

Media release

15 January 2019

Six calls a day for kids locked in hot cars

The triple zero service is again reminding Victorians to be aware of children and pets being locked in cars on hot days, with January the most dangerous time for such incidents.

The Emergency Services Telecommunications Authority (ESTA) says last summer there were 564 cases of a child being locked in a hot car; on average emergency services responded to six calls a day, with 199 call-outs in January alone.

Most calls came from Frankston, Preston, Pakenham, Berwick and Dandenong.

ESTA's Executive Director Operations Patrick Berry urged parents and carers to remember that the temperature inside a car could be 20 to 30 degrees hotter than outside.

Mr Berry said there was no excuse for leaving children or pets in hot cars.

"If you see a child or pet locked in a car make sure you call triple zero (000) and state your location clearly to the operator," he said.

"If you are in a car park, look for landmarks, section names, numbers or the colour of the parking bay so you can provide specific details."

Mr Berry said he hoped that the number of calls would drop with community awareness.

Jason Chambers, Kidsafe Victoria General Manager, said leaving a child unattended in a car, even for a short time, was dangerous.

"Most of the temperature rise inside a car occurs within the first five minutes and leaving the windows down has little effect on the temperature rise," he said.

"A child's body temperature rises three to five times faster than an adult, which places children at greater risk of suffering from dehydration and life threatening heatstroke.

"It's a good idea to keep your keys on you at all times when packing and unpacking the car to reduce the risk of your keys accidentally becoming locked in the car with a child."

The advice from ESTA and Kidsafe Victoria is, if you have to leave your car, always take the kids with you.

- Ends -

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. ESTA takes on average a call every 12 seconds.

For more information:

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