

# Property News

## January 2017

### NEW YEAR POOL HEALTH CHECK

Thinking about getting a New Year Health Check for your pool? Here are five signs that it might be time:

1. **Baby, it's hot outside** – A long hot summer can influence the health of your pool with extra sun exposure, temperature spikes, storms and rain all affecting healthy pool water balance. Did you know, that prolonged exposure to UV rays burns chlorine that is required to kill bacteria, and combined with warmer temperatures can promote algae growth? Summertime definitely means your pool needs a lot more care and attention than usual.
2. **You came back from holidays and the pool was green!** – According to the Healthy Pools Survey, 57% of pool owners experienced a 'green pool' in the past 12 months. Certainly one of those times that "green" doesn't equal good! If your pool has taken a turn for the worst then it's time to call in a professional. Make sure you get a qualified pool technician to restore the health of your pool water, otherwise it may end up costing you a lot more to rectify the problem.
3. **The pool LOOKS clean, but you're not really sure if the water is healthy?** – Taking the time to vacuum and skim the pool frequently is only part of the battle when it comes to keeping your pool water clean, healthy and ready for family fun. To maintain optimum pH and chlorine levels, make sure you're doing water tests once a fortnight, or even weekly in heavy use periods. Be sure to clean filters and basket regularly to ensure maximum efficiency.
4. **Every man (& his dog!) have had a dip over the holidays** – Much like your home over Christmas the more visitors the pool has, the more clean-up is necessary afterwards. Chlorine levels should remain at 2-3 Parts Per Minute (PPM) to disinfect all microorganisms that can cause health issues. When your pool is getting a work-out, it's critical to do regular water tests and maintenance to prevent the water from deteriorating and causing health risks for your family like ear, nose and throat infections; all side effects of swimming in a dirty pool. We know swimming with fido is fun and on a hot summer's day it's very tempting to let your dog jump in the pool to cool-off with the family, but this can have a significant impact on chlorine levels and water hygiene. Allowing pets, in particular dogs, in the pool can have serious consequences on pool health. Dog dirt in particular, rapidly depletes chlorine and dog hair



can obstruct the filter, leaving your pool at serious risk of an algae infestation!

5. **You can't remember the last time you even had it cleaned?** – With a busy rundown to the end of summer, it's easy for pool servicing to get away from you. If that's you, why not organise a fully certified pool technician to come poolside for regular pool servicing so you can focus on the more important things in 2016!

Source: Poolwerx, 2016

## **SMOKE ALARMS IN PROPERTIES AND THE NEW LAWS**

For many years we have found smoke alarm locations and installation requirements within Queensland properties has had some very grey areas to what is actually the standard installation for homeowners and also what is required for their rental properties to be seen as the minimum requirement. At Brislec we try and educate our customers on all electrical requirements to keep them safe and follow the Australian Standards, in the past this area has certainly confused not only us as electrical contractors but even more so the property owner.

At the end of the day we all want the property and the people living inside to be safe and that is the main aim, in my opinion with so many different styles of properties out there the current legislation leaves it wide open to interpretation as to the location a smoke alarm should be installed and what type of alarm it should be, not to mention the maintenance that is required to keep them functioning properly.

I have listed below what the new legislation means to all of us owning and living in a Queensland property and this should be read in conjunction with the Fire and Emergency services (Domestic Smoke Alarms) Amendments Bill 2016, this can be used as a guide to what your obligations are.

For any Questions at all please feel free to contact us at Brislec Data and Electrical HQ and we will be more than happy to assist.

07 3399 9449 or [www.brislec.com.au](http://www.brislec.com.au) or on Facebook

### **What the new Legislation means to you:-**

- These new laws **ONLY** apply to Queensland; refer to Amendment Bill referenced above
- From 1 January 2017 all smoke alarms installed in Queensland must be Photoelectric Technology
- From 1 January 2017 if any smoke alarm is requiring replacement due to any reason it must be replaced with



Photoelectric Technology and must be the same installation technique as previous as a minimum eg Hard wired

- The new legislation is rolled out over a period of 10 years
- If you are acquiring new building approval from 1 January 2017 you will be required to comply with new laws
- If you are doing any major renovations, which means you are eg Moving walls or adding additional rooms in a home you are required to comply with the new laws
- From 1 January 2022 if you have a rental property or are selling a home, unit or rental property you are now required to comply with the new laws
- From 1 January 2027 **ALL** homes, units and domestic properties are to comply with the new laws

#### **What you need to do to comply with new laws (minimum):-**

- Install a smoke alarm in every bedroom of your property
- Install a smoke alarm in every hallway outside of bedrooms of your property
- Install a smoke alarm on all levels of a home preferably in an egress area if it is not located near a bedroom eg. If you only have open plan living area on ground floor of your home, smoke alarm would be located between the stairwell and the front door
- In the case of a Queenslander with an enclosed room eg. Laundry under the house a smoke alarm must be installed

#### **Interconnection requirements:-**

- All smoke alarms installed are to be connected by either being wired together by a qualified electrician **AND/OR**
- Smoke alarms are to be interconnected by wireless technology
- Smoke alarms can be interconnected with a mixture of these technologies

#### **Battery operated smoke alarms:-**

**Only** 10 year lithium battery photoelectric smoke alarms with wireless technology can be interconnected with all other smoke alarms in property can be used

*Source: Shane Lockland, Brislec Data and Electrical, October 2016*



## **IS YOUR HOME 1 IN 3 THAT GETS ATTACKED BY TERMITES!**

Did you know that it's estimated that termites do more damage to Australian homes each year more than, fire floods and storms combined!



Statistics show that 1 in 3 properties in Australia will be attacked by termites. Termites will travel a hundred metres from their nest in search of food! And that 80% of houses in Australia are only 25 metres from a Termite Colony.

Do you remember when your investment property was last inspected? If you haven't had an inspection completed in the last 12 months, please do so. You could be potentially saving yourself thousands of dollars in repairs and unwanted stress.

This is why it is important to have a Termite Inspection completed on your home yearly. The Australian Standards RECOMMENDED termite inspections no more than 12 months apart.

*Source: Trusted Pest Management, October 2016*



## **LAWN AND GARDEN MAINTENANCE IN A RENTAL PROPERTY**

### **How to remove potential issues**

Setting up your Investment Property for renting is a pivotal part of minimizing the stress through your investment lifetime. Lawns and garden maintenance is something you often need to consider with freestanding houses, and some townhouses – as well as tree trimming which may be required from time to time. Our modern day lives have grown fast paced, and often the lives of our Tenants are similarly busy. As a result, many people simply do not have as much free time to do these kinds of everyday tasks – or sometimes avoid them all together.

It is important to state the differences with lawns and gardens, as opposed to tree trimming. Generally speaking, if it is within reach for the Tenants to trim without the assistance of a ladder, then it is something your Tenant can and should be doing. If it is beyond this reach, it would then fall to you as the owner to have it attended to when required. Thankfully tree trimming is usually a job that only needs doing occasionally!



Having an Investment Property with large lawn or garden areas, or sometime both – can lead to these areas being neglected; sometimes even with otherwise good Tenants. How do we minimize the risk of problems occurring, and in turn remove the distraction and potential expense from *your* life?

There are a number of options you can consider, depending on the circumstances:

- 1. Include the lawn and/or garden maintenance in the rent –** bypass the Tenants all together, and have a contractor attend to this for them. You will want to consider recovering this cost from the Tenants through the rent price or other methods, while ensuring you are not disadvantaged in chasing away potential Tenants (by possibly being too high in rent price). We recommend considering this option on properties with large gardens and/or lawn areas, or for Tenants who do not have time to attend to it themselves.
- 2. Encourage Tenants to have it done professionally –** Have your Property Manager recommend they engage a contractor, and put them in contact with a good one. Your Property Manager can also help by making the Tenants aware the lawns and gardens are a priority for you, which may encourage them to ensure they are looked after.
- 3. Tenant direct responsibility, and setting the expectations -** By highlighting to your Tenants about their responsibilities with lawns and gardens, it can often encourage them enough the desired result. Making them aware you will be having this monitored from time to time can also help. This is a task your Property Manager can handle for you, and although it gives you less control over the situation – you can still monitor and act on any issues that arise through your State's Tenancy laws.

Regardless of which way you decide to go above, you are less likely to run into problems. Even if an issue does eventually occur, the Tenants have been made fully aware and there is a clear way for your Property Manager to deal with the issue. With tree trimming, the process is more straight forward.

You should be able to get advice on how often a trim would be required from a tree trimming company, and then have your Property Manager arrange it as a recurring job. This way, you have less to think about for your Investment – and more time to spend on other things.

We hope this information helps you better understand lawns and gardens in a rental property, and avoid unnecessary issues that can arise. If our Property Management team can provide guidance about managing the lawns and gardens, or other aspects of your Investment Property, we'd love to hear from you. We're here to help make your life easier with your Investment!



## CALENDAR

15<sup>th</sup> February 2017

28<sup>th</sup> February 2017

Mid Month Processing

End Of Month Processing

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL – Craig Mendoza

I hope all our landlords had a safe and wonderful Christmas.

We were kept very busy with a lot of storm damage over the Christmas period and on many of my inspections, I've suggested to the landlords to trim back branches overhanging roofs and fences.

Tenant demand in January has been extreme, with dozens of applications being submitted for all properties and those properties with air-conditioning are achieving higher rental yields and most of the demand. If you're looking for more tax deductions this year I recommend investing in A/C.

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## QUOTE

“Only those who attempt the absurd can achieve the impossible.”

**Albert Einstein**