

# YOUR home



## e-Repair – an easy way to report maintenance issues



**D**o you wish there was a way to report maintenance issues online at any time of the day or night? Why not try using eRepair, the easy to follow online service for all non-urgent maintenance issues, available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

eRepair is designed to help you request non-urgent maintenance to your home or common areas. All you need is internet access and you can get started! Go to the Housing NSW website at [www.housing.nsw.gov.au](http://www.housing.nsw.gov.au) and click on the eRepair icon.

You will then be guided through the process. You can even make up to

five requests in one go - it couldn't be easier!

Once the request has been received, you will receive a confirmation email or SMS. If the request is approved, you'll also be advised once a contractor has been allocated.

For issues that are urgent, please continue to call the Housing Contact Centre on **1300 HOUSING (1300 468 746)**.

You can also find a video on YouTube which explains how to use the online eRepair service - [www.youtube.com/watch?v=pO56Pe3x6Ac&feature=youtu.be](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pO56Pe3x6Ac&feature=youtu.be)

## Say thank you to an exceptional carer

Do you have a neighbour, work colleague, client, friend or family member who provides exceptional care for someone with disability, mental illness, chronic health condition, dementia or ageing? Please consider nominating them for a NSW Carers Award. Groups and organisations can also be nominated. Nominations are open until 30 June 2014. For more information or to nominate please visit [www.facs.nsw.gov.au/carersawards](http://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/carersawards)



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*Your Home* is a quarterly magazine published by the Department of Family and Community Services and distributed to Housing NSW tenants.

We welcome your feedback and encourage you to share your handy tips and recipes.

Please contact us:

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 You can send us an email at [yourhome@facs.nsw.gov.au](mailto:yourhome@facs.nsw.gov.au)

 Visit [www.housing.nsw.gov.au](http://www.housing.nsw.gov.au)

*Your Home* is printed on environmentally friendly paper. Please consider the environment and recycle this newsletter.



## Message from the new Minister



**Gabrielle Upton MP**  
Minister for Family and  
Community Services

I take this chance to introduce myself to you as the Minister for Family and Community Services.

In my first few weeks as Minister I have been keen to learn about Housing NSW and its clients. I can already see that the support offered by Housing NSW makes a real difference in people's lives.

To me, public housing is about offering tenants a hand up, not a hand out. In order to make the system as fair and equitable as possible, tenants need to keep

doing the right thing; looking after their properties, paying the right amount of rent and looking for opportunities to engage with their communities.

I look forward to learning more about your experiences over the coming weeks and months. Please enjoy this edition of *Your Home*.

## Resolving disagreements with neighbours

All tenants have a right to expect that their neighbours will respect their privacy, their property and the peaceful enjoyment of their home.

But we may not all get along all of the time. So here are some simple ways of preventing or sorting out problems with your neighbour:

- you don't have to be best friends but getting to know your neighbour will help
- make sure you speak to your neighbour and let them know if you're planning anything that may impact on them like a party
- we should never let conflict make people feel uncomfortable or unsafe in their own home and should try to settle any disagreements with our neighbours **before** they build up in our minds to be serious
- take your neighbour's concerns seriously, even if they don't seem important to you



- don't assume the other person knows there is a problem – often they don't
- keep calm and tell your neighbour how it is affecting you and your enjoyment of your home
- try to talk things over with your neighbour before you talk with anyone else
- remember to focus on the behaviour and don't make personal comments about your neighbour.

If the problem remains unresolved you could call your local Community Justice Centre to help mediate, or if your neighbour is breaching their tenancy agreement please contact your local Housing NSW office.

# Getting ahead with your rent for Christmas

The lead up to Christmas is an expensive time, so it's important to keep on top of your rent. If you already have a Rental Deduction Scheme in place, that's a great way to ensure that you can pay your rent and hopefully still have some money for some festive spending.

In the past, some tenants have cancelled their direct deductions or stopped paying rent over the holidays, and have found that they are unable to pay the rental arrears in the New Year. If you are tempted to do the same, please consider that the best gift anyone can give at Christmas is a roof over your family's heads. When you're struggling to balance your finances, the last thing you need is to find yourself slipping into rent arrears.



As always, Housing NSW staff will be monitoring rental payments carefully during the holiday season. Please make sure that you budget properly so that you can keep paying your rent in full. We don't want to see anybody faced with

the prospect of losing their home, especially at Christmas.

If you are already behind in your rent, now is a good time to get on top of that. Another handy way of taking care of the rent and focusing on enjoying Christmas is to make extra rent payments now. It's very simple and you can make payments:

- by using your payment card at any Australia Post Office
- online at [www.housing.nsw.gov.au](http://www.housing.nsw.gov.au) or
- by BPay.

If you use Centrelink Deductions to pay your rent, you still need to use one of these above methods to make extra payments. Your local Client Service Officer is there to help you if you have any questions.

## Beat the dreaded flu this winter

Influenza or flu spreads very easily and at its worst, can put you in hospital and can even be fatal. It can be especially serious for people aged 65 years or older, Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander people aged 15 years or older, pregnant women and anyone aged six months and over with medical conditions that make them more likely to come down with severe influenza.

There are plenty of other things you can do to reduce your chances of getting the flu. Good hand washing and hygiene practices, reducing your contact with people who have the flu and staying active and eating well can help keep you healthy. If you do get the flu, here are a few practical steps so you can avoid passing it on to others:



- cover your face when you cough or sneeze and throw used tissues in a rubbish bin, cough into your elbow rather than your hands if you don't have a tissue
- wash your hands thoroughly and often for at least 10 seconds, especially after coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose, or use an alcohol-based hand rub
- stay at home until you are better, waiting at least 24 hours after

your fever goes down before going out so you don't infect other people

- keep sick children away from school and other activities
- avoid visiting people such as pregnant women, infants, older people and people who are already unwell.

Stay healthy and enjoy the cooler months!



## New interpreter service provider



**H**ousing NSW now has a new interpreter services provider - All Graduates Interpreting and Translating Service.

All Graduates can help clients with all their interpreting and translating needs - you can phone them direct on **1300 652 488** for assistance.

This free service for Housing NSW clients provides telephone interpreting, as well as on-site interpreters at Housing NSW offices. Interpreters can be pre-booked to attend an office and some offices have interpreters visit their office regularly on specific days.

For more information and the times available, please see the Interpreter and Language Service fact sheet at [www.housing.nsw.gov.au/Forms+Policies+and+Fact+Sheets](http://www.housing.nsw.gov.au/Forms+Policies+and+Fact+Sheets).

All Graduates Interpreting and Translating also provides a document translation service, as well as AUSLAN interpreters for clients that are hearing and/or speech impaired.

If you would like an interpreter for your appointment with Housing NSW please ensure that you inform your Client Service Officer at least five days beforehand to ensure Housing NSW can arrange the right interpreter for you.

## Handy hints

**Heather** from Argenton has written in with a handy hint to keep vegetables fresh, she wraps lettuce in aluminium foil which keeps it fresh for 14 days. Heather says this method also works very well with celery, broccoli, peas and beans. Congratulations Heather you have won a \$25 voucher.



### Recipe winner

Congratulations also to **Cherie** from Urunga who has won a \$25 voucher for her mixed bean burger recipe.

### Mixed bean burgers (makes 9)

#### Ingredients

750g can of four bean mix, drained and rinsed  
1 tbsp olive oil  
2 cloves of garlic (crushed)  
1 medium onion finely chopped  
1 tsp cumin  
¼ tsp salt  
2 cups wholemeal breadcrumbs

2 eggs lightly beaten

¼ cup wholemeal plain flour

2 tbsp olive oil (extra)

1. Heat oil in a frypan and sauté onion and garlic until soft. Place in large bowl.
2. Add beans, cumin, salt, breadcrumbs and eggs, mix well.
3. Using a ¼ cup measure form the mixture into burgers and toss gently in flour.
4. Heat extra oil in a frypan or on a BBQ and cook burgers until golden on both sides.
5. Serve on toasted Turkish bread with a fresh salad.

## Your contacts

**1300 HOUSING (1300 468 746)**  
24 hours/7 days

Maintenance, general enquiries,  
Home Purchase Advisory Service

**Other services** (Monday-Friday  
8.30am-4.30pm)

Rentstart, reports of fraud or  
corruption.

Aboriginal people can ask to speak  
to an Aboriginal staff member.

### Feedback

Fax feedback **9612 6099**

email [feedback@facs.nsw.gov.au](mailto:feedback@facs.nsw.gov.au)

**eRepair** For non-urgent  
maintenance request online 24 hours  
a day, seven days a week [www.housing.nsw.gov.au](http://www.housing.nsw.gov.au)

**Housing Appeals Committee**  
(Monday-Friday 8.30am-4.30pm)

**1800 629 794**  
[www.hac.nsw.gov.au](http://www.hac.nsw.gov.au)

**Translation and Interpreting  
Service (TIS)**

Call **1300 652 488** if you need help  
understanding English and TIS  
will phone Housing NSW for you  
at no cost.

Website [www.housing.nsw.gov.au](http://www.housing.nsw.gov.au)

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