



# SNIPPETS

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Seniors Enquiry Line

Linking Seniors with  
Community Information

## In this Issue:

- Pension Changes
- Changes to the Electricity Rebate
- Can you Spot a Scam?
- Concession Stamps
- Guest Speaker
- What's On

### Quote of the Month:

You only live once, but if you  
do it right, once is enough.  
Mae West

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Seniors Enquiry Line is an information and referral service for Queensland seniors, proudly sponsored by the Queensland Government Department of Communities and operated by UnitingCare Community.

## Pension Changes

Seniors Enquiry Line has received a high volume of calls asking about Federal Government changes to the Age Pension. It has been reported in the media that seniors would receive an increase of thirty dollars in January. Unfortunately, the increase is only for a select number of seniors who will be better off under the pension asset changes that came into effect on January 1.

An estimated 171,500 people who were receiving a part pension prior to the changes are expected to have received an increase in their pension. A further 330,000 people who were receiving a part pension are likely to have lost their eligibility for the Age Pension as a result of the changes.

Seniors who were receiving the full Age Pension prior to January 1 should not be affected by the asset changes and will not receive an increase until the regular twice-yearly adjustment on March 20.

Further information is available at [www.humanservices.gov.au](http://www.humanservices.gov.au). If you have any concerns about these changes to the assets test or your rate of payment, Centrelink can be contacted on **13 23 00**.



## Changes to the Electricity Rebate

The Queensland Government has extended access to the electricity rebate (currently \$329.96 per year) to more households. Under the changes, people who have a Commonwealth Health Care Card and are not receiving the rebate will be eligible. If you have a Health Care Card, you will be able to contact your electricity supplier from April 1 to apply for the rebate, with rebates being backdated to January 1, or the date after January 1 when you became eligible. Information on how to apply for the rebate can be found at [www.qld.gov.au](http://www.qld.gov.au).



## Can You Spot a Scam?

Scamwatch has reported that Australians have lost over 81 million dollars to scams during 2016. However, the true dollar value is likely to be much higher as many losses are not reported. There are a vast number of scams, but the biggest financial losses relate to dating and romance scams and investment scams.

**WARNING**  
**SCAM**  
**AHEAD**

Often, the best way to protect yourself against becoming a victim of a scam is through education. If you understand the different types of scams and how to spot them, you are better able to protect yourself.

The Office of Fair Trading and Scamwatch have some great information and resources about how to spot and protect yourself from scams. For more information, you can visit the Office of Fair Trading website: [www.qld.gov.au/law/your-rights/consumer-rights-complaints-and-scams/](http://www.qld.gov.au/law/your-rights/consumer-rights-complaints-and-scams/) or Scamwatch website: [www.scamwatch.gov.au/](http://www.scamwatch.gov.au/).

If you would like to have printed copies of resources about spotting and protecting yourself from scams posted out to you, please contact Seniors Enquiry Line on **1300 135 500**.

## Concession Stamps

If you have a Commonwealth Health Care Card or concession card from Centrelink or the Department of Veterans Affairs, you may be eligible for a reduced rate on stamps. To access the cheaper stamps, you are required to set up a free MyPost Concession account so that you can receive a MyPost Concession Card. With your MyPost Concession Card you pay 60 cents per stamp (up to 50 stamps per year), instead of \$1 for each full-price stamp.

To register for a MyPost Concession Account, visit an Australia Post retail outlet and complete a registration form. The form can also be downloaded from <https://auspost.com.au>.

You will receive 5 free concession stamps in the welcome pack sent out to you with your MyPost Concession Card and can purchase more stamps (in booklets of 5) from Australia Post retail outlets by showing your MyPost Concession Card.



## Guest Speaker

Would you like a guest speaker to come out to talk to your group about scams, fraud or consumer rights? Seniors Enquiry Line can organise a speaker for your organisation or group. Topics may include: Investment scams, unfair business practices, romance and dating scams, telemarketing and unwanted calls and protecting your identity. During these talks you can learn about your consumer rights, how to protect yourself from scams and where to report scams.

For more information or to request a guest speaker to visit your group, phone **1300 135 500**.

## What's On

### Chinchilla Melon Festival

16 February

The festival encompasses a week of activities with a Family Fun Day and colourful street parade.

**Venue:** Heeney Street, Chinchilla  
**Phone:** 4679 7291  
**Web:** <http://www.melonfest.com.au/>

### Gem, Mineral & Fossil Show - Gatton

25 February

Friendly traders with thousands of bargains, cut and rough precious and semi-precious gemstones, minerals, fossils, beads, jewellery and other craft items. Free Entry.

**Venue:** Gatton Shire Hall, North Street, Gatton  
**Phone:** 0418 824 279

### Let the Games Begin - Main Beach

17 February 12pm-3pm

Get the inside scoop on the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games™. Hear all the details about how it will impact and benefit our city and everyday lives. \$59 entry includes a two-course luncheon and drink. Bookings essential.

**Venue:** Southport Yacht Club, 1 Macarthur Parade, Main Beach  
**Phone:** 5591 3500

**Other events on Seniors Enquiry Line's 'Events' page include:** Logan Car Show, Moreton Bay Caravan, Camping, Boating & 4x4 Expo, Flame Hill Annual Grape Stomp - Montville, Australian Hearing Bus, National Servicemen's Day - Rowes Bay and many more.