from and how it was grown. You can be sure that the vegetables are fresh, tastier than supermarket varieties and free from harmful chemicals. It can help save money on groceries and is also a great way to get fresh air and exercise.

Children can learn about the importance of soil health, water conservation, and sustainable agriculture practices. Watching those tiny seeds grow to fully mature plants can give you a sense of achievement and you get to enjoy the fruits of your labour!

Easy vegetables to grow over the cooler months are:

- | | | | | | |
|------------|----------|---------------|-------------|-----------|----------------|
| ● Broccoli | ● Carrot | ● Cauliflower | ● Leek | ● Lettuce | ● Onions |
| ● Peas | ● Radish | ● Rocket | ● Snow Peas | ● Spinach | ● Spring Onion |



Puzzle fun

Win a \$30 Bunnings voucher by completing our Word Search! This issue it's all words associated with our article on Mould Prevention.

All the words are in the word search except for one which has been left out. Words can be forwards, backwards, diagonal, up or down. Letters may be used more than once. **Let us know the missing word** by emailing your answer, name and address to enquiries@stellarliving.com.au or post it to: Stellar Living Limited, PO Box 370, Thornlie WA 6988

Competition closes **Monday 1st May 2023**. A winner will be drawn from all the correct entries after the closing date. Only one entry per household please.



Warmth	Vinegar
Hazard	Spores
Leaks	Dampness
Mould	Moisture
Fans	Open
Gloves	Odour
Scrub	Winter
Health	Soapy
Safety	Aired
Goggles	



Congratulations to Ms. Kelly who was the successful correct draw in our last competition.

The missing word was soliloquy.

stellar living

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