



## MEDIA RELEASE

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### Firefighter health monitored at Morwell

Fire authorities continue to work on the Hazelwood Coal Mine fire, which is burning in an unused part of the mine.

While the fire is not impacting on the security of the electricity supply for Victoria, one of the challenges faced by firefighters is the smoke and included in that smoke is increased levels of carbon monoxide.

Gippsland Regional Controller Steve Warrington said the management of the smoke was a constant issue that required firefighters and others working in the mine to be monitored to assess their health and wellbeing.

"Seven firefighters have been assessed as having higher than normal levels of carbon monoxide, which has required medical attention," Mr Warrington said.

"Due to the risk posed by carbon monoxide being release by the Morwell mine fire, all firefighters at the scene are required to wear air quality monitors and appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) while fighting the fire."

Fire Services Commissioner Craig Lapsley said health monitoring was being done, including monitoring the carbon monoxide levels in the blood of firefighters before going underground and then again when they returned for a break or at the end of their shift.

"The safety of all firefighters is always the highest priority, and operations have temporarily relocated from within the mine, but will continue from the edge," he said.

Health authorities said there was no direct threat to community members from the carbon monoxide.

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