



Storm season checklist for body corporate and strata sites

Four jobs in October are cheap to do and expensive to argue about in January: deal with dead and overhanging limbs, clear the drains and pits, secure or remove loose items, and take a dated set of photos. The State Emergency Service treats spring and summer as Victoria's high risk season for storms. In Victoria the owners corporation must repair and maintain the common property, so this is a committee matter.

The October walk, one lap of the site with a phone

- ☐ **Dead limbs**, and limbs hanging over roofs, carports, fences and parking bays, written down by location for the arborist
- ☐ **Anything that rubs** on a building or a fence in the wind
- ☐ **Pits and grates** covered by leaves, mulch or clippings
- ☐ **Mulch** that has washed off beds onto paths or driveways, and beds that need proper edging to hold it
- ☐ **Last autumn's leaves** still sitting in corners and along fence lines
- ☐ **Loose furniture, umbrellas, bins, trampolines** and materials left from unfinished works
- ☐ **Shade sails, pergolas and fences** that already look tired, sails checked for fixings and tension by whoever installed them
- ☐ **A photo of each item** as you go: the photos become the job list and the before record

Who does what

- ☐ **Arborist** booked for anything above a grounds contractor's safe working height. Bookings are hardest to get in the week after a storm
- ☐ **Council tree rules** checked before anyone starts a saw. Councils across the south east protect established trees and the size thresholds can be modest, so check the current page for your council
- ☐ **Plumber** for anything below the grate, a blocked pipe or a pit full of silt
- ☐ **Residents** told by notice to secure their own items, with the plan of subdivision showing where private lots start
- ☐ **Grounds contractor** sweeping every pit and grate, clearing leaf litter and mulch run off, and reporting what needs a trade

The storm plan, agreed before you need it

- ☐ **Who attends first** after a storm
- ☐ **What counts as making safe** and what is scheduled clean up
- ☐ **How access works** if a tree blocks the driveway
- ☐ **Who approves extra work**, and how storm damage beyond a defined scale is priced (most maintenance agreements treat it as an extra, quoted separately)
- ☐ **Emergency numbers** on the notice board: Triple Zero for anything life threatening, the State Emergency Service on 132 500 for a tree on a building or flood and storm damage. Treat any fallen powerline as live

The photo record

- ☐ A **dated set of photos** of the trees, fences, sails, pergolas and common areas, taken each spring

- ☐ Kept **wherever the committee's records live**, refreshed every year
- ☐ After an event, the contractor's **make safe first, tell the manager the same day, then schedule the full clean up** so it is not done at emergency rates

Sites on a regular program recover faster, because the contractor already knows the gate codes, the exclusions and the quirks of the property. If your site runs on an ad hoc arrangement, storm season is a good reason to look at a fixed program.

From the Kanga Gardening guide Storm season prep for body corporate and strata sites, kangagardening.com.au/insights/storm-season-prep-body-corporate. Who pays for storm damage depends on the circumstances and belongs with your owners corporation manager and insurer.

Want the October walk done and reported?

Kanga maintains body corporate and strata grounds across Bayside, Kingston, Frankston and Casey on one fixed monthly fee, with the same operator every visit, a seasonal condition report for the committee file and a written list with photos of anything that needs a trade. hello@kangagardening.com.au or 0406 937 593.

- \$20M public and products liability
- Police checked
- The same operator every visit
- Established 2020
- Certificate of currency on request