

MEDIA RELEASE

EMBARGOED

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Green Sparks at Vinnies Shops – test and tag volunteers ready, state-wide

Vinnies Shops has launched a novel test and tag initiative to take quality electrical goods, often destined for careless disposal, to its shelves for sale. All profits will support vital frontline support services for Victorians in need.

The St Vincent de Paul Society Victoria's (Vinnies) dedicated retail division, [Vinnies Shops](#), has launched a novel, volunteer-run program to give quality electrical goods a second chance at life.

Vinnies has trained and deployed almost 200 passionate Green Sparks electrical test and tag program (ETTP) volunteers in more than 100 Vinnies Shops in all corners of the state. They are ready to receive quality electrical donations in-store, to test, tag and sell the goods. Every sale represents an important contribution to reducing harmful e-Waste in Victoria, which was [officially banned from household bins and landfill on 1 July 2019](#).

"This program launch represents a formalisation and expansion of Vinnies' passionate commitment to reducing harmful e-Waste in our community. Vinnies Shops was awarded a \$250,000 grant to support this project in September 2021 from the Recycling Victoria Communities Fund. The Fund is delivered by Sustainability Victoria on behalf of the Victorian Government. Like us, the Victorian Government is dedicated to building a circular, climate resilient, clean economy," said Vinnies Victoria Executive General Manager Commercial Services, Jeff Antcliff.

"We haven't wasted any time bringing our vision to life. Vinnies Shops across the state now have dedicated battery disposal hubs and Green Sparks test and tag volunteers, who are trained and ready to assess and test quality electrical goods. We are a one-stop-shop for people looking to donate and/or purchase quality second-hand electrical goods."

The Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change, [Lily D'Ambrosio MP](#), attended a media event on the weekend to officially launch the program and celebrate the productive use of these grant funds.

"We have helped two million Victorian households cut their energy bills through this nation leading program, creating jobs while we aim to halve emissions by 2030. We're protecting Victorians while they cut costs and be part of combatting climate change in our journey to net-zero," said Lily D'Ambrosio MP.

Vinnies Shops' ETTP initiative is estimated to be ready to divert around 100,000 electrical goods (approximately 100 tonnes) from landfill every year. Vinnies is also leading vital public education and awareness initiatives, to support the re-use and repair of electrical items – together with the most appropriate ways to manage disposal of e-Waste at the end of its life.

"In Victoria there are [clearly mandated steps to appropriately manage e-Waste](#) and whilst Vinnies Shops are creating a solutions-focused initiative to give electrical goods a new lease on life, we don't want to be a destination for careless disposal either. If it is good enough to give to your family, it is good enough to give to Vinnies – we welcome as new or fully functioning electrical products, to be donated during our shop opening hours," said Mr Antcliff.

For Victorians seeking to support this initiative by bringing electrical donations in-store, Vinnies Shops has created a short checklist to help.

Tips for successful e-Waste donation

- **What:** Electrical goods must be as new or fully functioning to qualify for donation.
- **Where:** Check the location of your local Vinnies Shop by [clicking here](#).
- **When:** Visit your local Vinnies Shop during business hours so a dedicated test and tag volunteer can test and verify if your donation is suitable for test, tag and re-sale.
- **What next:** Watch your electrical goods go to a deserving new home – with all profits from the sale supporting vulnerable Victorians through Vinnies' vital frontline support services.

Fast Facts

- In the 2021 Financial Year, Vinnies Victoria volunteers completed 74,591 home visits across Victoria; delivered \$8,174,805 of material assistance to people in need; and answered 53,424 calls for help at its designated call centres.
- Revenue from Vinnies Shops is invested directly back into these invaluable welfare initiatives.
- Since the commencement of the ETPP initiative in January, Vinnies Shops has already increased its electrical trade by over 18%.
- [Click here to visit the Green Sparks ETPP website page.](#)

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MEDIA CONTACT:

The media is invited to interview representatives from Vinnies Victoria, including Executive General Manager Commercial Services, Jeff Antcliff, and Vinnies Shops Green Sparks test and tag volunteers.

To arrange an appointment, please contact:

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Television resources:

A video news release package has been prepared for TV, featuring interview excerpts and vision from the recent Green Sparks ETPP launch. The media is invited to film at their local Vinnies Shop too. [Click here to download VNR.](#)

Radio resources:

Radio interview grabs have been prepared for radio featuring Vinnies Executive General Manager Commercial Services, Jeff Antcliff. Longer interviews are available too. [Click here to download radio interview grabs.](#)

Print/Online resources:

Selected images from Vinnies Shops are available – and the media is invited to take photos of Green Sparks ETPP volunteers at their local Vinnies Shop too. [Click here to download media images from Vinnies Shops.](#)

ABOUT THE ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY:

The St Vincent de Paul Society and its wide network of members and volunteers provide practical frontline support, advocacy and friendship for the most vulnerable members of our community. Key services include home visitation; Vinnies Shops; youth programs; soup vans; assistance for asylum seekers and refugees; education and tutoring; and professional accommodation and health services through VincentCare. The St Vincent de Paul Society in Victoria has more than 13,000 members and volunteers, and more than 60,000 across Australia. Internationally, the Society operates in 149 countries and more than 950,000 members. To find out more visit www.vinnies.org.au.