

COMMUNITY



Harmony Day Event I hosted at Mill Park Library



Discussion with Marymede Catholic College student leaders & Principal Tim Newcomb about issues that matter to students



Visit to Whittlesea First Response Youth Refuge in South Morang



Meeting with Ivana Ilic to discuss life after Australian Idol



Turning the SOD on the Quarry Hills Regional Park Connecting Trails



Closing Ceremony at the Whittlesea City Little Athletics Centre



Throwing the first pitch at the opening of the new Softball & Baseball training facility at Mill Park Recreation Reserve



Visiting the VVED at the Northern Hospital with Premier Jacinta Allan & Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas



Visit to The Orange Door in Epping with Minister for Prevention of Family Violence Vicki Ward



Talking to locals at the Whittlesea Community Festival



Meeting with locals who keep us safe at the Community Health and Safety Expo at Mill Park Library



Officer Installation Ceremony of the Bayanihan in Melbourne Inc.



Laying a wreath at the Epping RSL's ANZAC Day Dawn Service - **Let's We Forget**

WOMEN'S HEALTH

FREE SPECIALIST WOMEN'S HEALTH CLINICS ON THE WAY

Since June, Victorian women have had access to free and comprehensive care and support under the one roof for conditions including endometriosis, pelvic pain, polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS), perimenopause and menopause.



Joining Premier Jacinta Allan & Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas in announcing the Women's Pain Clinic opening at the Northern Hospital in June

Back in May, I joined Premier Jacinta Allan and Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas at the Northern Hospital for the official announcement of the first five of 20 comprehensive women's health clinics that will open; including one at Northern Hospital.

The clinics will remove the barriers women face when trying to access specialist care and deliver more services closer to home.

WOMEN'S PAIN SURVEY

The announcement coincided with the opening of the Women's Pain Survey, which is seeking the views of women and girls who have experiences with pain and accessing related services.

The findings will contribute to the ongoing Inquiry into Women's Pain, adding to the insights from Victoria's recent nation-leading health report, Listening to Women's Voices. This confirmed what women already know: their health and pain are real and regularly overlooked, with 40 per cent of Victorian women living with chronic pain.

If you feel like you have something to contribute to the survey, please do not hesitate to register and let your experiences be known so they can be accounted for and help other women.



PELVIC PAIN EDUCATION

Young people across Victorian government schools will be offered free pelvic pain and menstrual education from 2025.

The sessions will include curriculum-aligned, age-appropriate and evidence-based information about menstrual health and pelvic pain. Students will develop skills and confidence to recognise when and how to seek help and support.

Procurement for a provider of the Pelvic Pain Education in schools' initiative will soon get underway, thanks to a \$900,000 investment in the Victorian Budget 2023/24.

FREE PADS & TAMPONS

Pads and tampons are not a luxury, they are a necessity. Yet many people in Victoria cannot afford the products they need to manage their periods.

It's why the Allan Labor Government is expanding access to pads and tampons through a \$23 million program, providing free pads and tampons at 700 public sites like cultural institutions, hospitals, courts, TAFEs, public libraries, and staffed train stations across the state

Vending machines are expected to be installed in a phased roll-out this year. The Allan Labor Government's nation leading move to make pads and tampons - alongside information and resources about women's health conditions and period pain - available for free in every public school from 2020.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

When women are still dying at the hands of men - we must do more. This is about changing laws, changing culture and delivering more support to keep women and children safe.

The Allan Labor Government is implementing all 227 recommendations of the Royal Commission into Family Violence and dedicated more money and effort than any other Australian government, ever.

These reforms include opening 36 Orange Doors, providing immediate and simple access for women escaping violence and establishing the nation's first dedicated prevention agency, Respect Victoria.

A new package of reforms will change laws, change culture and deliver new support for victim survivors when they need it most.

The package will drive action at every stage: better responding to victims when violence occurs, delivering a stronger justice response that holds offenders to account, and continuing Victoria's world-leading prevention response - stopping violence before it starts.

We are building on this ambitious agenda because we know the safety of women and girls is counting on it. Victoria is leading the nation in the prevention of family violence.

To access the local **Orange Door**, call **1300 234 263** or visit in-person at **Pacific Epping, Corner of Cooper & Miller St.**

HOUSING

MAKING RENTAL HOMES BETTER TO LIVE IN

We're making rental properties safer and more energy efficient.

This drives down power bills for renters and keeps their homes warm in winter and cool in summer.

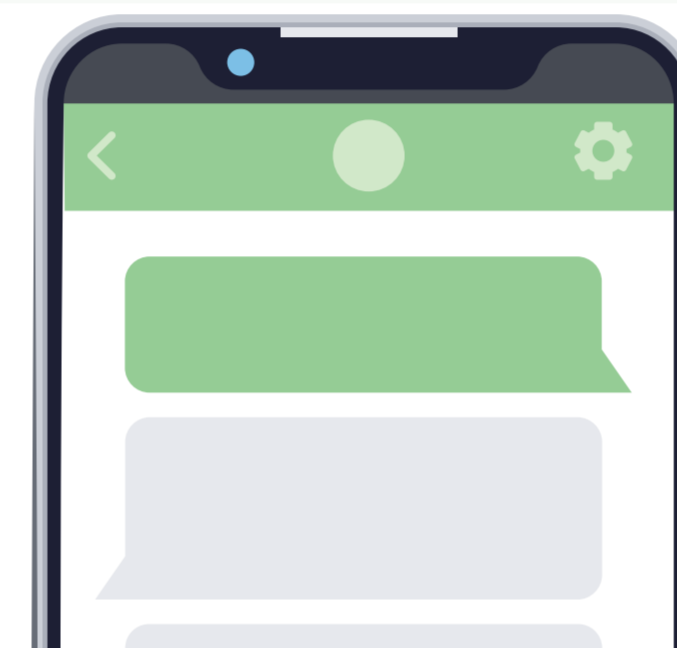
These new standards include requirements for ceiling insulation, draughtproofing, energy efficient electric hot water, heating and cooling.

The review of submissions to the consultation process is now underway on these new minimum rental standards. These include requirements for ceiling insulation, draughtproofing, hot water efficiency and cooling.

For information, scan the QR code.



LILY D'AMBROSIO'S WHATSAPP CHANNEL



I'm excited to unveil my new WhatsApp Channel. It will be a direct link to updates from me on local news and State Government initiatives that may be of interest.

By joining my WhatsApp Channel, you'll receive updates, important announcements, and insights directly to your notification centre. Simply use the **QR Code** to get direct updates.



COMMUNITY SURVEY

What do you think? I encourage all members of our community to take a few moments to fill out my community survey.

Whether it's feedback on local services, suggestions for improvement, or ideas for events, every response matters.

Your participation helps me to best understand what matters to you.



LILY D'AMBROSIO
MP for Mill Park

Always listening. Always doing.

- Shop 2/30 Oleander Drive, Mill Park VIC 3082
- millpark@parliament.vic.gov.au
- 9422 5171
- LilyDAmbrosioMP
- @LilyDAmbrosioMP
- @lilydambrosiomp

Authorized by Lily D'Ambrosio, Shop 2/30 Oleander Dr, Mill Park. Printed by ME, 26 Beyer Road, Braeside.



NORTHERN NEWS WINTER 2024

LILY D'AMBROSIO
MP for Mill Park

Always listening. Always doing.

Welcome to the Winter Edition of Northern News - my Mill Park community newsletter.

I hope that 2024 has been a good year so far.

The Allan Labor Government is getting on with helping Victorian families with the **cost of living**.

There are a range of initiatives such as:

- **Free Sessional Kinder** - saving families up to \$2,500 per child.
- **Free Glasses for Kids program** - providing free vision screening and, if needed, further testing and free glasses to participating Prep to Year 3 students.
- **Get Active Kids \$200 voucher** - helping families pay for their kids' sport and physical exercise.
- **\$400 School Saving Bonus** - for all government school students and concession card holders at non-government schools.
- **School Breakfast Clubs program** - providing free healthy breakfast to students at participating government schools.
- **Capped Council Rates with CPI**
- **The Victorian Default Offer - 2024/25** VDO savings households \$100 on their yearly electricity bill.

There are many more initiatives throughout this newsletter that I think will be very useful to you.

We've also had progress on local commitments such as a brand-new emergency department at the Northern Hospital, including a dedicated Children's emergency, \$36.166 million to build a brand-new Science, Arts and Technology building, a new administration building and new learning neighbourhood at Wollert Secondary College, and new shared user paths in South Morang and Epping.

And don't forget Wollert Central Primary School is expected to open its doors next year!

We'll continue to build on the success of our Solar Homes program - which has seen Victoria become the number one state for solar in Australia. The Victorian Budget invests \$29.7 million to fund an extra 27,000 rebates for energy efficient hot water systems. Switching to a heat pump or solar hot water system saves the average household up to \$400 on their energy bills each year.

Mill Park is proud of its diversity, and we know there is no place for discrimination, or Islamophobia in Victoria. That's why the Victorian Budget has invested \$6 million to faith-based non-government schools for additional security upgrades to make sure communities feel safe.

I'll continue to advocate strongly for our community across Mill Park, South Morang, Epping, and Wollert, and if you need assistance or have any questions, you are welcome to contact me via my office.

Warm regards,

Lily D'Ambrosio MP
State Member for Mill Park

Representing the communities of South Morang and parts of Mill Park, Epping and Wollert.

TRANSPORT

The Allan Labor Government's state budget this year delivers \$9.2 million for better walking and bike paths, including two shared user paths to connect Greenbrook Drive to Epping Station, and another path connecting Plenty Valley Town Centre and South Morang Station.

KEON PARADE & MODERN NEW TRAIN STATION

The level crossing on Keon Parade is now gone! I know how many people from our electorate pass this crossing regularly and what a great relief it will be to everyone not to have to deal with the dangerous and congested level crossing anymore.

Now the area has reduced congestion for more than 18,000 vehicles traveling through each day. This is one year ahead of schedule!

The Allan Labor Government is removing 110 dangerous and congested level crossings by 2030, with 80 already gone for good, boosting safety and easing congestion.



And the brand-new Keon Park Station opened late June! With modern facilities for passengers, the vibrant Keon Park Station is located on the south side of Keon Parade, providing better access to the station, and improved connections to local neighbourhoods, buses and more.

EDUCATION

FREE SESSIONAL KINDER & EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

The Allan Labor Government is reforming early childhood education to give every Victorian child the best start in life.

In the past year, our Free Sessional Kinder initiative has provided relief to approximately 140,000 families and saved them \$2,500 in fees per child.

It's why this year's Victorian Budget 2024/25 has made an additional \$129 million investment to continue delivering Free Kinder and the statewide roll-out of free Three-Year-Old Sessional Kinder.

An extra \$19 million will deliver new Building Blocks grants – enabling kinders to renovate and upgrade their facilities. The grant is aimed at expanding classrooms, funding native gardens, upgrading technology and transforming outdoor play spaces, investments in the future of our youngest Victorians.

GET ACTIVE KIDS VOUCHERS

We're investing \$6 million to expand our Get Active Kids vouchers. These vouchers offer up to \$200 to help eligible families cover the costs of sporting club registration, uniforms, and equipment.

For more information, visit getactive.vic.gov.au/vouchers



Wollert Secondary College has received \$36.166 million for upgrades. This will expand the school with a new Arts, Technology, and Science building, a new admin building, and new learning neighbourhood. This will ensure world-class spaces for the students and teachers at the College.



Speaking at the Mill Park Secondary College International Women's Day Breakfast

SCHOOL SAVING BONUS

We know some families are doing it tough, and everything adds up. This will provide \$400 in support of every child enrolled at government schools and eligible concession card holders at non-government schools. Your school will provide you with more details in Term 3.

GLASSES FOR KIDS

We're tripling our free Glasses for Kids program to ensure even more young Victorians can excel in the classroom and beyond. Having already supported 34,000 children across the state, this new investment will help an additional 74,000 students by providing free vision screenings and prescription glasses.



Pleased to host students from local schools for International Women's Day with Premier Jacinta Allan

I was delighted to officially open the brand-new 400-seat Performing Arts Centre at Mill Park Secondary College with Deputy Premier and Minister for Education Ben Carroll and School Principal Tim Natoli in June.



HEALTH & WELLBEING

VIRTUAL EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT

The Allan Labor Government is expanding Australia's first virtual emergency department, doubling the number of patients who can use the service and potentially avoid unnecessary hospital trips.

The Victorian Virtual Emergency Department (VVED) will provide urgent care via video for over 1,000 each day.

VVED has delivered:

- Clinical assessments
- Medical advice
- Treatment
- Referrals to over 256,000 patients

Impressively, 86% of these patients avoided unnecessary hospital visits, freeing up emergency departments for those in critical need.

The Allan Labor Government is investing over \$235 million to sustain this 24/7 service, delivered by Northern Hospital, and to recruit additional clinicians. This expansion will support more direct referrals from aged care, paramedics, primary health networks, Nurse on Call, and self-referrals, reducing pressure on the health system.



Visit to the Northern Hospital celebrating the \$813 million for a new emergency department

And the good news continues! We've just appointed Bec Spink as the Principal for the new Wollert Central Primary School (interim name)! The school will be located at 110 Saltlake Boulevard Wollert 3750, and is set to open for Term 1, 2025.

TAFE

Were you contemplating on upskilling?

Because over 80 TAFE courses are free in Victoria!

We've also made changes so that if you already have a university or TAFE qualification, you are also now eligible for Free TAFE!

New courses have just been added to the list, such as Diploma of Youth Work, Certificate IV in Kitchen Management, Diploma of Hospitality Management, and Certificate III in Tourism.

RAPID ACCESS HUBS TO DELIVER SURGERY

As part of the Government's COVID Catch-up Plan, Four Rapid Access Hubs across Victoria will be able to deliver surgery sooner with the investment of \$1.5 billion dollars.

Established to repair the planned surgery system and ensure more Victorians get the surgery they need sooner, the hubs offer an alternative pathway to care, on-the-spot procedures, and reduced wait times for low-risk procedures.



Opening of the Whittlesea Mental Health & Wellbeing Local in South Morang with Minister for Mental Health Ingrid Stitt

The hubs will be used exclusively for planned surgery to relieve pressure on main theatres, avoid impact to emergency procedures and free up staff – with minor upgrades undertaken at each hospital to accommodate:

- Northern Hospital – \$1 million for new equipment, making an existing theatre space operational to deliver an additional 1,000 procedures annually
- Royal Children's Hospital – \$3 million to support a six-bed increase in overnight stay capacity, supporting an extra 1,560 admissions annually

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT MADE EASIER IN WHITTLESEA

The Allan Labor Government is building a modern and accessible mental health system for all Victorians, including walk-in services at the Whittlesea Mental Health and Wellbeing Local.

In early May, I was pleased to be with Minister for Mental Health Ingrid Stitt, to officially open the Whittlesea Mental Health and Wellbeing Local located at 7/1 Danaher Drive, South Morang.

Locals aged 26 and older can now receive free mental health support without needing a GP referral or appointment, providing community-based care for those experiencing mental illness or psychological distress, including co-occurring substance use issues.

The centre is open seven days a week and has face-to-face or telehealth appointment options.



Checking out progress on the City of Whittlesea Community Hospital

LOWERING YOUR ENERGY BILLS

SOLAR HOMES REBATES AND LOANS

The Solar Homes Program offers eligible Victorian households solar panel (PV) rebates and the option of an interest-free loan, hot water rebates, and an interest-free loan for solar batteries.

- Solar Battery Loans: Interest-free loans of up to \$8,800 are available to help eligible Victorian households reduce the upfront costs of installing a solar battery.
- Solar panel PV rebate: Solar panel rebates up to \$1,400 plus the option of an interest-free loan are available for eligible homes.
- Hot water rebate: The hot water rebate of up to \$1,000 is available on eligible heat pump and solar hot water systems.
- Solar rebates for rental properties: Solar panel rebates are available of up to \$1,400 plus the option of an interest-free loan.
- Solar rebates for community housing: Solar panel rebates of up to \$1,400 are available for community housing organisations.



For more information on these rebates and loans, including how to apply, scan the QR code.

VICTORIAN ENERGY UPGRADES

We want to help you cut your power bills and reduce greenhouse gas emissions with discount energy-saving products.

Which is why since 2009, the Victorian Energy Upgrades program has supported over 2.3 million households and businesses to upgrade their appliances and equipment.

These households and businesses have saved on average \$110 and \$3,700 respectively on their energy bills annually. Products include lighting, space heating and cooling, water heating, and draft sealing.

So if you're replacing an:

- Old gas Heater
- Old and inefficient gas ducted heating system
- Old electric water heater
- Old gas storage or instant water heater

You can receive discounts off new energy efficient electric appliances through the VEU.

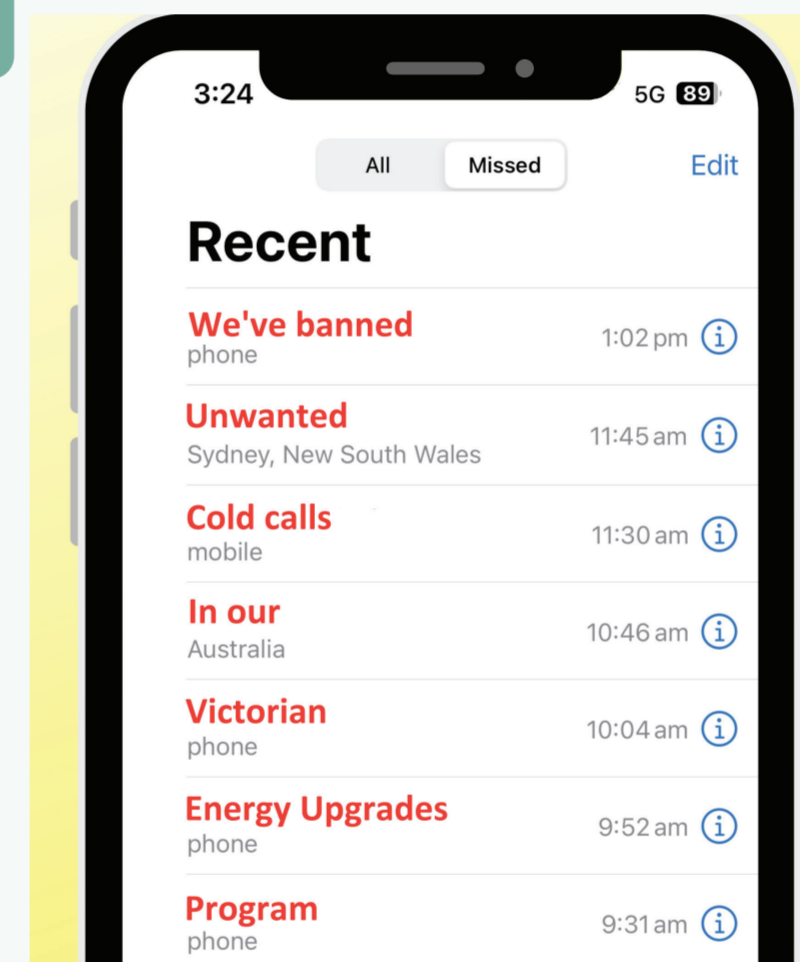
WHITTLESEA COMMUNITY HOSPITAL

The Allan Labor Government is investing more than \$800 million to build community hospitals in major growth areas including the City of Whittlesea.

Whittlesea Community Hospital will be a small public hospital providing a range of important everyday health services including chronic disease management, chemotherapy, and women's health.

The project will help take pressure off nearby major hospitals, including Northern Hospital Epping, and enable more people to manage their health needs closer to home. Strong links to specialists, community health providers and social support services will ensure more seamless follow-up treatment and support for those who require complex care.

The Whittlesea Community Hospital will be managed by Northern Health and located in Mernda.



We have also heard from you regarding unwanted telemarketing calls or door knocking.

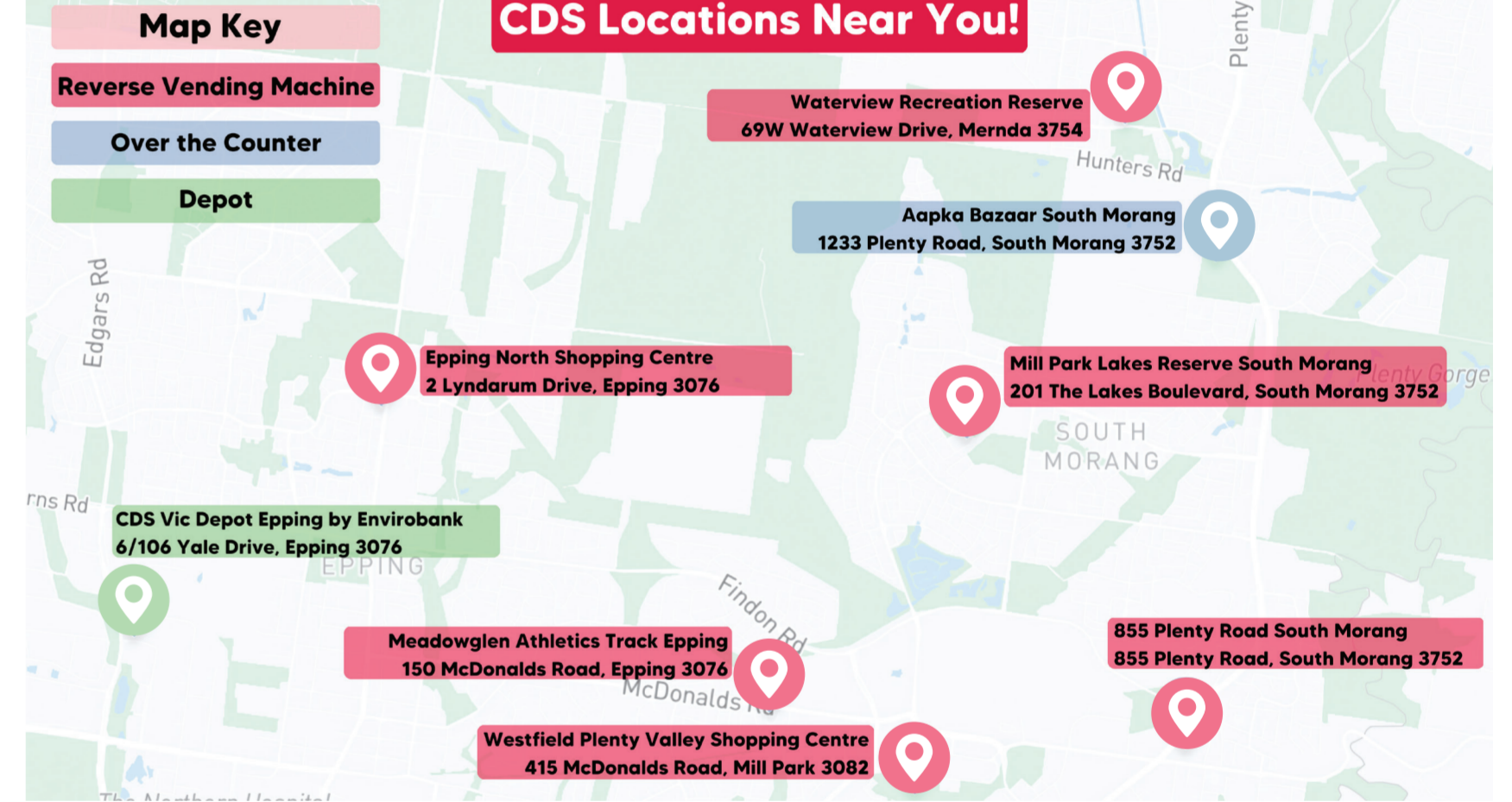
So, we are banning unwanted, annoying telemarketing calls and doorknocking in our Victorian Energy Upgrades Program. The ban on telemarketing came into effect on 1 May 2024, and the ban on doorknocking will start from 1 August 2024.

This change will help protect consumers, ensuring Victorians can make informed decisions as they make these energy efficiency upgrades to their homes.

The VEU program is a key pillar of the renewable energy transition. All-electric homes are healthier, cleaner and cheaper to run – and Victorians need information they can trust on how to get there. We're making sure Victorians get the information they need more appropriately and effectively.

Since 2009, the VEU program has supported over 2 million households to upgrade their appliances. Energy savings from the program are expected to reduce Victorian electricity consumption by 7% in 2025 and avoid \$3.8 billion in energy system costs.

CONTAINER DEPOSIT SCHEME



I've been amazed by the number of locals using the Container Deposit Scheme (CDS). As of 31 May 2024, more than 8.6 million containers have been returned, meaning more than \$861,000 in refunds turned to our local community via deposit locations across Epping, Mill Park, South Morang, and Wollert and surrounding suburbs since the CDS launched last November.

The CDS handles approximately 10 million cans, cartons, and bottles weekly in Victoria, with an average of 129 containers per transaction. Our most popular location is the CDS Vic Depot Epping at 6/106 Yale Drive, Epping! If you've got more than 100 containers, the depot is the best place to go for a very quick experience.

Each eligible can, container, or bottle will earn you a 10-cent refund. Victorians can opt to pocket the refunds or donate to the 1,600 available charities that are connected to the scheme. They include groups such as educational, community, sports, and more.



For more information about discounted energy efficient appliances, visit: energy.vic.gov.au/households/victorian-energy-upgrades-for-households.

VICTORIAN DEFAULT OFFER

Electricity prices for Victorian households on the Victorian Default Offer have gone down by an average of \$100 since July 1, thanks to the Allan Labor Government's record investments in renewable energy.

The Victorian Default Offer is a simple and trusted price for electricity, set up by the Allan Labor Government in 2019. It ensures Victorian households have access to a fair electricity deal, even if they are unable or unwilling to shop around in the market.

Bills are coming down because wholesale power prices are down. Thanks to our renewable energy investments, Victoria consistently has the lowest wholesale power prices in the country.

That's why Victorians on the VDO will pay on average \$300 less than households on the Default Market Offer in other states.



Checking out the new Westfield Plenty Valley CDS Machine