

# Media release

From the Minister for Energy and Resources

Monday, 2 March, 2009

## PREDICTED STRONG WINDS COULD IMPACT POWER

Extreme weather predicted for the next three days has the potential to impact on the electricity network and all Victorians should be prepared for localised blackouts, Energy and Resources Minister Peter Batchelor warned today.

“Storms and wind gusts of up to 150km/h have been predicted for tonight, tomorrow and Wednesday and it is important people are aware that extreme weather conditions can cause widespread but localised power outages,” Mr Batchelor said.

“Power outages can be caused by trees falling on powerlines and strong winds can bring down powerlines.

“All Victorians, not just those living in bushfire-affected regions, should have an energy plan and kit in case of power outages.

“This means residents should have a battery-powered radio that will allow them to monitor ongoing events, a fully-charged mobile phone and access to important contacts including the number of their local power distributor.

“As part of their kits, residents should also have alternative lighting such as torches, an esky with ice, access to fresh water, and alternative cooking facilities such as gas appliances.

“Those in areas threatened by bushfires should remember that when checking fireplans, some equipment that is dependent on power might not be available if electricity is impacted.”

Mr Batchelor said if people did experience power blackouts, they should remain patient and understand power might not be restored immediately, and in extreme cases repairs to damaged powerlines could take several days.

“Extreme storm events can put huge pressure on distribution companies and people should understand that if localised power outages occur, distributors will be working around the clock to ensure people are reconnected to power as soon as possible,” he said.

“It is also important that people keep clear of fallen powerlines because they could be live and dangerous.

“If you lose your power, you should contact your electricity distribution company. The number can be found under faults on your bill.”

Distributors can be contacted on:

Powercor	132 412	(outer western suburbs and western Victoria)
CitiPower	131 280	(Melbourne CBD and inner suburbs)
Jemena	131 626	(northern and inner western suburbs)
United Energy	132 099	(eastern/south eastern suburbs, Mornington Peninsula)
SP AusNet	131799	(outer eastern and eastern Victoria)

**Media contact: Emma Tyner 0409 023 131 [www.premier.vic.gov.au](http://www.premier.vic.gov.au)**