

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 continuing to update details in this flyer as we receive more information about the needs of the community and the services being offered by other agencies.

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### FLOOD UPDATE INFORMATION

**Important electricity and gas safety advice in floods can be obtained from Energy Safe Victoria at [www.esv.vic.gov.au](http://www.esv.vic.gov.au)**

**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. There is no need for ratepayers to complete a payment arrangement form and as long as they can pay by the 15th March 2011 no interest will be charged. 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).

**Insurance:** In the event that your home is damaged or destroyed by a flood, make contact with your insurance company as soon as possible to register your intention to claim and seek advice about the claim process under your policy. All insurance policies vary. You should also contact your insurer to arrange for an assessment. Don't be worried if your insurance papers have been destroyed during the flood, as insurance companies keep records electronically and only require the policyholder's name and address. If you are unable to identify your insurer you can contact the Insurance Council of Australia on 1300 728 228 - 24 hours a day. They will be able to provide advice and assistance with identifying your insurance company.

**Animal Welfare:** For information about animal welfare after floods please contact Department of Primary Industries on 136 186 or visit [www.dpi.vic.gov.au](http://www.dpi.vic.gov.au). **Fodder drops** Loddon Mallee - Richard Leitch of Landmark -0428 351 413 Horsham - Phil Norman of Driscoll, McIlree & Dickinson Ph: 0409 812 461.

**Dial Before You Dig:** Many of the existing underground infrastructure for vital community services potentially could have little or no cover protecting them due to the unprecedented effects of erosion caused by the devastating flooding. Please ensure that you lodge an enquiry via our website [www.1100.com.au](http://www.1100.com.au) or call us on 1100 prior to undertaking any form of excavation work involving machinery or hand digging. Lodging enquiries is a free service which will enable a person to receive plans and other information from our members that have underground assets in the area the person is planning to work in.

### Electrician Contact List for flood affected residents of Mount Alexander Shire Council

The following electricians based in Castlemaine and Bendigo have been directly contacted by Council and they have advised that they are licensed contractors who are available at short notice to conduct safety assessments on flood affected properties within Mount Alexander Shire.

Electrician	Telephone	Contact
ADS Electrical Services	0438 043 345	Adam
Paul Cochrane	5472 2385	Paul
Stephen Breheny	5472 3003 or 0415 507 777	Steve
De Araugo & Lea	5441 6222	

Please note if you hire an electrician to do work on your property, please ensure that they are a licensed electrician and that they provide you with a Certificate of Compliance on completion of the works.

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### **Property Inspections**

If you have experienced flood damage to your home or property and require an assessment or advise from Council, please contact Council on 5471 1700 to arrange an appointment.

### **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.

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.

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 able to assist residents and business operators with the removal of damaged goods and materials from houses and businesses that were inundated by the most recent flooding. If flood waters entered your home or business, Council can 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. For enquiries, please contact 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 (Disaster Income Recovery Subsidy and Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment). Small businesses may 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 \$25,000 provides a one-off grant to eligible 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 or [www.ruralfinance.com.au](http://www.ruralfinance.com.au).

### Personal Hardship grants available through Department of Human Services

#### Emergency grant

**up to \$1067 per household available** per household is available to help affected people meet their immediate basic needs for clothing, food, personal items and shelter. The grant is 'needs based', is not means tested and is not affected by the insurance status of the applicant.

#### Temporary living expenses

**up to \$8,650 available**

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

#### Re-establishment grant

**up to \$8,650 for necessary structural repairs and up to \$8,650 for essential household items**

- The property must be the main home of the applicant.
- 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.

To access these grants visit or call your local DHS office on 03 5434 5555. More information is available for the DHS website [www.dhs.vic.gov.au](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au)

#### **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. 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.

**Important electricity and gas safety advice in floods can be obtained from Energy Safe Victoria at [www.esv.vic.gov.au](http://www.esv.vic.gov.au)**

#### **7. 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.

**Mount Alexander Shire Council  
Customer Service – Ph. 5471 1700**

## FLOOD INFORMATION CONTACT DETAILS

### LIFE THREATENING EMERGENCIES

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#### Mount Alexander Shire Council

Customer Service 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) 5443 7331 [www.redcross.org.au](http://www.redcross.org.au)  
Information Line (Relief Centres) 1800 727 077

#### Castlemaine District Community Health (CHIRP)

Counselling and Health Related Services 5479 1000

#### Castlemaine Health

Hospital 5471 1555 [www.mtalexhosp.vic.gov.au](http://www.mtalexhosp.vic.gov.au)  
Housing (CADARG) 5472 4299

#### Bendigo Health Emergency Respite

1800 068 978 [www.bendigohealth.org.au](http://www.bendigohealth.org.au)

#### Centrelink

Financial Assistance 5430 5802 [www.centrelink.gov.au](http://www.centrelink.gov.au)  
Monday to Friday 8am – 5pm 180 22 66

#### Department of Human Services

Grant Assistance 1300 650 172 [www.dhs.vic.gov.au](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au)  
Bendigo Office 5434 5555

#### 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 131 812 [www.vinnies.org.au](http://www.vinnies.org.au)  
Castlemaine Assistance Centre – 16 Mostyn St 5470 6091  
Tues, Thurs, Fri 12-4pm

#### Salvation Army (Castlemaine)

Material Aid & Donations 5470 5389 [www.salvationarmy.org.au](http://www.salvationarmy.org.au)  
Volunteer counsellors 137 258

**FLOOD INFORMATION CONTACT DETAILS – continued.**

<b>Wildlife Victoria</b> Injured Sick or Orphaned Wildlife	1300 094 535	<a href="http://www.wildlifevictoria.org.au">www.wildlifevictoria.org.au</a>
<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>
<b>Insurance Council of Australia</b> Insurance identification	1300 728 228	
<b>Carers Support Service</b> Bendigo Health	1800 068 987	