



As summer heats up checking on your neighbour is a cool idea

With the blistering heat of summer now arriving people with elderly or vulnerable neighbours should make the effort to check they are okay.

That's the message from Neighbour Day founder and Australia Day Ambassador Andrew Heslop who says hot weather and older residents simply don't mix.

"With heat wave conditions beginning to sweep across the country we have to take steps today to prevent anyone becoming unwell or dying because of the heat," said Andrew.

"High temperatures are clearly a health risk for the elderly and frail who simply cannot cope with the relentless heat. So I urge anyone with older people living next door, across the street or on the next farm to go and check up on them to make sure they are okay.

"Many senior citizens, particularly residents in rented homes, may not have air conditioning or even a fan to use. Those who do may still be reluctant to run them because of the cost.

"If your house has air-conditioning, why not invite your elderly neighbours over for a cold drink during the heat of the day? Consider giving them a spare key to your home so they can remain cool while you are at work.

"Or if you have a spare fan or portable air-conditioner at home that isn't being used why not offer it to them?"

"Everyone with elderly or vulnerable neighbours needs to be vigilant to help save lives," Andrew said.

Other handy tips for residents with elderly neighbours include –

- Remind them to drink enough fresh water to stay hydrated.
- Drop by in the morning and in the cool of the evening to see how they are.
- Leave your mobile or work phone number so they can contact you in an emergency.
- Alert police and emergency services immediately if elderly residents known to live alone fail to answer the door.

Neighbour Day, Australia's annual celebration of community, began in Melbourne in 2003. A national day to develop better relationships with the people who live around us it has five principal aims –

1. Strengthen communities and build better relationships with the people who live around us.
2. Create safer, healthier and more vibrant suburbs and towns.
3. Promote tolerance, respect and understanding.
4. Break down community barriers.
5. Protect the elderly, the vulnerable and the disadvantaged.

The 10th Neighbour Day will be held on Sunday 25th March 2012.

www.neighbourday.org

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