



Government of South Australia

SA Health

# Severe Domestic Squalor Assessment Scale

Based on the Environmental Cleanliness and Clutter Scale<sup>1</sup>

Date	
Name of assessor	
Organisation / Agency	
Name of client	
Address of client	

<b>A</b>				
<b>Is there reduced accessibility due to clutter?<sup>2</sup></b>				
Note that a reduction in floor space due to excrement is not to be considered as a reduction in accessibility.				
	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
	<b>EASY TO ENTER</b> and move about the property.  <b>0 – 29%</b>	<b>SOMEWHAT IMPAIRED ACCESS</b> but I can get into all rooms.  <b>30 – 59%</b>	<b>MODERATELY IMPAIRED ACCESS</b> It is difficult or impossible to get into one or two rooms or areas.  <b>60 – 89%</b>	<b>SEVERELY IMPAIRED ACCESS</b> Access to the front door is heavily/fully obstructed and/or I am unable to reach most or all areas inside and/or outside of the dwelling.  <b>90 – 100%</b>
of the ground space is inaccessible for use or walking across.				
Notes				
<b>B</b>				
<b>Is there an accumulation of items that have little obvious value?<sup>3</sup></b>				
In general, is there an accumulation of items that most people would consider to be useless or should be thrown away? <sup>3</sup>				
	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
	<b>NONE</b>  <i>Rate 0 if there is a small circumscribed part of the dwelling (e.g. a back room) that has been used or is designated for the storage of 'junk'.</i>	<b>SOME ACCUMULATION</b> but collected items are organised in some way and do not impede on movement, prevent cleaning, or access to furniture and appliances.	<b>MODERATE ACCUMULATION</b> Items cover the furniture in most areas and have accumulated throughout the dwelling making it very difficult to keep clean.	<b>EXCESSIVE ACCUMULATION</b> Items are piled to at least waist high in all or most areas inside and/or outside <sup>4</sup> the dwelling.
Notes	<i>Please describe the types of items that have been accumulated:</i>			
<b>C</b>				
<b>Is there an accumulation of waste or recyclables?</b>				
In general, is there evidence of excessive accumulation of waste or recyclables such as food waste, packaging, plastic wrapping, discarded containers (tins, bottles, cartons, bags) or other unwanted material?				
	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
	<b>NONE</b>	<b>A LITTLE</b> There is a scattering of waste and recyclables throughout the property.	<b>MODERATE</b> Waste and recyclables are piling up throughout the property. There is a substantial accumulation of waste that should have been discarded.	<b>EXCESSIVE</b> Waste and recyclables are piled knee high inside and/or outside the dwelling. Clearly no recent attempt to remove waste or recyclables.
Notes				

1 Halliday, G & Snowdon, J 2009, 'The Environmental Cleanliness and Clutter Scale (ECCS)', *International Psychogeriatrics*, vol 21, no. 6, pp 1041 - 1051.

2 A reduction in access and egress is an enabling fire hazard as the occupant escape time increases and access for emergency personal is impeded. Consider the extra time it would take occupants to exit the property and any access difficulties for emergency personal.

3 Accumulated items can increase the fuel load of a property. Take special note of items that are highly combustible such as wood, clothes, paper, books and magazines.

4 Items stored in the yard can increase the severity and consequences of a fire, especially when items are located in close proximity to the boundary of the property. Take note of items that are located within 2-3 metres of the property boundary.

<b>D</b>				
<b>Are the floors and carpets (excluding the bathroom) clean?</b>				
<b>0</b>		<b>1</b>		<b>2</b>
<b>YES</b> Acceptably clean in all rooms.		<b>MILDLY DIRTY</b> The floors and carpets look as if they haven't been cleaned or swept for weeks. There may be scattered rubbish.		<b>VERY DIRTY</b> The floors and carpets are very dirty and look as if they haven't been cleaned for months. There may be mould growth.  <i>Rate 1 if only one room or small area is affected.</i>
<b>3</b>		<b>EXCEEDINGLY FILTHY</b> There is rubbish or dirt throughout the dwelling.  <i>Excrement usually merits a score of 3.</i>		
<i>Notes</i>				
<b>E</b>				
<b>Are the walls, visible furniture &amp; other surfaces clean?</b>				
<b>0</b>		<b>1</b>		<b>2</b>
<b>ACCEPTABLY CLEAN IN ALL ROOMS</b>		<b>MILDLY DIRTY</b> There are mildly dusty or dirty surfaces.		<b>VERY DIRTY</b> The walls, furniture and/or surfaces are heavily soiled with grime or dirt. Signs of neglect indicated by lots of cobwebs and/or greasy, messy, mouldy or wet furniture.
<b>3</b>		<b>EXCEEDINGLY FILTHY</b> The walls, furniture and surfaces are filthy (e.g. covered with faeces and urine) and the assessor does not want to touch them.		
<i>Notes</i>				
<b>F</b>				
<b>Is the bathroom clean?</b>				
Including the floor, walls, basin, shower, bath and toilet.				
<b>0</b>		<b>1</b>		<b>2</b>
<b>REASONABLY CLEAN</b>		<b>MILDLY DIRTY</b> The bathroom has not been cleaned for weeks and there is a build up of mould, mildew, hair and/or grime. The toilet may be unflushed.		<b>MODERATELY DIRTY</b> The bathroom has not been cleaned for months and there is an extensive build up of mould, mildew, hair and/or grime. Faeces and/or urine are on the outside of the toilet bowl or localised to a small part of the bathroom.
<b>3</b>		<b>VERY DIRTY</b> There are piles of rubbish and/or excrement throughout the bathroom. The toilet may be blocked and bowl full of excreta. The condition of the bathroom impedes/prohibits normal use of fixtures.		
<i>Notes</i>				

<b>G</b>				
<b>Is the kitchen clean and is the food safe to consume?</b>				
	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
	<b>CLEAN AND HYGIENIC</b>	<b>SOMEWHAT DIRTY AND UNHYGIENIC</b> The cook top and sink are untidy. Surfaces are dirty and there maybe some spilt food. Refuse is mainly in the garbage bin. Food that could go off has been left uncovered and out of the fridge.	<b>MODERATELY DIRTY AND UNHYGIENIC</b> The oven, sink, surfaces and floors are dirty with piles of unwashed crockery and utensils. Refuse/garbage is on the floor and surfaces. There is some rotten or mouldy food. The fridge is unclean. The walls, floor and ceiling may have mould growth.	<b>VERY DIRTY AND UNHYGIENIC</b> The sink, cook top, and the inside of all the cupboards are filthy. Much of the food is rotten, putrid, covered with mould and unsafe to eat. A lot of garbage and refuse is over the surfaces and floor.  <i>Rate 3 if maggots are seen.</i>
Notes				
<b>H</b>				
<b>Is there an odour emitting from the property?</b>				
	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
	<b>NIL / PLEASANT</b>	<b>UNPLEASANT</b> The dwelling is unaired or there is a smell of urine.	<b>MODERATELY MALODOROUS</b> There is a stench (e.g. faecal / putrid) but the assessor can stay in the room.	<b>UNBEARABLY MALODOROUS</b> The assessor has to leave the room because of the smell and/or the smell is potentially impacting on neighbouring properties.
Notes				
<b>I</b>				
<b>Is there evidence of a vermin infestation?</b>				
For example rats, mice and cockroaches.				
	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
	<b>NONE</b>	<b>MINOR</b> There is evidence of current vermin activity (e.g. a few droppings) but it is confined to one area of the property and control measures are in place.	<b>MODERATE</b> There is an accumulation of droppings in multiple areas of the property and/or the assessor has physically seen living vermin. Control measures are absent or ineffective.	<b>EXTREME</b> An active heavy infestation that is potentially impacting on neighbouring properties. Indicated by visually observing many live vermin, rub marks, runs, gnawed surfaces and/or active burrows.
Notes				
<b>J</b>				
<b>Are the sleeping areas clean and hygienic?</b>				
	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
	<b>REASONABLY CLEAN AND TIDY</b> The sheets and/or mattress are mildly stained or dirty indicating they have not been washed for weeks.	<b>MILDLY UNCLEAN</b> The sheets and/or mattress are mildly stained or dirty indicating they have not been washed for weeks.	<b>MODERATELY DIRTY</b> The bed sheets are unclean and stained (eg with faeces or urine). Clothes and/or rubbish are over the surrounding floor area.	<b>VERY DIRTY</b> The mattress or sleeping surface is unclean, damaged or non existent. There are no bed sheets or linen present or they are extremely dirty. The surrounding area is filthy.
Notes				

**TOTAL SCORE =**

The score is <b>less</b> than 12 indicating the person(s) <b>is not</b> living in moderate or severe squalor <sup>5</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The score is <b>more</b> than 12 indicating the person(s) <b>is</b> living in moderate or severe squalor <sup>6</sup>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The score is <b>less</b> than 12 but my <b>professional judgement</b> indicates further action is required	<input type="checkbox"/>

5 Consider strategies that will prevent the situation escalating (see section 15.6 in 'A Foot in the Door' guidelines).

6 Commence interagency collaboration (see section 15.7 in 'A Foot in the Door' guidelines).

<b>Other considerations</b>	
<b>Are the utilities working correctly?</b> For example water, gas, electricity and sewerage.	
<b>YES</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>No</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Notes</i>	
<b>Are there vulnerable people living in the dwelling?<sup>8</sup></b> For example, children, the elderly and the disabled.	
<b>YES</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Contact the relevant agency or service provider if the score is greater than 12 or if there are serious unmet needs or inadequate care.	<b>No</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Notes</i>	
<b>Are there animals living on the property?</b>	
<b>YES</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Contact the RSPCA if the quality of care for the animals is poor (e.g. not being appropriately fed, insufficient or inadequate shelter, animals are sick or diseased, excessive fleas, mites or ticks).	<b>No</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Notes</i>	
<b>Is there an increased fire risk associated with the property?</b> Consider the fire risk associated with question A and B. Also consider that occupants may use temporary measures when household appliances are not working correctly (e.g. use an open fire to cook when the oven/stove does not work).	
<b>YES</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Contact the local fire authority.	<b>No</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Notes</i>	
<b>Does the dwelling appear to be structurally unsound?</b>	
<b>YES</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Contact a building inspector from the local council for technical advice.	<b>No</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Notes</i>	
<b>Are there OHS&amp;W risks associated with the property?<sup>9</sup></b>	
<b>YES</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Please describe all the risks below.	<b>No</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Notes</i>	

7 See section 15.5 in 'A Foot in the Door' guidelines for more information.

8 See section 15.5 in 'A Foot in the Door' guidelines for more information.

9 See section 15.4 in 'A Foot in the Door' guidelines for more information.