



Christmas: the lonely season

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CHRISTMAS is supposed to be a joyous time of year spent with family and friends – but what happens to those who don't have the support network most of us take for granted?

More than one in four NSW homes are lone-person households, according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, and some of those people will spend the festive season alone.

David Ferguson, president of the Institute of Strata Title Management, is encouraging apartment owners and renters to make an effort to get to know the person down the

hall to spread some Christmas cheer.

"Your neighbour may be on the other side of the wall, above your ceiling or under your floor so spare a thought for them, especially if they live alone," Mr Ferguson said.

"We are encouraging owners and tenants in apartment buildings to get to know their neighbours – young and old – and in doing so they can help revive the community spirit."

Spreading a little Christmas cheer could help elderly neighbours in particular, who may appreciate some attention, Mr Ferguson said.

Then there are those who will sleep rough this Christmas. The Salvation Army estimates that about 105,000 Australians, including 12,000 children, will spend Christmas Eve on the streets.

Major Gary Masters said people turned to the charity group at Christmas more than any other time of year.

"This year has proven to be one of economic hardship, and a new group, who have never needed to ask for assistance before, has emerged," he said.

To donate to the Salvation Army, visit salvos.org.au/christmas or phone 13 72 58.



Apartment dwellers are being encouraged to get to know their neighbours over the festive period.

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