

## **Hoarding in rooming houses is a dangerous trap**

Rooming house operators are often confronted with hoarding by residents but are not necessarily aware of the dangers that this can cause to other residents and their business.

Julie Harris, Community Ageing Strategist for the Metropolitan Fire and Emergency Services Board, gave a graphic outline of the potential dangers that hoarding can create at RAAV's Annual General Meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> November.

Julie provided sound advice on how to identify clutter, assess the level of hoarding and develop a program to counter this threat. She has provided several links to help rooming house operators with this problem.

The first link is to a flyer about the community treatment program available via Swinburne University, More information is available from Swinburne.

<http://www.mfb.vic.gov.au/Community-Safety/Home-Fire-Safety/Hoarding-a-lethal-fire-risk.html>

The second is a link to the downloadable Clutter Image Rating Scale. This is the only tool available to visually assess a level of hoarding and is useful to;

- Assess a level of hoarding,
- Engage an affected individual ,
- To develop policy and practice in relation to what actions need to occur in relation to specific levels of hoarding such as engaging the occupant, providing a warning, referral to other services, etc.

<http://www.oup.com/us/images/treatments/hoardinglivingroom>

For more information about hoarding there is a link to the site with the most comprehensive information,

<http://ocfoundation.org/hoarding/>

Depending on the level at which rooming house operators are experiencing hoarding, there will be a Hoarding and Squalor Conference in Sydney in February.. This is the second national conference tbeing held on this issue, Details are in the link below

<http://www.hoardingsqualorconference.com.au/>