



Volunteering

If you would like to **donate your time**, Latrobe City requests that you contact Go Volunteer on 1300 366 356 or register at www.govolunteer.com.au

Recovery Centre

Operating Hours

Boolarra Recovery Centre 1800 017 777

Church Street, Boolarra

Open Wednesdays 9am – 5pm (or as need dictates)

Residents requiring urgent assistance or support should contact **1800 017 777** or visit the Churchill Recovery Centre at Churchill Hub, Phillip Pde Churchill. Open 9am-7pm this week, next week 9am-5pm.

Services Offered

- Department of Human Services - emergency assistance including grants www.dhs.vic.gov.au
- Centrelink disaster payment information 180 2211 or www.disasterassist.gov.au/

Personal Support/Counselling

- Lifeline 131 114 or www.lifeline.org.au
- Parentline 13 22 89 or www.parentline.vic.gov.au
- Kids Helpline 1800 55 1800 or www.kidshelp.com.au
- Headspace (for young people 12-25 years) 5136 8300

Justice of the Peace

If you require a Justice of the Peace appointments can be arranged through the Boolarra Recovery Centre. Please phone 1800 017 777 for more information.

Asbestos Waste

Asbestos is a hazardous waste. Its handling and disposal is prescribed by the EPA. If your home was built before 1986, it will most likely contain some asbestos-cement products.

Prior to attempting any removal of asbestos material, please contact Latrobe City for advice on protecting yourself and family members and consideration for neighbours.

Firmly-bound or 'non-friable' asbestos is typically in sheet form and was used in roofing and wall sheeting, flue pipes and some water pipes. It can also be found in floor tiles and the backing for linoleum floor coverings.

Loosely-bound or 'friable' asbestos is found in the insulation of some domestic heaters and stoves. It can be found

in some roof insulation but this is unlikely in domestic situations.

When asbestos-cement is burnt in a fire, it becomes brittle and can even explode, making it loose and friable in nature. This material is potentially very dangerous if inhaled.

The disposal of waste asbestos, whether from a workplace or household, is controlled by EPA. In addition, EPA controls the transportation of waste asbestos when undertaken by a commercial contractor.

Asbestos waste must be double wrapped and sealed with 0.2mm thick plastic and clearly identified as containing asbestos material prior to disposal at a licensed landfill facility.

While it is currently legal for any resident to remove asbestos from their own home, we strongly recommend that you do not do so without wearing the appropriate protective clothing and equipment.

Native Vegetation & Tree Removal

Residents who are planning to clear Native Vegetation should contact council prior to any work being undertaken.

Free Legal Advice

The lawyers of Gippsland have pledged to provide free legal advice and assistance to bushfire victims and their families. This is part of the wider effort being coordinated by the Law Institute of Vic.

Those with legal queries have two options:-

1. Attend at any law firm in Gippsland and indicate they are seeking assistance following the fires. The lawyer will triage the legal problem, provide the necessary advice and any follow up. The service is free.
2. Phone 1800 004 402 (freecall Gippsland specific). Or 1800 113 432 (statewide). The Gippsland number is manned by the Gippsland Community Legal Centre.

Re-establishing Identity Documents

I need a replacement licence

You can get a free replacement licence or learner permit on-the-spot by visiting a VicRoads Customer Service Centre.

If you are unable to get to a Customer Service Centre, you can call Vic Roads on 13 11 71 and answer a few questions to confirm your identity. Your replacement licence will be sent to an address of your choice and delivered within three working days.

Medicare Card

Residents who have lost property or belongings can obtain a temporary Medicare card number from any Medicare office 13 20 11 or www.medicareaustralia.gov.au/

Donations

Gippsland Emergency Relief Fund

Relief organisations have reported difficulties managing the large influx of material aid (clothing, white goods, food etc) that has been generously donated.

At this time people are being asked to instead donate to the Gippsland Emergency Relief Fund.

- Donations can also be made at any branch of the:
National Australia Bank
BSB: 083 932
Account Number 04829 9080 or
- Via post to:
Gippsland Emergency Relief Fund
PO Box 508
Traralgon Vic 3844 or
- visit www.reliefund.org.au

Blood Donations

Urgent blood donations are not needed at this time. However people should continue donating over the coming weeks to maintain supplies. Call 13 14 95 to make an appointment or visit www.donateblood.com.au to fill out an online registration form.

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Corporate Donations

Corporate donations of food can be made to VicRelief Foodbank on 03 9362 8300

Housing/Emergency Accommodation

The Department of Human Services is coordinating donations of billeting/housing and emergency accommodation for Victorian bushfire victims.

People wishing to donate accommodation should contact the Victorian Bushfire Public Accommodation Donation Line by calling 1800 006 468 between 8am - 8pm.

Anyone affected by the fires who needs advice or assistance with accommodation can call Erin, Victor or Kylie at the Office of Housing Gippsland accommodation assistance (fire recovery) 1800 650 813

Disposal of dead stock

Latrobe City has established a burial site at the former Traralgon Landfill Facility in Depot Road, Traralgon for the disposal of dead stock. We have also arranged for the collection of stock from fire affected properties. Please call Wayne Sim, Cleansing Services Coordinator on 5128 5303 to request a collection.

It is preferable for carcasses to be taken to this disposal site, however we understand that some residents may wish to bury stock on-site.

In this case we ask residents to contact us to determine the suitability of individual sites in cooperation with EPA Victoria and the Department of Primary Industry. Some sites will not be suitable as they may cause adverse environmental effects.

Please contact the Latrobe City Recovery Office 1800 017 777 to register your request for assistance.

Animal Welfare

Department of Primary Industries (DPI) is responsible for animal welfare response and recovery activities with the support of the RSPCA and Department of Sustainability and Environment.

- DPI Customer Service Centre on 136 186 for advice on nearest DPI coordination centre.
- RSPCA temporary emergency accommodation for animals 03 9224 2222 or www.rspca.org.au. RSPCA is also providing wildlife assistance
- Animal Aid (Coldstream) for care of domestic pets affected by fires. Contact 0418 982 070
- Wildlife Victoria 24 hour contact for injured animals 13 000 94535 or www.wildlifevictoria.org.au
- Lort Smith Animal Hospital is offering free veterinary treatment for pets affected by the bushfires. Contact 03 9328 3021 (North Melbourne) or 03 9407 2030 (Mill Park) www.lortsmith.com
- University of Melbourne Veterinary Clinic (Werribee) is offering free treatment of pets and horses injured in the bushfires. Contact 03 9731 2232 (24 hours) or www.vch.unimelb.edu.au/
- Project Hope Horse Welfare Victoria is arranging housing and transport, coordinating feed and horse related goods for horse owners 1300 881 606 or www.phhvw.org.au/
- Help for Wildlife has a 24 hour emergency service 0417 380 687 or www.helpforwildlife.com/

Post Fire Waste Management

There is a separate information sheet which is available for residents.

Please visit www.latrobe.vic.gov.au to download a copy or call 1300 367 700

Warning for Homeowners around Fire Damaged Properties

Building Commissioner Tony Arnel has issued a warning to homeowners returning to fire affected properties to exercise caution when near their homesites.

“It can be assumed that any structure that has been exposed to fire and is still standing is at risk of collapse. This includes homes, outbuildings such as sheds and garages as well as chimneys and partially standing brick walls.

“Homeowners are at risk of collapsing walls, especially those that are partially standing, roofs and other structures that have been damaged in the fire.

“If you are in any doubt about the structural stability of your home or outbuildings, you should stay well away and have the structure inspected by a registered building practitioner, such as a structural engineer or a municipal building surveyor,” he said.

Safety Advice from Energy Safe Victoria (ESV)

ESV is the State’s electricity and gas safety regulator and provides the following important safety information for bushfire affected communities.

- If planning to return to your property affected by the bushfires, seek the advice of police and other emergency services to make sure it is safe to do so.
- When accessing your property take extreme care around damaged or fallen powerlines as they may still be “live”. Keep clear of them and keep others away.
- Do not remove damaged trees or clean-up around fallen or damaged powerlines.
- Notify the local electricity distributor by calling the “customer faults and emergencies” number on your most recent power bill if there is any damage to powerlines.
- Where properties have been significantly damaged by fires or strong winds, it is imperative that checks of wiring and other electrical installations are made before appliances are connected and turned on. Such checks must be carried out by an electrician or electrical inspector licensed by Energy Safe Victoria.
- If electricity supplies have not been restored to homes for any reason, householders must not connect permanent generators or perform other electrical work around the home. Such work can only be carried out by licensed electricians.

- Safety precautions must also be followed when using temporary generators at properties.
- If there are continuing power supply problems within properties, an electrician licensed by Energy Safe Victoria must be engaged to perform any electrical repair work. Again, contact a registered electrical contractor to arrange the work.

This is an excerpt from ESV. For further information phone (03) 9203 9700 or 1800 800 158 or visit www.esv.vic.gov.au

Important Safety Information for Generator Use

Energy Safe Victoria advises people to take the following precautions if using a generator:

- Ensure your generator is correctly connected.
- Keep your generator outside.
- Ensure you do not overload your generator.
- Ensure your generator is placed in a location where the exhaust fumes do not come into contact with any combustible material.
- Always plug appliances into the generator rather than plugging the generator into the power socket as this increases the risk of electrocution.
- Ensure you have the appropriate power board and leads to fit the generator you are using.
- Make sure the generator is off and has cooled before refuelling as petrol spilled on hot engine parts can ignite.

Volunteer electricians are currently being coordinated to help people in bushfire impacted areas safely connect generators and repair electrical damage.

This is an excerpt from ESV. For further information phone (03) 9203 9700 or 1800 800 158 or visit www.esv.vic.gov.au

Horses

Many of our friends and neighbours have suffered losses in the bushfires. Even if their horses have survived, they may no longer have the basic necessities such as feed, hay, buckets, headstalls and leadropes. When the children are ready to ride again they won’t have saddles or bridles, helmets, saddle blankets or brushes for their ponies.

To assist those in need in our area TADARC and the Traralgon Pony Club are coordinating the receipt and distribution of donated feed and gear.

Bulky goods (feed and hay) should be dropped off at the Traralgon Pony Club grounds on Minniedale Road in Traralgon.

To arrange a delivery or a pickup, please call Tania Vermeulan on 0427 338 362.

Insurance

We have been advised that some insurance companies were requiring people with spoiled food in fridges and freezers (due to interrupted power supply caused by the bushfires) to hold on to the food pending inspection by an insurance assessor.

The Insurance Council of Australia advised that health and safety issues have precedence over other issues. Policy holders may be advised that spoiled food may be disposed of prior to assessment. The food should be listed and, where possible photographed prior to disposal.

Offer of Care for Animals

The Faculty of Veterinary Science at Melbourne University is providing free care for dogs and cats and horses injured in the bushfires. People with injured dogs and cats who wish to use the Faculty's services should contact the Veterinary Clinic and Hospital on 03 9731 2232 (24 hours). For injured horses please contact the Equine Centre at the University of Melbourne on 03 97312 268.

Agencies that can help you

Latrobe City	1300 367 700	www.latrobe.vic.gov.au
Centrelink	13 28 50	www.centrelink.gov.au
Department of Human Services	5177 2500	www.dhs.vic.gov.au/emergency
Department of Primary Industries	13 61 86	www.dpi.vic.gov.au
Water Management Authority- Gippsland Water	1800 066 401	www.gippswater.com.au
Personal Support: Lifeline Gippsland	13 11 14	www.lifeline.org.au/gippsland
Department of Sustainability & Environment	13 61 86	www.dse.vic.gov.au
Bushfire Information Hotline	1800 240 667	www.cfa.vic.gov.au