



1 May 2014

Vinnies says more people will need help this winter as rental costs increase financial pressure

As it launches its 2014 Winter Appeal, the St Vincent de Paul Society NSW says that in a worrying trend, assistance provided over the winter months in 2013 shows that Vinnies assisted more people who are in private rental properties than government housing. Figures show that 15,600 people in private rentals were assisted between June and August 2013, an increase of 80% on figures for the same period in 2012.

Vinnies believes this highlights what is an escalation of a housing and rental affordability crisis across the state.

St Vincent de Paul Society NSW CEO, Michael Perusco said, "The St Vincent de Paul Society is really concerned that a lack of affordable housing and rentals is putting extreme pressure on people already struggling to make ends meet, pushing them further into poverty."

The St Vincent de Paul Society is calling for people to dig deep and donate to its Winter Appeal, and says the reasons to help someone out are all around us in the many cities, towns, neighbourhoods and streets, where people are struggling to keep their heads above water.

Between June and August 2013 the St Vincent de Paul Society assisted over 33,000 people in NSW providing \$3.3 million in assistance. This includes just under \$1 million in energy vouchers and cash to help people pay their utilities. A further \$1.6 million was provided in food assistance during this period, an increase of close to \$500,000 for the same period in 2012.

St Vincent de Paul Society NSW President, Ray Reynolds explains that the generosity of ordinary Australians will make a real difference to the lives of many people who will face a very bleak winter.

"Time and time again, the kind-hearted deeds of our supporters shine through, providing comfort and solace to the people in our community who need it most. The public's donations tell people doing it tough that they matter and haven't been forgotten," says Mr Reynolds.

Please find your reason for giving this winter and donate to the Vinnies 2014 Winter Appeal so that we can continue to change lives every day. To make a generous donation visit vinnies.org.au or call 13 18 12.

News grabs and interviews available.

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