



EERN provides donated furniture, white goods, bedding, kitchen items and electrical appliances to people in need through member welfare agencies. Our goal is to make a difference to those in need with Community, Compassion and Respect

It's Spring

Spring has started and we have already had a few warm days. And flowers are appearing, especially on fruit trees. That means that if you have a garden, it's time to start planning for summer. Maybe also start planning for a nice summer break or a weekend away with friends.



Spring is also a good time to do your annual Spring clean. And while cleaning you can see if there are things you would like to change or dispose of. Maybe it's time for a new TV, sofa or fridge. And if the old ones are still working and in good condition, they can be donated to EERN and we can pick them up.

Save My Mattress initiative

EERN provides household items to help individuals and families make or maintain a home. And one of the most important items in any home is a clean and comfortable bed. This helps many people in need and reduces waste that could otherwise end up as land fill. We are therefore very excited to be part of a new initiative, the Save My Mattress project.

This is an initiative developed by a partnership between EERN, the MegaMile Precinct Group, Australian Bedding Stewardship Council, Whitehorse City Council and the Bendigo Bank Blackburn South.

The MegaMile Precinct Group is a group of bedding outlets in the section of the Maroondah Highway, Nunawading including Snooze, Forty Winks and Bedshed.

It aims to give high-quality used mattresses a second life. These may be returns to a retailer as

they did not meet a customers' particular needs or they may have been replaced by a new mattress. Normally these would be disposed of as waste. But by offering them to EERN they can be given to people in need. It also saves retailers the costs associated with disposing of them.

A grant from the Whitehorse Council's Community Grants Program is also funding specialised mattress sterilisation equipment at EERN to help ensure mattresses are safely prepared for reuse.

To date, nearly 100 mattresses have already been saved from landfill and provided to people and families in need. An amazing outcome and a fantastic example of how local partnerships can create environmental, social and economic benefits. It is also gaining national recognition as a finalist in the 2026 National Economic Development Awards for Excellence.



Whitegoods and Televisions

Do you have a spare fridge, washing machine or microwave? At EERN we are currently very short of these basic items and we would love to reduce your clutter at home and pick them up. And, if you are thinking of upgrading your current working ones, we could pick up the old ones.

EERN is happy to take all sizes, even small ones as they can be useful for a single person in a small unit. And if you are not sure if they are in good operating condition, we will test them before we give them out.



The difference a donated washing machine can make

At EERN we don't ask our clients why they are coming into our Warehouse. This is a private matter between them and their support worker. But occasionally we do hear stories and sometimes these remain with us. For example, when talking about whitegoods one of our volunteers remembers a woman who came in a few years ago.

She told him that she had a job, but her husband couldn't work as he had MS (multiple sclerosis). They also had two children at school. They were doing okay on her salary, but then their washing machine broke down, and she couldn't afford to have it fixed or replaced.

Her husband couldn't do a lot of the physical jobs around the house so as well as going to work she had to do those jobs including washing all the clothes by hand. A support agency brought her into the EERN warehouse and she was given a washing machine.

This story is just one example of how a single item such as a washing machine can make a huge difference to a family.

Dumped rubbish costs us all

If you live in the Whitehorse Council area you may have seen on the Council's media sites images of dumped rubbish with the comment *"This dumped rubbish didn't disappear. It cost our community"*. And this doesn't just apply to rubbish dumped in Whitehorse, it applies to rubbish dumped anywhere.

Whether it's a fridge, furniture or just general rubbish, your rates and taxes are being used to pick up and dispose of that rubbish. So if you see anyone dumping rubbish, report it to your local Council.

Those who know about EERN know that we take household items that are in good condition, so there is no need to dump them. But there are also many other ways of disposing of items, such as donating them to an op-shop or putting them on one of the local marketplace websites. There are also places that take metal items free of charge and places, such as the Whitehorse Waste transfer station in Burwood Hwy, that take electrical items at no cost. Councils also offer free roadside hard rubbish collections.

And if a person does need to pay for rubbish disposal, it is only fair that they pay and not expect our rates and taxes to pay for them.



EERN sausage sizzle at Bunnings Nunawading

What could be better, shopping at Bunnings, enjoying a sausage and supporting EERN? So mark in your diary to come for a Bunnings sausage cooked by EERN volunteers on **Saturday 17 October**.



EERN Pantry

You will know that our warehouse is full of household goods that we offer free of charge to people in need. But did you know that we also have a food pantry? This recognises that people coming in to select items to help them make or maintain a home can be experiencing a very busy and often stressful time.

For some, choosing items to make a home and move on from whatever has happened in the past, can also be very emotionally draining.

So EERN offers a variety of nonperishable food, toiletries and personal items to help reduce the need to shop and prepare meals while they are unloading furniture and setting up their home. It can also help them to relax and reduces stress as they settle into their home.



Use By and Best Before Dates

Talking about meals and shopping, do you know the difference between **Use By** and **Best Before** dates on food packaging? Unfortunately, it appears some people don't fully understand the difference, and this can lead to food and money being unnecessarily wasted.

To help people understand these two dates Foodbank Victoria issues the following information:

Use By and Expiry date

- » Critical date marker showing when a food must be consumed by
- » Applied to highly-perishable items like meals, meat, dairy, cooked food
- » Food beyond its 'Use By' date might contain harmful bacteria and unsafe to eat



Best Before date

'Best Before' dates are about food quality, not safety. If food has passed its 'best before' date, it does not mean it is unsafe, but it might lose its colour, flavour or texture.

- » It is not dangerous to eat food passed its 'best before' date
- » Often found on canned foods, packaged products, long-life items, produce and pasta
- » Food will typically be ok to eat for 6 to 12 months after the 'best before' date

So always check the dates on food before you throw it out. When shopping you may also be able to buy cheaper food that is near its use by date especially if you are going to eat it soon (but don't eat it after the use by date). And food that is close to or even past its best before date may be offered at a discount.

Spring Festivals

One of the great activities at this time of year are the Spring Festivals. This year the Whitehorse Spring Festival is to be held on Sunday 18 October. And a couple of weeks later, on Sunday 8 November, will be the Maroondah Festival.



These are both fun days for all ages and we will have a stand at both events. So mark them in your calendar now!

People First Community Lottery

Tickets sales close on 8th October



There is just a couple of weeks to go to buy a

ticket in the People First Community Lottery and support EERN. This is a unique lottery as participating community groups receive 100% of every \$2 ticket sold. That means that if you buy a ticket and nominate EERN, every \$2:00 will come back to EERN. And you could win one of the 41 amazing prizes.

The first prize is a Toyota Kluger Hybrid GX AWD Wagon, 2nd prize a Toyota Yaris Hybrid Ascent Sport Hatch and 3rd prize Northern Lights and Rhine River Delights Cruise Package. But the other prizes are also very good.



And if you don't win, you will be still be supporting EERN.

To purchase tickets go to www.communitylottery.com.au. Then under the heading "Find a Community Group" and type in EERN or Eastern Emergency Relief Network. Then buy your tickets

Remember, ticket sales close soon (on 8 October).

Contacts

Donate Household Goods

If you have items to donate, please contact the warehouse to make an appointment, preferably by emailing warehouse@easternemergency.org.au with a list of items (with photos) and your suburb. Or phone 9874 8433 between 9:00am to 12:30pm weekdays. Remember, sometimes we have to say "Thanks, but no thanks" especially if the item is large, damaged or not suitable (most of our clients only have small places).

Support

If you would like to support EERN as a volunteer, financially or in any other way please email our Secretary secretary@easternemergency.org.au and she, or another Committee member, will contact you back.

Alternatively call the warehouse (ph 9874 8433) between 9:00am to 12:30pm weekdays (or leave a message) and someone from our Committee will call you back.

Find Out More

For more detail, such as how your organisation can join EERN, please contact our secretary. A speaker from EERN could also visit your organisation to give a presentation.

Newsletter

If you know someone who would like to receive this Newsletter (or if you no longer want to receive it), please contact our Secretary secretary@easternemergency.org.au.

