

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. 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. 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.

### **Property Inspections**

Council staff have visited houses that have been inundated with flood water across the Shire. Since Wednesday, properties affected in Baringhap, Harcourt, Taradale, Newstead, Castlemaine and Campbells Creek have been provided with information and given assistance to assess the damage. Council officers will arrange visits to other affected areas of the Shire on Monday.

Approximately 51 residences have been fully flooded across the Shire, with a further 17 partially inundated with significant damage. A comprehensive assessment of Shire wide impacts is being finalised, including damage to local businesses and community facilities.

If you have experienced flood inundation, please report it to Council by contacting the Flood Information Contact Officer on telephone 5471 1813 between 9.00am and 5.00pm Monday to Friday. Council is coordinating support and referral to other services to assist in the Recovery process.

### **Recovery Centre**

Approximately 40 people sought assistance today from agencies, services and community volunteer groups who participated in a Recovery Centre at the Castlemaine Town Hall between 11.00am and 3.00pm. Residents were assisted with a range of enquires about grants, financial assistance, counselling and material aid. Agencies in attendance included: Department of Human Services (DHS), Castlemaine District Community Health (CHIRP), Bendigo Health Care and Support Service, Department of Justice – Consumer Affairs, Mount Alexander Volunteer Network, Rotary Club of Castlemaine, Centrelink, St Vincent de Paul Castlemaine and the Salvation Army Castlemaine.

Affected residents who were unable to attend, should make contact with these services directly. A list of telephone numbers of organisations available to assist and information about financial assistance is attached to this flyer.

### **Damage across the Shire**

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. 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.

Council is also working with the CFA to assist with the cleanup of damage across the Shire. Works are being coordinated at a regional level with Council to assist in clearing fallen trees, major storm water pits and debris. Structural assessments of some bridges that have been impacted as well as assessing damage to Community Centres, Recreation Reserves and Community Halls is currently taking place. Staff from the YMCA and Council are working to get the Harcourt Pool back in operation which is expected to take approximately a week to treat the water.

Residents that require assistance with stock, should contact the District Veterinary Officer from the Department of Primary Industries (DPI) on 5422 1706.

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.

## **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.

The Australian Flood Phone Counselling Services Register for Flood Victims is now active on the ACA web site: [www.theaca.net.au](http://www.theaca.net.au). A link to service providers can be found on the home page.

## **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.

## **10. Rate payments:**

Residents whose properties have been directly affected by the recent floods will be given an extension on their February rate payments (full or instalments) until the 15th March 2011. No Interest will be charged and no debt recovery action will be taken until after the 15th March 2011. There is no need for ratepayers to complete a payment arrangement form as long as they can pay by the 15th March 2011. Ratepayers still experiencing difficulty in making payments after this date can contact Margaret Jacka, Council's Revenue Officer on 5471 1700 or [m.jacka@mountalexander.vic.gov.au](mailto:m.jacka@mountalexander.vic.gov.au)

**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](http://www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au)

#### State Emergency Service

Flood and Water Damage

132 500

[www.ses.vic.gov.au](http://www.ses.vic.gov.au)

#### Red Cross

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

5443 7331  
1800 727 077

[www.redcross.org.au](http://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](http://www.mtalexhosp.vic.gov.au)

#### Bendigo Health Emergency Respite

1800 068 978

[www.bendigo.health.org.au](http://www.bendigo.health.org.au)

#### Centrelink

Financial Assistance  
Monday to Friday 8am – 5pm

5430 5802

[www.centrelink.gov.au](http://www.centrelink.gov.au)

#### Department of Human Services

Grant Assistance  
Bendigo Office

1300 650 172  
5434 5555

[www.dhs.vic.gov.au](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au)

#### VicRoads

Road Closures and Road Damage

131 170

[www.vicroads.com.au](http://www.vicroads.com.au)

#### Victorian Farmers Federation

Requests / Offers of Fodder

1300 882 833

[www.vff.org.au](http://www.vff.org.au)

#### St Vincent de Paul Society

Furniture, Clothing, Food and Donations

5470 6091

[www.vinnies.org.au](http://www.vinnies.org.au)

#### Salvation Army (Castlemaine)

Material Aid & Donations  
Volunteer counsellors

5470 5389  
137 258

[www.salvationarmy.org.au](http://www.salvationarmy.org.au)

#### Wildlife Victoria

Injured Sick or Orphaned Wildlife

1300 094 535

[www.wildlifevictoria.org.au](http://www.wildlifevictoria.org.au)

## FLOOD INFORMATION CONTACT DETAILS – continued.

<b>Powercor</b> Electricity Faults and Difficulties	132 412	<a href="http://www.powercor.com.au">www.powercor.com.au</a>
<b>TruEnergy</b> Gas Faults Electricity Faults	132 083 133 466	<a href="http://www.truenergy.com.au">www.truenergy.com.au</a>
<b>Coliban Water</b> Water and Waste Water Matters	1300 363 200	<a href="http://www.coliban.com.au">www.coliban.com.au</a>
<b>Rural Finance – Bendigo Office</b> Finance Advisors	5448 2600	<a href="http://www.ruralfinance.com.au">www.ruralfinance.com.au</a>
<b>Optus Country (Luke)</b>	0434 736 939	<a href="http://www.optus.com.au">www.optus.com.au</a>
<b>Telstra</b> To access an assistance package or report a fault	132 203	<a href="http://www.telstra.com.au">www.telstra.com.au</a>
<b>Mount Alexander Volunteer Network</b> Volunteer Registration and Assistance	0425 323 005	
<b>District Veterinary Officer (DPI)</b> Stock Issues	5422 1706	<a href="http://www.dpi.vic.gov.au">www.dpi.vic.gov.au</a>
<b>Consumer Affairs (Bendigo office)</b>	5444 2038	<a href="http://www.consumer.vic.gov.au">www.consumer.vic.gov.au</a>
Rotary Club of Castlemaine		

## 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](http://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](http://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](http://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.