

Planned Maintenance

Overview

This policy outlines how we will manage our planned maintenance program.

Scope

This policy applies to all properties owned or managed by SGCH Victoria and its subsidiaries (we, our and us).

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Plan and budget for a program of maintenance to maximise the life of dwellings
- Optimise our budget by achieving the best possible balance between planned and responsive maintenance
- Make sure that we comply with our legal and contractual responsibilities

Types of planned maintenance

There are 3 categories of planned maintenance:

- Programmed maintenance (lifecycle) – programmed maintenance is based on the condition of a property. We assess our properties regularly and identify the highest priority based on function, safety, and appearance. This category forms most of our planned work by volume and value each year, with the highest priority works planned and budgeted for yearly.
- Annual service and compliance maintenance - We plan regular maintenance on works that are undertaken on a regular cycle e.g. compliance inspection of fire safety, gas and electrical equipment.
- Special projects - We have a range of special projects including security upgrades and upgrades to core infrastructure.

Programmed maintenance

To assess the condition of a property, we undertake a Property Condition Assessment (see SGCH Victoria Property Assessment policy).

Where a property becomes vacant within 12 months of any programmed maintenance being due, we will consider bringing the work forward to minimise the impact on future renters. For example, if the component is rated and therefore nearing replacement, it will be upgraded during the vacant term. Priority will be given to items that improve the safety and security of renters.

Annual service and compliance maintenance activities

Termite inspections

We conduct termite inspections on selected capital and owned properties annually (undertaken by specialist contractors). We also look for signs of termite infection/damage during property inspections.

Smoke alarms / smoke detectors

We install smoke detectors in all our owned properties and inspect and test them annually.

If a leasehold property has no smoke detector installed, the Leasehold Acquisitions Manager must ask the owner to install a smoke detector immediately. We will not accept properties that do not have smoke alarms.

Gas safety check

We undertake a gas safety check of all gas installations and fittings in the rented premises, conducted every 2 years by a licensed or registered gasfitter in accordance with the *Residential Tenancies Regulations 2021 (Vic)*.

Electrical safety check

We undertake an electrical safety check of all electrical installations, appliances and fittings provided by SGCH Victoria as a residential rental provider in the rented premises, conducted every 2 years, by a licensed or registered electrician, in accordance with the *Residential Tenancies Regulations 2021 (Vic)*.

Residual Current Devices (RCDs)

All new properties have RCDs included as part of construction. We install RCDs in existing buildings if they are not present. We test RCDs annually at the same time as testing smoke alarms. Any testing and decisions about RCD's must be made in accordance with the *Residential Tenancies Regulations 2021 (Vic)*.

Window locks

We install keyed window locks in all our properties to lock windows closed and to allow partial opening for safe ventilation as required by the *Residential Tenancies Regulations 2021 (Vic)*. We ensure keyed window locks are installed prior to occupation.

Essential Fire Safety Measures

We conduct essential fire service maintenance (EFSM) annually to all Class 2 buildings we own or manage, to meet legislative requirements. We employ fire maintenance specialists to provide an annual certificate of compliance (AFSS).

Core Infrastructure maintenance

We undertake regular maintenance on lifts, stormwater drains, and water tanks based on the lifecycle of each component. We engage specialist contractors to plan and undertake these works.

We repair driveways and pathways as required.

Cleaning & Vegetation management

For all owned and managed properties, we specify a regular cycle of works for common area cleaning, lawn mowing, and regular pruning/trimming of trees and shrubs. This work is undertaken through our multi-trade contractors. We regularly audit the quality standard of the work undertaken by the contractors to ensure compliance with contract terms and conditions. Renters must not plant or remove trees or plants in common areas, except in space nominated as a community garden.

For leased properties within an Owners Corporation, the Owners Corporation is responsible for the common areas landscape and grounds management. When we become aware of common area maintenance issues, we will advise the Owners Corporation.

Private yards

Our renters are responsible for maintaining private yards, including lawn mowing, pruning manageable size trees and cleaning gutters of single storey houses.

Special Projects

Core Infrastructure upgrade

We replace or upgrade utilities within the property boundary as required, including lifts in multi-storey buildings, Building Essential Services (BES) relating to fire, electrical, mechanical, plumbing and/or building structure systems to ensure that our properties meet our Safe and Sustainable Homes (SASH) standard at all times. We plan for these upgrades on a life-cycle basis and include estimates of the planned works in our 10 Year and Annual Asset Plans.

Security upgrades

Cameras

We may install security cameras if we believe that it will help with customer safety and building security or to reduce illegal activity or unacceptable behaviour at our properties. The relevant Homes and Customers team members are jointly responsible for determining if security cameras are appropriate on a case-by-case basis. A business case will then be prepared pending delegation limits for approval.

We will inform our renters when we are going to install security cameras at their property, and we will install signage at our properties where we have security cameras installed.

We will make sure that we meet our duties under privacy laws and Local Planning Policies. Access to security camera footage will be restricted to our staff or staff of partner organisations who have a business need for access.

Most of our security cameras will be activated when there is movement. Digital recordings will be available for a 4-week rolling timeframe to allow review of reported incidents. Recordings from security cameras will only be accessed by our authorised employees as needed.

We will only provide footage to external parties as permitted by privacy or other relevant laws. This may include providing footage to an enforcement body for enforcement related activities (as defined by the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth)).

Renters may request approval to install security cameras under our Alterations policy.

Other security features

We will install intercoms, door locks, security gates, fencing and signs. The relevant Customers team members are jointly responsible for determining the level and extent that these security features are appropriate for the property.

Non-dedicated roads, pathways and driveways

We undertake maintenance or repair works to these features where those works are not provided by a local council. We will engage a specialist contractor for these works as needed – mainly trip hazards and potholes.

Hazardous materials management

We repair, replace or make good building elements as required to meet legislative requirements. This includes actions required to be undertaken for lead paint, asbestos and other hazardous materials.

If renters become aware that these substances have been disturbed, they contact our maintenance helpline so that we can arrange for any risk to be managed.

Gutter cleaning

We clean gutters on attached dwellings or multi storey residential buildings.

For freestanding properties including houses, townhouses and villas, renters are responsible for making sure that their gutters are cleaned. If a renter is elderly or has a disability, we will arrange and pay for the gutters to be cleaned. At no time do we expect a renter to climb on a roof.

Alterations

Our renters may request modifications and or additions to a property that are non-disability related. Refer to our Alterations policy for more information.

Pest control

As a rental provider, we are responsible for:

- Fumigation of vacant properties
- Fumigation for household pests if they were already a problem when the renter moved in
- Fumigation to common areas
- Treatment to prevent bird and possum access

Pest control is deemed a reactive maintenance function, and the urgency of these requests will be determined based on the definition of an urgent repair in the *Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (Vic)* and our Responsive Maintenance Matrix.

We have limited the annual termite inspection program (through external specialists) to those properties deemed at highest risk as the cost of the entire portfolio program was significantly greater than the annual rectification expenditure.

Fences

All properties that we manage have dividing fences that meet local council regulations for safety, function, and appearance. If a fence does not meet these requirements, we will arrange repair or replacement of the fence.

If the owner of a neighbouring property requests to replace a fence that divides a property that we manage, they will be required to submit a written Fencing Notice which includes the following information:

- The line on which the works should be carried out (the boundary line)
- The type of works including type, length and height of the proposed fence
- The contractor
- A cost estimate
- How much each party should contribute
- The addresses of both properties and proof of property ownership in the form of a rates notice

If the owner of a neighbouring property wants to install a fence which is better than the standard required, we will only pay half of the cost of the standard fence type in accordance with the *Fences Act 1968 (Vic)*.

When assessing or initiating requests to replace dividing fences, we will meet our responsibilities under the *Fences Act 1968 (Vic)*, *Fences Amendment Act 2014 (Vic)*, *Residential Tenancies Act 1997 (Vic)*, and local planning laws.

Trees

Most properties we manage have trees of varying scale either within the curtilage or adjacent. Whether they are considered significant depends on the local government area where the property is located.

Trees that are not considered significant but are likely to damage our property will be pruned or removed.

If a significant tree is located on our property and is likely to damage our property, we will obtain consent from council to prune or remove the tree.

If a significant tree is located on a neighbouring property or council land, and is likely to damage our property, we will notify the owner of the land and obtain consent to prune or remove the tree. This may include obtaining consent from council (as required)

All pruning or tree removal costs are to be paid by the party who is commissioning the work.

Quality Inspections of work undertaken

Planned maintenance and modification works will be inspected through a site visit or desk top audit to confirm acceptability and to ensure the correct work has been carried out to scope and the requested standard.

Relevant laws, regulations or standards

- [Housing Act 1983 \(Vic\)](#)
- [Residential Tenancies Act 1997 \(Vic\)](#)
- [Fences Act 1968 \(Vic\)](#)
- [Fences Amendment Act 2014 \(Vic\)](#)
- [Privacy Act 1988 \(Cth\)](#)
- [Disability Discrimination Act 1992 \(Cth\) \(Disability Discrimination Act\)](#)
- [National Construction Code \(NCC\)](#)
- [Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Control Act 1999 \(Cth\) \(EPBC Act\)](#)
- [Building Act 1993 \(Vic\)](#)
- [Building Regulations 2018 \(Vic\)](#)
- [Owners Corporations Act 2006](#)
- [Building Amendment \(Swimming Pool and Spa\) Regulations 2019](#)
- Victorian Housing Registrar Performance Standard 2 (Housing Assets)

Related documents/ resources

- Policy: SGCH Victoria Property Assessment
- Policy: SGCH Victoria Responsive Maintenance
- Policy: SGCH Victoria Asset Maintenance
- Policy: SGCH Victoria Alterations
- Resource: [Housing Registrar's Asset Management Good Practice Guide](#)

Policy information

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Transparency & accessibility	Available on our website