

## PUBLIC HOUSING CRISIS

# Fury over empty units

## 40,000 wait on state lists

TRENT EVANS

HUNDREDS of public houses are lying empty for up to a year while the number of families on the state's waiting lists continues to grow.

Properties found vacant include:

**A BLOCK** of 16 units in Portland vacant for more than six months;

**A FOUR-BEDROOM** Braybrook house empty since last July; and

**A THREE-BEDROOM** house in Boronia that neighbours claim has been empty for about a year, despite the Government saying it has been empty only a month.

The Tenants Union of Victoria believes there are as many as 500 other empty public houses across the state.

It comes as figures show there are almost 40,000 Victorian applicants waiting for public housing.

In Portland, 22 extra families joined waiting lists between June and September last year, despite the major block of units in Mitchell Cres remaining largely abandoned.

Neighbours said the few remaining occupants were sur-



**Frustrated:** Kelly Travers of Tecoma has been waiting eight years for a house, but this property in nearby Boronia has been vacant for one year. Picture: JOE SABLJAK