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fact: n. 1. an event or thing known to have
app. d. ex. 2. a tr. h. re. na. e. fr. i.
sp. in. or observ. ic. 3. a p. ce. f.
information. get me all the facts of this case.

FACT SHEET

EMERGENCY ACCESS: LIFT-OFF HINGES FOR TOILET DOORS

In Queensland, most toilet doors can be removed in an emergency even if the door is locked. This fact sheet contains information on why this feature is important and how the hinges work.

Why do we need lift-off hinges?

It may not happen very often, but getting stuck in a toilet is a real and potentially serious risk. So much so that Australian building law requires that in an emergency, a door to a toilet can be removed by someone on the outside. For example in most cases, toilet doors must open outwards, slide, or be readily removable from the outside of the compartment. This requirement only applies if the space between the toilet pan and the door is less than 1200mm.

Recently in Ipswich, a 67 year old woman found herself trapped in the toilet for seven days. One neighbour noticed the toilet light on day and night and noticed her dog barking curiously. Another neighbour at a clothesline heard the elderly woman's calls for help. An expert said she could easily have died from dehydration, but fortunately she survived her ordeal.

In Aberdeen (UK) a 55 year old man spent four days trapped in a toilet after the door handle broke. The elderly man had no mobile phone or food and used tap water for drinking and heat. He was eventually rescued by a cleaner.

How do the hinges work?

An inward swinging toilet door with lift-off hinges will typically have a gap between the top of the door and the under side of the head of the door frame. This is to allow sufficient movement upward so the pin in the door hinge can slip out of the hinge-blades screwed to the side of the door frame or style. A suitable door latch should allow the door to be lifted upward and away even if it is in a locked position.

