

Fire action not enough

Community leader says the Government needs to do more to reduce risk

Safety | Shaun Campbell

A STRATHEWEN community leader has welcomed State Government plans to improve powerline safety, but says more could be done to reduce bushfire risks. Strathewen Community Recovery Association chairman Malcolm Hackett said the Government's \$750 million response to the Powerline Bushfire Safety Taskforce's report was a "good start" and a "major improvement".

But he said the effect on power

bills, which the Government estimated would rise by \$13 a year in a decade, was "chickenfeed".

"I think there are still a number of high-risk areas which are not being addressed," Mr Hackett said. "I thought the Victorian community would have been willing to pay more to increase the safety of people and property."

The plan, announced last month, includes replacing automatic circuit reclosers with remotely controlled devices to allow electricity companies to

change settings quickly in response to bushfires.

The 2009 Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission found the devices contributed to the Kilmore East fire on Black Saturday that ravaged the Diamond Valley's northern townships, resulting in the deaths of 119 people.

The rollout is expected to take up to 10 years, costing \$500 million, with another \$200 million to be spent replacing more than 1000km of powerlines in the state's most high-risk areas.

Government spokesman Simon Troeth said safety settings for the reclosers would meanwhile be made more sensitive for six weeks in summer, starting on January 23 this year.

Kinglake Ranges Community Recovery Committee chair Bill Gale declined to comment as he had not yet read the plan.

How much are you willing to pay to protect your home? Have your say at diamondvalleyleader.com.au



Flooding at the Balance Gymnastics gym has forced the youngsters training for Australia's Got Talent to practise elsewhere.

Picture: JASON EDWARDS N29DV201

Extreme gymnasts carry on despite flooding

A GROUP of extreme gymnasts gearing up for their debut on *Australia's Got Talent* have been forced out of their Research gym since the Christmas Day storms.

Balance Gymnastics copped more than \$300,000 damage after water surged through the centre, damaging equipment and drenching foam pits.

But owner and tradesman Paul Danelutti, who has been repairing the damage, said the setback had not hampered training for the Off Balance team, which is set to appear on the Channel 7 talent show next month.

Eighteen male gymnasts aged 11-23 make up the team, which has been training up to 16 hours a week at nearby Eltham Mar-

tial Arts Academy on their two-minute acrobatic and tumbling routines.

Coach Chris Downie said the television show's producers had invited the gym to enter an act after hearing about its extreme team.

Mr Downie said the group had not yet settled on its routine for the show, but said it would "try

and be clever with the skills we have and surprise people with something a little bit dangerous and exciting".

Mr Danelutti, who bought the gym with another parent almost five years ago to save it from closure, said he hoped to have the centre repaired and fitted out with new equipment for its 500 members on January 30.

LIFESTYLE ROLLER SCREENS



The most technologically advanced, affordable & quality driven external roller screen on the market!

- Up to 85% light control & shade factor
- Up to 95% heat control & UV block
- High velocity wind resistance – 154kg loading
- Interlocking zip track
- Reduced energy consumption all year round
- Daytime privacy

Ideal for Verandas, Pergolas or Windows
Up to 24 months INTEREST FREE Conditions apply

RING NOW 9354 1500

or visit our SHOWROOM

88-90 Derby Street, Pascoe Vale

24COV15534F/KE/10

eurotec
WINDOW SHUTTERS
www.eurotecwindowshutters.com.au

ALICE KITCHENS

VERSATILE KITCHENS TO SUIT YOUR HOME

Alice Kitchens is a small business that focuses on providing clients with high-quality kitchens that are built to last.

We work with clients to develop a design that best suits their needs. From traditional designs through to minimalist contemporary kitchens

For a free quote contact Alice Kitchens
9464 3899 or 0408 848 896
18/350-354 Settlement Road
THOMASTOWN

St. George's

Medical & Dental Centre

Dentists: Drs Eva Tossoun & Fady Tossoun

Provides quality dentistry with the latest Technology for all the family in a friendly environment.

- Cosmetic Dentistry, Veneers
- Teeth Whitening in chair (Zoom)
- Root Canal, Crown, Bridges, Dentures

Available Saturdays and Evenings up to 8.30pm

BULK BILLING

Ph: 9432 5400

109 MAIN RD, LOWER PLENTY
At Lower Plenty Shops cnr Para Rd

17DVV519304F/JOX/10

We guarantee that our experienced expert fitters measure every foot correctly, every time.

airflex®
softer, lighter, more flexible

Model	Sizes	Features	Color	Was	Now	Savings
TRANCE	Sizes 4-12	Including half sizes	Black Lace	\$119.95	\$99.95	SAVE \$20
SWING	Sizes 9-2	T-Bar Buckle	Black Only	\$99.95	\$79.95	SAVE \$20
SUBJECT	Sizes 9-2	T-Bar Buckle	Black & Brown	\$99.95	\$79.95	SAVE \$20
TRIPLE	Sizes 3-7	T-Bar Buckle	Black & Brown	\$99.95	\$89.95	SAVE \$10

Quality Multi Fit School Shoes with genuine half sizes

PLUS 15% OFF ANY PURCHASE FOR THE MONTH OF MARCH 2012!

ELTHAM FOOTWEAR
FITTING SPECIALISTS

Shop 22-23 Eltham Town Mall
10 Arthur Street Eltham 3095
Ph: 9439 4383

PLUS you will go into a draw to WIN either an iPhone4S or an iPad2!