

1st May 2009

**Information for communities affected by the Redesdale Fire:
Barfold / Baynton / Glenhope / Redesdale / Sidonia**

Details of FUNDS available to fire-affected residents on page 2 of this newsletter

Community Recovery Committee (CRC) – The next meeting takes place this Wednesday 6th May, at 6pm, Barfold Hall. All welcome. Light refreshments are available from 5.45pm. The CRC's Working Groups are meeting regularly; see below.

1. Fencing: Anyone who has fencing materials but needs help in putting up fences can contact Lyal Metcalf (volunteer co-ordinator) on 54 234 135. Working parties of volunteers are in the area most weekends, with some braving the cold and camping in Barfold Hall. A team from the McIvor Neighbourhood House are also beginning work in the area during weekdays. **The Fencing Working Group meets again on Tuesday 12th May, at 12.30pm, Barfold Hall – this group is now meeting fortnightly, not weekly.**

2. Community Wellbeing: The Community Wellbeing Working Group met on 23rd April and discussed a mid-winter celebration, including a Community Bonfire for 27th June; and a number of ideas for children's activities such as a temporary skate park, a hip hop workshop, a circus workshop, and drama and writing workshops to assist with expressing feelings. If you'd like more information, please call Susan on 0400 054 971 **Next Meeting of this group is on 7th May at Barfold Hall at 1pm.**

3. Roadside Management: discussions are continuing between the four local governments involved in the roadside clean up; details will appear in next newsletter.

More information and minutes of the CRC meetings, and its Working Groups, are available by calling Ian on 5422 0337 or 0417 147 058, or via email i.lillington@macedon-ranges.vic.gov.au

Visit by Federal Member for Maribyrnong – Bill Shorten MP met with the Fencing Working group and other residents at Barfold Hall on Tuesday 28th April. This was a great opportunity to discuss problems facing the community including the on-going fencing materials issue. Mr Shorten confirmed that there was a relaxation of the 51% income rule that would allow more residents to access some of the Recovery Grants available. {see p2}

Loan cars for up to 12 months donated by GM Holden and Nissan. If you lost a car in the fire, you can lease a car for free. Call 9096 1093, or email: jlq@dhs.vic.gov.au ; or talk to your Key Contact Worker at Cobaw or Castlemaine Health Services. {Details over}

\$300 worth of vouchers from VBBRA are available. These can be used in Bendigo Salvo's Store for material aid (blankets, clothes etc.) Available to anyone who was fire-affected, they can be accessed at the Salvo's Centre at Gravel Hill, Bendigo (5442 7699).

Compensation for fencing damaged by fire fighting activities: CFA and DSE will pay the costs of repairing up to 20 metres of fencing at each point that it was cut for fire

suppression activity, during or after the fire on 7th Feb. To access the funding you will need to provide an invoice to DSE for the costs and information, stating the number of separate places that fences were cut and where these were {e.g. name of road, or some other description of location of the fence}. **Seed** is also available for pasture damaged by fire suppression activity. You need to write a separate letter, stating the number of square metres of damaged pasture to be re-sown.

Send claims for Fencing Damage or Seed to: Trevor Pollard, DPI, 53 Mollison St., Kyneton 3444. For more information, please call Trevor on 54 211 733 or 0408 345 579.

Pasture renovation: residents who'd like technical advice on pasture assessment, renovation and re-establishment can contact Trevor Pollard on at DPI Kyneton 0408 345 579

FarmPlan21 is a nationally accredited course that provides you with knowledge to make the right decisions for your property. FarmPlan21 is your action plan to ensure you are well able to achieve your personal, financial, production and environmental goals. FarmPlan21 is **free** to farmers who enrol before 30th June, 2009. Contact Nicholas Bate at DPI Bendigo 5430 4497 or 0419 580 934, Nicholas.Bate@dpi.vic.gov.au or Trevor Pollard at DPI Kyneton 54 211 733 or 0408 345 579.

The Redesdale Bushfire Appeal: this fundraiser [back in February] raised over \$30,000. The community group who organised this fundraiser are offering \$300 to fire-affected residents who are registered on the bushfire recovery list held by Council. You need to complete and return an application form that went out with newsletter number 9, or contact Simone on 0421 45 88 91.

Free fuel for volunteers: BP have \$250,000 available to offset volunteer fuel expenses. If you're a volunteer who uses a vehicle to undertake your activities, you could receive free BP fuel to help in your volunteering work. Apply via the BP website www.talkstoppedlongago.com.au. Offer closes at 5:00pm on Monday 11 May. Successful applicants will be notified by 1/06/2009. Church groups can apply where the work undertaken has a non-denominational focus (such as emergency relief).

Victorian Bushfire Appeal Fund: the Key Contact Workers [also called Case Managers] based at CHIRP and Cobaw Community Health have information about all of the grants available via the Victorian Bushfire Appeal Fund. *Applications are open until the end of 2009.* The grants that are most relevant include:

- **A Rural Properties Recovery Assistance grant** of \$5,000 is available, which **does include fencing**. This grant is to assist individual rural landowners in bushfire affected areas who have suffered hardship and who have an increased need due to the damage or destruction of rural and farming property infrastructure. Available for properties of 5 hectares or more in the bushfire affected areas that suffered damage or destruction. Only applicable if the person has not applied for and been granted *the Bushfire Initial Clean up and Restoration Grant – Primary Producers (Rural Finance)* grant for the same amount.
- A \$50,000 grant is available to homeowners whose principal place of residence was destroyed. A grant of up to \$15,000 (with a possible further needs-based payment of up to \$16,000) is also available for repairs to damaged primary residences. Tenants are eligible to receive grants of up to \$15,000 for home contents if their rental property was destroyed in the fires.
- **Initial Home Dislocation Payment:** families who lost their principal place of residence or were otherwise unable to return home for more than a week - eligible for a grant of up to \$10,000.
- **Tools of Trade Payment:** a \$5,000 grant to assist people who have lost equipment vital to their trade and employment and are employees working for a registered business.

You can find out more about these grants at <http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/bushfireappeal/home> or call 1800 255 925. If you don't have a Key Contact Worker but are interested in finding out more about this service, contact CHIRP on 5479 1000 or Cobaw Community Health on 5421 1666.

News contributions to Ian on 5422 0337 or 0417 147 058, or via email i.lillington@macedon-ranges.vic.gov.au

