

Thursday 13 January 2011

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## SP AusNet urges customers to prepare for strong winds and potential flash flooding

Eastern Victoria's electricity distributor SP AusNet is urging customers to be prepared for possible power interruptions following extreme weather forecasts of damaging winds, heavy rain and potential for flash flooding.

SP AusNet spokesperson Joe Adamo said the power company was asking people to have plans in place for the possibility of being without power as a result of the predicted 60-90km/h winds and heavy rain.

"We strongly urge people to stay well clear of any hazards they see, including fallen powerlines or tree branches on powerlines, and report the hazard immediately to **SP AusNet's 24-hour faults line on 13 17 99**," Mr Adamo said.

"Our network operations team works closely with the authorities to monitor severe weather and has mobilised emergency teams and crews to ensure we are available to respond as quickly as possible if power is affected.

"We're encouraging people to ensure they plan for strong wind including a contingency for being without power."

The following safety advice may be useful to prepare for possible power outages:

- Ensure you have a battery-operated radio, torch, spare batteries and a fully charged mobile phone
- Home phones may fail to work if wires are damaged, cordless phones won't work during a power outage
- Electricity-powered water pumps won't work if power is interrupted
- You may wish to turn your fridge and freezer to a cooler setting to help keep food fresh if there is a power outage
- We ask people to be patient, as power may not be restored for some time, depending on damage and access issues
- If you notice fallen powerlines or a tree on a powerline, contact **SP AusNet's faults line on 13 17 99**

The following safety advice may be useful to prepare in light of possible flooding:

- Unplug electrical appliances and move them to higher positions
- If you are leaving your property, turn off power, water and gas at the meters as you leave your home
- Do not use any water-damaged appliances and have a licensed electrical contractor check wiring and any water-damaged electrical device prior to turning back on.
- Stay well clear of fallen powerlines in flood regions and report them **SP AusNet's faults line 13 17 99**
- Further safety advice may be sought from Energy Safe Victoria at **[www.esv.vic.gov.au](http://www.esv.vic.gov.au)**

Mr Adamo said power outages never occur at a convenient time and that we always work safely to get power restored as quickly as possible, but damaging winds could have a severe impact on electricity infrastructure.

For general enquiries, customers can contact SP AusNet's customer service line on **1300 360 795** (8am – 5pm, Monday to Friday) or visit the website for further information [www.sp-ausnet.com.au](http://www.sp-ausnet.com.au).

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