

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

Tuesday, 3 February 2009

Here is what some clients said about their experience during one of Melbourne's worst heat waves in 100 years:

- "We simply get kicked out of any public places with air conditioning so how do you think we feel."
- "We try to keep cool by hanging out in air conditioned public places, however, I was trying to hang out at hungry jacks and they not only kicked me out but they banned me. Fair enough they ban us if we are kicking off but when we are just trying to survive the heat."
- "People turn into arseholes when it's really hot, and guess who it is that they lash out on – the homeless."
- "The only place we have to go to escape the heat where we feel comfortable are places like the Living Room, and they are only open during the day. What are we supposed to do at night in that heat! It's a joke!"
- "If we hang out in the shade, police harass us for our names and address – so we are not even able to try escape the heat in the shade."
- "If they want us not to hang out in public spaces then they should give us somewhere to go."
- "Mate, I sleep under a bridge, I didn't get a wink of sleep- I'm exhausted. People should stop whinging about their air con!"
- "It was so hot, it would have been good if services did assertive outreach and handed out water."
- "Some people are lucky, they complain but they had a place to go during the day and at night- sure their air conditioner may have broken down but at least they can escape."
- "A mate of mine, had court, so bloody hot outside that he didn't make it to court and now he has warrants out for his arrest- so I reckon that a broken air conditioner is not really that bad."
- "It's hard if you're on medications can be dangerous in that heat."
- "They handed out some water at the train station when the trains broke down- that's great and all but what about the people who are homeless and in the heat?"
- "I normally sleep on the streets but it was too hot- so I ended up sleeping in a public toilet. But I even got moved on from there eventually."
- "Would be good if companies could donate Gatorade."
- "Maccas were pretty good- they gave out some cups with ice if you asked."
- "I live in a rooming house in St Kilda and an old lady died from heat exhaustion."

- “If the homeless wanna escape the heat we have to find \$165 dollars a week and even then the room don’t even have a fan- some don’t even have windows!”
- “Half the taps in Melbourne are turned off or hot water so we can’t even make sure we get a cool drink. Sometimes as a homeless person it really feels like I’m being targeted!”
- “I pay over 150 for a room in a rooming house and some nights it was 45 degrees.”
- People reported being asked to leave- Melbourne Central and Library