



## **Hebel meets new Victorian Building Standard**

March 2009, In light of the recent bushfires that devastated parts of regional Victoria, building standards have been revised to better protect communities and ensure homes are built to incorporate improved fire protection.

Introduced in Victoria on March 11, 2009, the new Australian Standards have been defined under six Bushfire Attack Level (BAL) categories from low to extreme risk. New homes will be required to have external walls constructed from non-combustible material. Hebel® from CSR is one material that will comply with the new standards.

Hebel blocks and panels are non combustible and have been tested at CSIRO to achieve excellent fire ratings. Also known as Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (AAC), this unique material delivers the right balance between thermal insulation and mass, being used by a growing number of builders and architects in Australia for 20 years and in Europe for over 60 years.

It is important to note that Hebel is only one piece of the puzzle. The main danger to housing during a bushfire is burning embers driven by wind pressure that can penetrate openings. Hebel will not burn but must be used in conjunction with a complete bush fire resistant house design and bush fire action plan.

Hebel is an ideal choice for bushfire prone areas. Hebel blocks provide loadbearing solid walls that completely eliminate the need for framing in the walls and when combined with Hebel roof panels, framing in the roof is also eliminated. Hebel blocks are laid in much the same way as bricks but using Hebel Adhesive to form a monolithic structure. They can also be laid faster, saving time and building costs.

In Victoria, it was reported soon after the fires, a home in Steel Creek was saved due to some smart building decisions that bucked the trend of pre-fabricated roof trusses and traditional brick-veneer skin or lightweight cladding. The home was built using Hebel in the walls, double-glazed glass doors and windows - building materials that are now becoming mandatory in fire-prone areas. The house was also protected by a sophisticated sprinkler system.

Like all Australians, Marketing Manager of Hebel, Paul Mooney was devastated to watch the destruction unfold.

“Many homes and community buildings were destroyed in the bushfires and residents now face the daunting task of not only building their home from scratch,

but also making building decisions to ensure their new home now meets the new standards. Hebel wants to make this process easier for residents and is offering its support, resources and knowledge to the townships of Victoria,” Mr Mooney said.

Hebel has teamed up with Habitat for Humanity Australia (HFHA), a not-for-profit home ownership organisation project, helping rebuild homes for families affected by the Victorian bushfires.

Leading brands from CSR such as Bradford Insulation, Gyprock plasterboard, Cemintel fibre cement and Hebel, have all donated product, with Hebel donating enough panels to build 12 homes.

CSR’s suppliers have also come to the party by providing accessories, transport and storage for the 12 homes. The suppliers are Faststud, Bremick Fasteners, Christensen Engineering, Ardex, Wettenhalls Transport, Dulux, Walkers Haulage and Toll Transport.

Hebel is Australia’s leading manufacturer of AAC. It delivers the benefits of traditional masonry such as strength, fire and pest resistance but with a unique cellular structure. Hebel provides excellent acoustic and thermal insulation helping to minimise the use of artificial heating and cooling systems. When used in houses that are designed using passive solar principles, heating and cooling may not be required at all.

For more information on Hebel and its products, visit [www.hebelaustralia.com.au](http://www.hebelaustralia.com.au)

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**Note to Editor:**

Hebel offers environmentally responsible building systems that provide comfort and performance with high level design flexibility.

Hebel offers a number of options; Hebel PowerPanel or Hebel Block are the two common systems used when building a home. Hebel PowerPanel is the modern, steel-reinforced building system for framed construction that provides comfort and energy savings as well as a beautiful rendered look at an economical cost.

Hebel Block is the traditional, premium AAC building system that caters for frameless, loadbearing construction for homes with exceptional performance. Hebel Block offers exceptional thermal and acoustic insulation properties. They are non-combustible blocks with frameless construction and deliver superior fire resistance.

The thermal insulation properties of Hebel blocks provide such a high level of energy efficiency that a home built with Hebel blocks can meet Australia’s stringent energy efficiency regulations without the need for added bulk insulation.

Hebel has been independently assessed by Good Environmental Choice Australia (GECA) in comparison to other building products with the same application and as a result was awarded the GECA label for each of its product and systems.

**For more information:**

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