

This Flood Information Update contains information about services available to the community to assist in dealing with the impact of the recent flood event in the Shire.

Council officers are updating details in this flyer each day as we receive more information about the needs of the community and the services being offered by other agencies.

A Flood Information Contact Officer has been established in Council and is available on telephone 5471 1813 between 9.00am and 5.00pm Monday to Friday to assist residents affected by the floods with information, support and referral to other services. Please call this number if you need help.

From Wednesday 19 January 2011, houses that have been inundated with flood water are being visited by Council staff to provide information and help assess the damage to the property.

On Friday 21 January 2011 between 11.00am and 3.00pm the officers from the **Department of Human Services (DHS), Castlemaine District Community Health (CHIRP), Bendigo Health Care and Support Service, Mount Alexander Volunteer Network, Centrelink and Salvation Army** will be at Castlemaine Town Hall and will be able to assist with a range of enquiries about grants and financial assistance, counselling and material aid. Affected residents are encouraged to drop in to the Town Hall if they would like help. If you are unable to attend, please make contact with these services directly.

There have been a large number of offers of assistance from people in the community and the Mount Alexander Volunteer Network is helping coordinate the volunteer effort with the needs of affected community members.

There is a substantial amount of damage to roads, bridges, drains, paths, parks and waterways across the Shire. Council is assessing the damage and undertaking urgent works. As a priority Council officers will be working to clear debris from blocked drains to help minimise local flooding should there be more rain. Many jobs may take some time to fix and Council asks that members of the community be patient while we try to assess what needs to be done and how the work can be undertaken.

Attached to this flyer is a list of telephone numbers of organisations available to assist and information about financial assistance.

This Flood Information Update is being circulated to local media, local agencies involved in the recovery effort, on the Council website, in Council offices and is also being distributed in affected local communities.

1. Rubbish Removal:

Council is assisting residents and business operators with the removal of damaged goods and materials from houses and businesses that were inundated by the most recent flooding. Homes have been affected in Castlemaine, Campbells Creek, Metcalfe, Guildford, Harcourt, Barfold and Taradale.

If flood waters entered your home or business, Council will arrange for damaged and discarded items to be collected from your nature strip. Fees will occur for residents that take material to the landfill directly.

With Council staff also very busy working on repairs to Council roads, bridges, footpaths and resources, we are also seeking your understanding and patience as our officers yet again work their way through the exceptional and sizeable cleanup program across the Shire.

The service will be provided this week and the need to continue the service will be assessed on Friday 21 January 2011.

Residents that have lost garbage or recycling bins during the flood can arrange for a replacement by contacting Council on 5471 1700. Residents will need to complete a form to request the replacement of bins, which is available on Council's website.

If you have found a garbage or recycling bin, you can report it to be picked up by contacting Council on 5471 1700.

2. Material Aid:

If you need assistance with clothing and food, vouchers to purchase goods can be obtained from the Salvation Army located at 47 Kennedy Street, Castlemaine. St Vincent de Paul in Castlemaine is able to provide assistance with furniture and also assistance with clothing and food.

3. Financial Assistance:

Enquiries for financial assistance should be made to Centrelink. Small businesses will also be eligible for payments. Contact should be made with Centrelink on the telephone number attached. Centrelink services to the Shire are provided at the Castlemaine and District Accommodation Resource Group (CADARG) located at the Uniting Church Parish Community Centre, 12 Lyttleton Street, Castlemaine.

The Clean-up and Restoration Grant of up to \$15,000 provides a one-off grant to primary producers, small businesses and not-for-profit organisations who have suffered direct damage as a result of the floods between August 2010 and January 2011 or damage caused by hail during November 2010 in Victoria, for clean-up, removal of debris, animal welfare and business restoration. Contact Rural Finance to enquire about these grants on 5448 2600.

4. Counselling and Support Services:

If you would like to talk with someone about your situation and/or require counselling, please contact Castlemaine District Community Health (CHIRP) at 13 Mostyn Street, Castlemaine or phone 5479 1000 and arrangements can be made to see a qualified counsellor.

5. Reporting Damage to Roads, Footpaths and Buildings:

If you are having difficulty accessing your property or would like to let Council know about a problem you have observed with any local infrastructure, please contact Council on 5471 1700.

Your request for assistance will be logged and Council will add this information to our database. Council may not be able to attend to this issue immediately as we prioritise the need for repairs across the Shire.

6. Assessing the Impact of Flood Damage on your Property:

If you are concerned about your house structure following the flood and would like an assessment undertaken, please contact Council on 5471 1813. Council assessment and information teams will be visiting flood affected areas of the Shire today.

7. Power, Water, Electricity and Gas:

- Power - If you have any issues relating to your power supply, please contact Powercor on 132 412.
- Water - Any issues relating to drinking water or sewerage should be directed to Coliban Water on 1300 363 200.
- Electricity and Gas - Gas and electricity faults are to be reported to TruEnergy on 132 083 or 133 466.

8. Housing:

Housing enquiries should be directed to Castlemaine and District Accommodation Resource Group (CADARG) at the Uniting Church Parish Community Centre, 12 Lyttleton Street, Castlemaine or contact 5472 4299.

9. Volunteers:

If you would like to volunteer, the coordination of volunteers interested in assisting homeowners in the clean up of their properties or in any other way is being undertaken by the Mount Alexander Volunteer Network. If you are interested in assisting or require assistance, please contact Jacqueline Brodie-Hanns on 0425 323 005.

Teams of SES volunteers are also available to help clean out and hose houses inundated with flood water and they can be contacted on 132 500 if you require assistance.

Mount Alexander Shire Council
Flood Information Contact Officer – Ph. 5471 1813
Customer Service – Ph. 5471 1700

FLOOD INFORMATION CONTACT DETAILS

LIFE THREATENING EMERGENCIES

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Mount Alexander Shire Council

Flood Information Contact Officer
Customer Service

5471 1813
5471 1700

www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au

State Emergency Service

Flood and Water Damage

132 500

www.ses.vic.gov.au

Red Cross

Bendigo (Clothes and Food)
Information Line (Relief Centres)

5443 7331
1800 727 077

www.redcross.org.au

Castlemaine District Community Health (CHIRP)

Counselling and Health Related Services

5479 1000

Castlemaine Health

Hospital
Housing (CADARG)

5471 1555
5472 4299

www.mtalexhosp.vic.gov.au

Bendigo Health Emergency Respite

1800 068 978

www.bendigo.health.org.au

Centrelink

Financial Assistance
Monday to Friday 8am – 5pm

5430 5802

www.centrelink.gov.au

Department of Human Services

Grant Assistance
Bendigo Office

1300 650 172
5434 5555

www.dhs.vic.gov.au

VicRoads

Road Closures and Road Damage

131 170

www.vicroads.com.au

Victorian Farmers Federation

Requests / Offers of Fodder

1300 882 833

www.vff.org.au

St Vincent de Paul Society

Furniture, Clothing, Food and Donations

131 812

www.vinnies.org.au

Salvation Army (Castlemaine)

Material Aid & Donations
Volunteer counsellors

5470 5389
137 258

www.salvationarmy.org.au

Wildlife Victoria

Injured Sick or Orphaned Wildlife

1300 094 535

www.wildlifelifevictoria.org.au

FLOOD INFORMATION CONTACT DETAILS – continued.

Powercor

Electricity Faults and Difficulties 132 412 www.powercor.com.au

TruEnergy

Gas Faults 132 083 www.truenergy.com.au

Electricity Faults 133 466

Coliban Water

Water and Waste Water Matters 1300 363 200 www.coliban.com.au

Rural Finance – Bendigo Office

Finance Advisors 5448 2600 www.ruralfinance.com.au

Optus Country (Luke)

0434 736 939 www.optus.com.au

Telstra

To access an assistance package or report a fault 132 203 www.telstra.com.au

Mount Alexander Volunteer Network

Volunteer Registration and Assistance 0425 323 005

District Veterinary Officer (DPI)

Stock Issues 5422 1706 www.dpi.vic.gov.au

Financial assistance for flood victims

The Victorian Government is offering emergency grants for those impacted upon by current flooding. These grants comprise up to \$1067 per household personal hardship grants, up to \$8650 grants for temporary living expenses, up to \$8650 grants for structural repairs to households, and up to \$8650 grants for replacement of essential household items.

Emergency grants - up to \$1067 per household

Emergency grants of up to \$1,067 per household are available to help people meet the immediate basic needs for clothing, food, personal items and shelter.

These grants will help people manage immediately if they have been affected. The grant is 'needs based', is not means tested and is not affected by the insurance status of the applicant.

To access these grants visit a relief or recovery centre, contact your council or visit www.dhs.vic.gov.au.

Other grants

Temporary living expenses – up to \$8650

- Up to \$865 a week for up to 10 weeks, for those whose main home is unliveable for more than a week.
- The grant is not available immediately. It is income tested and varies depending on household size. It is intended to assist with temporary accommodation and transport costs not covered by insurance.

Re-establishment grants – up to \$8650 for necessary structural repairs and up to \$8650 for essential household items

- The property must be primary place of residence.
- These grants are income tested and don't include items covered by insurance.
- Available to owner-occupiers but not landlords. The essential household items component is available to tenants.

Financial support for affected businesses

\$15,000 clean up and restoration grants are available for eligible primary producers, small businesses and not for profit organisations. Affected people should contact the Rural Finance Corporation on (03) 5448 2600. Low interest loans of up to \$200,000 from the Rural Finance Corporation will also be available.



Disaster Income Recovery Subsidy - Flooding and severe weather

The Disaster Income Recovery Subsidy has been activated to assist employees, small business persons, and farmers who have had a loss of income as a direct result of the flooding and severe weather that began from 29 November 2010 and continued in January 2011 in the states of Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and Western Australia.

For more information on the Disaster Income Recovery Subsidy call Centrelink on 180 22 66, visit your local Centrelink Customer Service Centre or Centrelink Agent or visit www.centrelink.gov.au

Red Cross Victorian Floods Appeal

The Australian Red Cross has established this Appeal with the Victorian Government to support individuals, families and communities in areas affected by the 2011 Victorian floods. The Victorian Government will provide an initial \$1 million contribution to this fund.

The funds raised will be allocated by the Red Cross. A small allocation panel will be set up for this purpose. All administration costs will be met by the State Government and all interest on donations will be invested back into the Appeal.

Further information

Those affected by the floods can locate their closest emergency relief centre by contacting their local council, calling the SES Flood Information Line on 1300 842 737 or visiting www.dhs.vic.gov.au for a full list of centres.

To run a search for anyone you are looking for, or to register yourself if you live in a flood affected area and there may be people looking for you, contact the Red Cross National Registration and Inquiry System on 1800 727 077.