

Coronavirus COVID-19 update

A State of Emergency has been declared until 11 May 2020 to manage coronavirus (COVID-19). Staff are continuing to deliver essential services and support our community, staff and volunteers within the directives from government and health authorities.

We have launched a dedicated email to help residents during this challenging time. Contact covid19@mountalexander.vic.gov.au to find out more about what we are doing in response to COVID-19 or for referral to partner organisations and agencies who can help. For updates on Council services visit www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/coronavirus. Please stay at home and follow the advice to minimise the spread of COVID-19. Look out for each other and check in on your family, friends and neighbours. For more information call the coronavirus hotline on 1800 675 398 or visit www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus.

Changes to services

Customer and Visitor Services - The Customer Service Centre and Visitor Information Centres are closed to the public. Contact us by phone, email or lodge a customer service request via our website. Call 5471 1700 or email info@mountalexander.vic.gov.au.

Works and maintenance requests - We have a reduced capacity in our Works Unit and are dealing with as many requests as possible. Road hazards are the priority, followed by maintenance tasks.

Waste services - Bin collection is running as usual. Please delay non-essential visits to waste facilities in Castlemaine and Maldon. Heavy items and mattresses are not accepted at this time. For more information visit www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/wastemanagement.

Playgrounds and community facilities - Parks and reserves remain open for essential activities such as exercise within public gathering rules. Public playgrounds, skate parks and BMX parks are closed.

Aged Care Services - Council is working hard to support the most vulnerable members of our community. We have made some alterations to services based on advice from health authorities, and are continuing to share service updates with clients, carers and families. Contact our Community Wellbeing Team on 5471 1766 with any queries.

Maternal and Child Health Services - Immunisations for children up to six years are continuing by appointment only. Speak to a nurse on 5472 1364 before visiting the centre.

Local food relief

Local volunteers, community groups and organisations have established a community pantry to provide food relief for local residents in need. The Mount Alexander Community Pantry is a centrally coordinated food relief system. It offers prepared meals and food packages in the absence of a local foodbank. To access meals or food packages, contact the Mount Alexander Community Pantry Intake Coordinator on 0472 537 866, email mtalexcommunitypantry@gmail.com or order online at www.cch.org.au/communitypantry.

Council's initial relief measures

Council has announced some initial relief measures to help the community and local businesses manage the impacts of COVID-19 including:

- A one month extension on the due date for the fourth rates instalment, to 30 June.
- Establishment of a Council COVID-19 financial hardship policy.
- A temporary hold on following up unpaid animal registrations (due 10 April).
- Payment to suppliers as quickly as possible in weekly payment schedules.
- A reduction of commercial rents in Council-owned buildings until 30 June 2020, for businesses significantly impacted by COVID-19.

Visit our website for more information.

Pet registrations

Council is giving pet owners until 30 June to pay for pet registrations. Residents must still ensure their pet is registered. Council has sent renewal forms to pet owners.

Support local business

Council urges everyone to shop locally to keep every dollar in our shire. Find a list of businesses offering takeaway, delivery or online shopping options at www.maldoncastlemaine.com.au. Find out about support for businesses at www.business.gov.au or www.business.vic.gov.au.

Free business workshop

Many businesses are facing difficult decisions at this time. Join a free online financial fundamentals workshop as part of Council's small business workshop series. The workshop will be held from 6.00pm to 8.00pm on Monday 20 April via Zoom. Register at www.bit.ly/MtAlexBoxOffice or contact Eva Parkin, Economic Development Officer, on 5471 1805.

Update from CHIRP

CHIRP Community Health can offer support and advice to help you get through these challenging times. Call them on 5479 1000 every weekday during business hours (except public holidays).

Cyber alerts and scams

COVID-19 related cyber threats are increasing. Be wary of suspicious or COVID-19 related emails, messages and phone calls claiming to be government agencies. Cyber criminals try to trick you into providing sensitive information. If you receive a phone call requesting information or payment simply hang up the phone and contact the relevant institution, if appropriate.

End of the fire danger period

The Fire Danger Period ended for our shire on 23 March. Residents can now burn off without a permit but are required to register their fire with the Emergency Services Telecommunications Authority (ESTA) on 1800 668 511. Find out the requirements and more information at www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/FirePrevention.

Tenders

**Provision of Tree Maintenance Services
Contract M1496-2020**

**Castlemaine Market Building Conservation Works
Stage 3, Contract M1498-2020**

**Playspace Construction - Stanley Park North, Harcourt
Contract M1499-2020**

Tenders are invited for the above contracts. Tender documentation is available from Council's website under Tenders and Quotations.

Tenders close at 2.00pm on Wednesday 6 May.

Please direct enquiries to Andrea O'Grady, Procurement Coordinator, on 5471 1724.

Darren Fuzzard, Chief Executive Officer

Norwood Hill Rec Reserve

Have your say on the revitalisation of Norwood Hill Recreation Reserve, located on Maclise Street in Castlemaine. The reserve has a well-used playground, cricket practice net, fenced courts, barbecue, picnic setting and public toilets. We want to hear how the community uses the reserve, your favourite features and ideas for improvement. While we are unable to arrange a face-to-face session at the reserve we invite your feedback via an online survey at www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/HaveYourSay or call Kim Whitehouse, Project Officer, on 5471 1700. The survey will close on 15 May.

Help stop fruit fly

Council is calling for residents to act now to help prevent a widespread outbreak of Queensland fruit fly (QFF), following the first confirmed report in Castlemaine. Please check monitoring traps and gardens for the pest – they are small brown flies with yellow markings. Keep an eye out for grubs or larvae in fruit or vegetables, remove unwanted fruit from trees and pick up fallen fruit off the ground. A monitoring program has begun around Greenhill Avenue as part of the QFF emergency outbreak plan. If you suspect you have QFF contact Council on 5471 1700. See photos to help identification at www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/FruitFly.

Employment opportunities

Municipal Building Surveyor – full time, fixed term.
Closes Sunday 19 April.

Public and Environmental Health Officer – part time, ongoing.

Closes on Monday 20 April.

Audit and Risk Advisory Committee Member – fixed term – three years.

Closes on Monday 27 April.

For more information or to apply visit our website.

Council meetings

The next meeting is scheduled for 6.30pm on Tuesday 21 April at the Civic Centre. Watch the live broadcast via YouTube by searching Mount Alexander Shire Council.

Important message

This information was correct at time of going to print. Find the latest updates on our website at www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/coronavirus.