

## Gutter Cleaning

Cleaning gutters can be one of those maintenance jobs that gets easily overlooked. That is until the gutter becomes a garden, or there is a storm and water starts pouring over the edges. Quite often such overflow can redirect back into the building causing significant damage over time. Regular cleaning of gutters and downpipes is key to ensuring this does not happen! It also has benefits in reducing the excess that is liable if we need to make a claim for water ingress.

To assist parishes in this crucial maintenance the Diocese has purchased a Gutter vacuum. This is easy to operate and can be done safely from on the ground. You will have seen 'Gulliver' promoted in the Spirit and Diocesan updates recently. Rather than managing each parish booking Gulliver, we will be arranging for it go on Deanery tours.

To qualify for this rebate parishes need to either:

- Make use of the gutter-vac when it is in their deanery OR
- Engage a professional gutter cleaning company

Parishes that supply evidence that one of the above was done, either through a completed gutter-cleaning log (in the case of Gulliver) or a paid invoice (in the case of external work) will be entitled to the applicable rebate.

## Fire Readiness

Parishes should already have any fire equipment tested regularly (this includes extinguishers, hoses, emergency exit lights and detectors). Aside from being general good practice such testing is also a legal requirement. Beyond this there are a number of measures that parishes can employ to ensure the risk of fire is minimised. This include ensuring bins are not kept near buildings, evacuation maps are up to date and compliant and that evacuation drills have been conducted so that people know what to do and where to go in the event of an emergency.

To qualify for this rebate parishes need to:

- Supply evidence of regular testing of fire equipment
- Supply evidence of bins being stored at least 6m from any building (ie. a photo)
- Supply evidence that compliant evacuation plans are on display (we will provide advice on the current requirements for evacuation plans as they have recently changed)
- Supply evidence that an evacuation drill has been conducted recently (ie. a photo, a PC minute. Note: this need not occur during a regular church service)

## Volunteer Agreements

Property is not the only area of risk. People and processes are another vital aspect of risk mitigation and management. Volunteer agreements help outline what volunteers can expect of the church and what is expected of them. This might include training and support that is provided as well as the level of accountability and reporting that is required of them. A role description helps everyone be clear on what is being asked. Such agreements need not be lengthy legalistic documents. A regular review is also helpful in addressing issues before they escalate. Many parishes may already have such procedures in place and particular ministries (such as Op Shops) have templates that were provided previously. A general template is being developed and will be distributed post Synod.

To qualify for this rebate parishes need to demonstrate:

- Parish Council has established position descriptions and agreements for all volunteers that are engaged in activity outside of normal worship services (e.g. cleaning, bible study leading, Op Shops, pastoral visiting, nursing home or hospital visiting, etc)
- a schedule for reviewing the above on an annual / regular basis

## Safe Church Clearances

It hopefully goes without saying that we are committed to doing everything we can to ensure our churches are safe for all who participate in church activities. This includes screening and training for all who engage in ministry in the Diocese. Under the most recent Lay Safe Ministry Clearances Policy various categories of clearance levels and requirements are outlined. The focus of 2021-2 has been those who work with children and require a Level A clearance. Once these are all cleared, the process will open to the remainder of those who require a Level A clearance, as well as those who require Level B or C.

Despite significant work by the Registry team, which includes the dedicated efforts of Jenny Slattery, there is still a considerable number of individuals who have not completed the requirements, totalling almost a third of those identified by parishes as working with children. Little more can be done from a Registry standpoint to address this issue and so parishes and clergy are being asked to increase efforts to ensure full compliance.

This might be through clergy or other capable people assisting others to complete the application and access training. It may also be from advising the Diocese that certain individuals no longer work with children and can be removed from the list (along with obviously then ensuring they do not continue to engage in such ministry or service).

To qualify for this rebate parishes need to demonstrate:

- that every individual who is working with children in their parish has completed the requirements for the Level A Clearance
- that the Diocese is advised of any changes to the parishes list of names (ie. when persons previously identified by parishes as working with children need to be removed from the list and the reason why)

### **How to Apply:**

Submit the online form for any of the Four Key Areas by the deadline to receive the corresponding rebate by the end of that month.

**Deadlines:** Friday 10<sup>th</sup> June, Friday 5<sup>th</sup> August, Friday 4<sup>th</sup> November

**Online form:** <https://www.bendigoanglican.org.au/resources/risk-reduction-rebate/>