



BEYOND THE LETTERBOX

WINTER 2015

Calling Wickepin home

Former public servant Doug, his partner and their daughter found themselves on the public housing waiting list after health issues lead to Doug becoming unemployed. Unable to afford a private rental or to access Doug's superannuation, the family became homeless and were living in a tent.

Doug and family were open to housing options outside of the metro zone, and his urgent request was sent to the Housing Authority where it reached Wheatbelt Regional Manager Attila Mencshelyi. Happily, he remembered a property which had recently become available in the small regional town of Wickepin.

"From time to time properties do become available in the Wheatbelt which we try very hard to fill. There can be little demand for homes in some of these small regional areas due to the few services on offer," Attila said.

"I explained that although Wickepin is very small, it's only 40km from Narrogin which is a major epicentre for the area."

Doug was extremely happy with the service he received and the speed at which he and his family were able to move into their new home.

"It was amazing for us. We are very appreciative and very grateful to Housing for the prompt service we received," he said.

"The Wickepin community is friendly and we have met people in town. My daughter Amelia's first birthday present is a home for her, myself and Cherry."

Doug is now looking for job opportunities in the town that he and his family are proud to call home.



The Department of Housing is now referred to as the Housing Authority. Our services, local offices and contact details remain unchanged.

Comments or feedback?

customerfeedback@housing.wa.gov.au or Locked Bag 22, East Perth WA 6892.



Ellenbrook on top of the world

Twenty-one years after earth was first turned in the Swan Valley, Ellenbrook was named the world's best master-planned community at an international awards ceremony in Kuala Lumpur in June.

Already Australia's most awarded urban development project, Ellenbrook has taken out the FIABCI (International Real Estate Federation) World Prix d'Excellence Award for 2015.

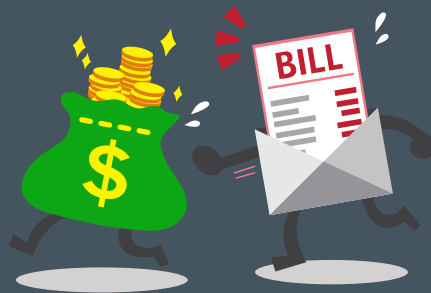
The Housing Authority's Acting Director General Paul Whyte said the award was further validation of Housing's approach to working in partnership with the private sector to successfully integrate social and affordable housing into vibrant, active and diverse communities.

"Ellenbrook is a pioneering development in which Housing has partnered with LWP Property Group to deliver a world-class master-planned community," Mr Whyte said.

Ellenbrook is designed to provide housing and associated education, recreation, retail and community facilities, defined by the creation of eight distinct villages or neighbourhoods with a vibrant town centre at its heart. The City of Swan forecasts the population of Ellenbrook to increase to 37,150 by 2016 and 44,185 by 2021.



Making payments? You have options



Many tenants enjoy the freedom of automatic account payments, which removes the stress of having to remember to pay your account on time. For those tenants who don't have automatic payments set up, there are a number of ways you can continue to pay your account, including:

- Post Office – Use your Housing Authority Card to make payment at any Australia Post office or Agency.
- BPOINT – Make a payment online using your debit or credit card. Visit www.housing.wa.gov.au, click 'Online bill payments', and supply your account number.
- BPAY – Look for the BPAY logo and biller code on your bill. You can access BPAY through online, mobile or phone banking. When making your payment, please ensure that you use the reference number on your bill that relates to the account you are paying. If you'd like more information on how BPAY works, visit their website at www.bpay.com.au.

If you'd like to set up automatic payments, please download a Direct Debit Form or a Rent Deduction Form from www.housing.wa.gov.au or contact your local Housing office.

Installing surveillance devices in your home

Ever wondered if you're allowed to install a surveillance device at your home? Here are some things you need to know.

What is a surveillance device?

A surveillance device can be an optical surveillance device (security camera), a listening device (voice recorder) or a tracking device.

What are the rules when using a surveillance device?

You cannot install, use or maintain a surveillance device if it will monitor, observe or listen to a private conversation or activity to which you are not a party, without the consent of all people involved.

A surveillance device must not be directed at, or be able to view, other people's private premises including doorways, windows, balconies and entrances.

What do I need to do in order to install a surveillance device?

As a public housing tenant, you must first seek permission from the Housing Authority.

They will assess the need for installation and the impact of the installation on the property and surrounding properties. If permission is granted, you are responsible for all the expenses associated with the surveillance device's installation, removal, repair and maintenance.

You must comply with the Surveillance Devices Act 1998. A breach of the Act is considered an offence and may result in action being taken by the police.

If you are found to be operating a surveillance device without the required approval from the Housing Authority and/or in an illegal manner you will place your tenancy at risk.



Preparing for storms

Winter storms can bring heavy rain, damaging winds, lightning, hail, floods and tornadoes to some parts of Western Australia each year. If you live in a storm-prone area, it's your responsibility to be prepared in order to ensure your safety and reduce potential damage to your home.

Prepare:

- Trim branches which you can reach safely on your property. If there are branches near or touching power lines, please call Housing Direct on 1300 137 677.
- Dispose of rubbish and put away loose objects.
- Prepare a list of emergency contact numbers and keep them easily accessible.
- Prepare an emergency kit, which might contain things like a portable radio, torch, spare batteries, first aid kit, waterproof bags, non-perishable food items, gloves and medication.
- If you live in a flood prone area it is important to prepare an emergency evacuation plan in case your home becomes flooded.

During A Storm:

- Close your curtains and blinds and stay away from windows.
- If there is lightning, unplug electrical appliances and do not use landline telephones.
- If you are outside, find shelter away from trees, power lines, metal objects, storm water drains, rivers and/or streams.
- Take extra care on the roads when driving.

You can keep up-to-date with the latest storm warnings and advice through news bulletins on radio and TV.

Alternative services include:

- The Department of Fire and Emergency Services website – www.dfes.wa.gov.au
- The Bureau of Meteorology's website – www.bom.gov.au
- The Bureau of Meteorology's recorded information line – 1300 659 213.

Safety device testing

The Housing Authority has installed a number of safety devices in your home.

The first one is a combined Residual Current Device/Miniature Circuit Breaker (RCD/ MCB), which provides protection against electrocution and the overloading of all circuits in the property.

The second is a smoke alarm, which alerts you to smoke presence in the property.

How to test your RCD/MCB

- Press the **TEST** button on the RCD/MCB; you should hear a click.
- The lever will flip downwards in the 'off' position.
- If the RCD/MCB doesn't flip downwards, you need to contact Housing Direct on **1300 137 677**.
- If the lever does flip downwards, then it works.
- Flip the lever upwards to 'on' and this will turn the power on.



How to test your smoke alarm

- To test your smoke alarm turn your power off at the mains. Press the **TEST** button on your smoke alarm (as illustrated); you should hear the alarm activate.
- The smoke alarm will automatically reset once the button has been released after testing. If you are unable to reach the test button, please use a broom handle. If the Smoke Alarm continues to beep after testing or the red light stays on the battery may be recharging, this could take approximately 20mins. If the beeping continues or the red light does not disappear after this time contact Housing Direct on **1300 137 677**.
- **DO NOT use a screw driver or put tape over the alarm.**
- If you don't hear a sound, contact Housing Direct straight away on **1300 137 677**.
- Once the test is complete, remember to turn your power back on at the mains.



DO TEST



**DO NOT paint,
remove or cover up**

If you notice a problem with your RCD/MCB or smoke alarm please call
HOUSING DIRECT on 1300 137 677.