



Information and resources for fire-affected communities

(Updated: 07/01/2020)

Below is a list of resources and information that may be helpful for people who have been or expect to be impacted by the fires over coming days, weeks and months. Whilst this list is by no means exhaustive, we hope that it is a starting point for your Network and your communities.

We will continue to update this list as new information comes to hand. Feel free to email Wesley LifeForce's Community Engagement Coordinator (Meryl.Klimczak@wesleymission.org.au) with details of resources, services and contact points not already listed below.

VICTORIA (East Gippsland)

East Gippsland Bushfire Community Information Booklet

https://www.eastgippsland.vic.gov.au/files/assets/public/documents/bushfire/faq_bushfire_information_6_jan_community.pdf

DHHS Emergency Relief Assistance Payment - Personal Hardship Assistance Program

Emergency relief assistance may be available for up to 7 days after the emergency event.

A one-off payment (up to \$1800 for families/\$500 for individuals) is provided to help meet immediate needs, including emergency food, shelter, clothing, medication and accommodation.

A needs assessment is carried out by a Personal Hardship Assistance Officer at an Emergency Relief Centre to determine eligibility.

Relief payments are not available to:

- Tourists
- Cover the costs of cleaning up fallen trees or branches on properties
- Cover the cost of repairing or replacing fences. If a tree has fallen on your house, please call the SES or your local council for more information
- Cover losses or impacts associated with power outages. Contact your energy distributor if you have any questions
- Cover business losses or compensate for lost income
- Repair or tow motor vehicle
- Pay insurance excess.

More information on assistance:

- Department of Health and Human Services website: www.services.dhhs.vic.gov.au
- VicEmergency hotline: 1800 226 226
- VicEmergency website: www.emergency.vic.gov.au



Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment

To receive this payment, you need to have been adversely affected by the fire. For example,

- your principal place of residence has been destroyed or must be demolished
- the interior of your principal place of residence has sustained major damage
- damage from the fire has exposed the interior of your principal place of residence to the elements
- your principal place of residence has been declared structurally unsound
- the interior of your residence has been affected by sewerage contamination.
- If you're eligible you will get:
 - \$1,000 per adult
 - \$400 for each child under 16 years of age

The fastest way to claim is over the phone. Call 180 22 66 (please note the 180 is correct) to complete the claim over the phone, or go to the [website](#).

Other financial assistance and support

- **Centrelink:** 132 850
- **Insurance Council of Australia disaster hotline:** More info: 1800 734 621
- **Rural Financial Counselling Service (RFCS):** Free financial counselling to farmers and small related businesses who are in, or at risk of financial hardship. Call 1300 045 747
 - **Farm household allowance:** For farming families in financial hardship. Call the Farmers Assistance Hotline on 132 316 (Mon to Fri, 8am to 8pm).
 - **Salvation Army:** DHHS at Emergency Relief Centres may refer people to Salvation Army for additional assistance.
- **State Trustees:** 1300 138 672
- **Superannuation** (early access on compassionate grounds): 1300 131 060
- **Victorian Disaster Legal Aid:** 1800 677 402
- **Consumer Affairs Victoria:** Information and advice about your rights and obligations following an emergency, including on renting and rebuilding, and insurance. Visit www.consumer.vic.gov.au/disasterhelp or call 1300 55 81 81
- **Australian Passport Information Service:** You may be eligible for a free replacement passport if it has been lost or damaged in the bushfire. Call 131 232.
- **Telstra:** 132 203 to register for a relief package and/or assistance with free or interim services during the recovery period.

Farm and livestock

Agriculture Victoria staff are working with affected landholders to assess injured livestock and losses of agricultural assets and livestock.

- **Injured livestock/ animal welfare assessments:** Call [1800 226 226](tel:1800226226) then selection option "0" and then "4" to speak to an operator to arrange for animal health staff to visit and assess livestock.
- **For information on bushfire recovery:** Call 136 186 or visit www.agriculture.vic.gov.au/animalemergencies
- **If you have injured pets:** Seek advice immediately from your local vet or call the RSPCA on 9224 2222.
- **To report wandering livestock:** Call Council on 5153 9500. Council has raised the issue of providing water for stock with Agriculture Victoria.
- Agricultural Victoria can provide technical advice and help you make decisions on topics such as:
 - agisting livestock affected by a bushfire
 - assessing livestock after a bushfire
 - stock containment areas



- pasture recovery
- For more info on these topics go to [Agriculture Victoria's Gippsland and Upper Murray Fires Recovery page](#) or call 136 186.