

Media release

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Triple Zero service urges Victorians to make the right call this winter

The Emergency Services Telecommunications Authority (ESTA) is reminding the community to keep the Triple Zero service free this winter for genuine emergencies and people in need.

Peak demand in winter can stretch emergency services, as hospitals and medical staff brace for another busy flu season.

ESTA answers on average more than 6900 calls for help per day, representing a call every 12 seconds.

ESTA's Executive Director Emergency Communications Centres, Tim Madigan, said people shouldn't be discouraged from calling Triple Zero but to ensure that they are only calling if they genuinely need an ambulance.

"Calling Triple Zero when there is no emergency puts lives at risk because it may delay help to someone in genuine need," he said.

"An emergency is a serious, unexpected and often dangerous situation that requires immediate action. This includes danger to life, health or property.

"Some examples of an emergency include difficulty breathing, severe bleeding or a suspected stroke," he said.

Ambulance Victoria's Acting CEO Mick Stephenson said when it comes to an emergency, time is absolutely critical to a patient's outcome.

"When it's not an emergency, we're simply asking people to take a moment and think about their options, because it could save someone else's life," he said.

"If you feel unwell or have a minor injury, you can visit your local GP. You can speak with a pharmacist for questions about general health or use of medications, or ring Nurse-On-Call at any time for immediate advice on 1300 60 60 24."

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ESTA provides the critical link between the Victorian community and the state's emergency services agencies. It provides Victoria's 24-hour emergency call-taking and dispatch services for police, fire, ambulance and VICSES.

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