



Relief Centre

The Relief Centre is the first point of contact for people affected by the recent bush fires. Residents can register and receive guidance & support.

Traralgon Town Hall, Little Theatre Complex, cnr. Grey & Breed Streets Traralgon, 5176 3559.

General Assistance

Financial Assistance

Latrobe's Recovery Office can assist you in contacting those departments or agencies responsible for providing financial assistance.

Emergency Grants and Temporary Living Grants are available from the Department of Human Services. Please contact the Relief Centre on 1800 017 700 for further information.

Insurance Advice

Policy holders who have been impacted by bushfires should, when it is safe and authorised to do so by emergency services, return to their properties and make their own initial assessment. If your property has been damaged or destroyed you should immediately make contact with your insurer so that the claims process can commence as quickly as possible.

Insurers have call centres operating to assist policy holders to get the claims process underway quickly. When access to affected areas is allowed, insurance assessors will most likely visit your property.

Telephones

Telstra can set up a diversion from your home phone to your mobile. For more information please call Telstra on 13 22 03.

Council Rates and Property Valuations

Letters and/or notices have been sent to many residents who had property damaged or lost as a result of the bushfire. If you need information or assistance regarding potential change in your property valuation, as a result of damage, please contact the rates department on 1300 367 700.

Rebuilding

Latrobe City Council has already started to receive calls from owners of fire affected properties, requesting permission to build/rebuild. To assist with the recovery effort, the Planning

and Development Team will implement a system to:

- Provide an integrated planning and building advisory service
- Waive planning application fees
- Fast track planning applications in fire affected areas
- Liaise with CFA planning staff to ensure that any referrals triggered by Wildfire Management Overlay are also fast tracked.
- Liaise with private building surveyors to encourage quick turnaround of building permit applications.

Requests for assistance can be directed to Robert Dunlop, Latrobe City Senior Statutory Planner on 5128 5469 or 0407 505 029.

Garbage Collection

Residents who have bins which have melted or been damaged can contact Cleanaway on 1800 007 543 and a replacement bin will be provided.

For residents that do not have access to bins, Cleanaway have temporarily agreed to accept rubbish bags.

Updates

For information on fires in Victoria and general fire safety advice, please contact the Victorian Bushfire Information Line (VBIL) on freecall 1800 240 667.

Callers who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have a speech / communication impairment may call textphone/ telewriter (TTY) on 1800 122 969.

Information is also available at www.dse.vic.gov.au/fires

ABC Radio

Residents and Visitors to the region are asked to remain vigilant and listen to their local ABC Radio (100.7 FM or 828 AM) for up to date fire related messages.

Native Vegetation Management

Green Waste Drop Off Facilities

Unburned green waste can be taken to the green waste facilities located in Morwell (open 7 days) Traralgon (open Sat-Sun) or Moe (open Sat-Sun). Contact Council regarding the disposal of burnt vegetation.

Dead Vegetation

Whilst the vegetation (including trees and shrubs) may appear dead, it is likely that the burnt vegetation will recover and re-shoot. This needs to be considered before making the decision to remove trees that appear dead. You are encouraged to allow vegetation to recover before making a decision to remove or clear the area.

Please note that prior to removing dead trees with a trunk diameter of 40cm or more, you will need to contact the **Natural Environment & Sustainability Team** at Latrobe City Council on 5128 5751.

Dangerous Trees

Council is currently undertaking native vegetation lopping and removal on roadsides which present a risk to road users. This is being undertaken to comply with the appropriate guidelines and people are requested to take care on the roads around these works.

If you have burnt or damaged trees on your property that you believe are at risk of causing personal injury or property damage, it is recommended that you have a private arborist assess the trees. Arborists can be found in the Yellow Pages. Before any tree removal works including lopping, pruning and/or removal are undertaken contact Latrobe City Council to ensure a permit is not needed.

Farming

The DPI are currently assessing farm properties affected by fire. Please contact the DPI 136 186 on or visit their web site www.dpi.vic.gov.au for further details.

Water Issues

Water for fire affected residents

Gippsland Water will provide up to 20,000 litres of free potable water per property to fire affected residents in the Traralgon South, Jeeralang, Jumbuk, Callignee, Churchill, Warragul, Drouin, Rawson, Erica, Neerim, Neerim South, Noojee, Hazelwood North and Hazelwood South areas who have lost water from their private water tanks as a result of

the recent fires.

Interested residents can telephone a participating Gippsland Water accredited licensed water carter – which can be located in the Yellow Pages – and advise they would like to access replacement water for their water tank.

Gippsland Water is making this offer available for a period of two weeks commencing 9 February 2009 and will continue until 23 February 2009. A limit of 20,000 litres per property applies. All transportation costs are the responsibility of the resident, Gippsland Water will cover the costs of the water only.

Gippsland Water can only guarantee the quality of the water whilst it is in the reticulated supply system. Residents are encouraged to inspect their water tanks prior to delivery due to the possibility of recent contamination.

For further information, please telephone Gippsland Water's Service Centre on 1800 066 401.

Water Tanks and Quality

Your water tanks may be contaminated by ash, debris and fire retardants.

If you are concerned about the quality of the water in your tank following the bushfire, there is a fact sheet on Latrobe City's web site www.latrobe.vic.gov.au which provides information in regards to water quality. Alternatively, Latrobe City Health Officers will be able to provide you with information on water testing and usage by ringing 1300 367 700.

Road Closures as at 11am 10/02/09

Churchill Jeeralang Fire

- Carrajung - Woodside Road
- Grand Ridge Road between Tarra Valley Road and Hyland Highway
- Hyland Highway between Traralgon Creek Road and South Gippsland Highway
- South Gippsland Highway between Yarram and Stradbroke
- Tarra Valley Road
- Traralgon Balook Road
- Traralgon Creek Road

Local Roads

- East Tyers - Thomson Fire, Walhalla
- Flynn Creek Road, Flynn
- Glendonald Rd and Hazelwood Rd, Hazelwood North
- Hazelwood Road in Hazelwood North
- Jeeralong North Road at Hazelwood North
- Jumbuk and Junction Roads, Jeeralang Junction
- Lawless Rd at Churchill

- Roberts Road at Won Wron
- Sagars Road at Hazelwood North
- Thompson Road at Hazelwood North
- Thomson Valley Road at Parkers Corner
- Walhalla Road at Tyers-Thomson Valley Road
- Warren Terrace and Clarke Rd in Hazelwood North

For updates on road closures, please contact the Victorian Bushfire Information Line on 1800 240 667

Cleaning up your property after a bushfire

Houses, sheds and other buildings or structures that are burnt in a bushfire can leave potential health hazards in the remaining rubble and ash.

Hazardous household materials that may be present after the fire include asbestos, ash from burnt treated timbers (i.e. Copper chrome arsenate or 'CCA timber'), medicines, garden or farm chemicals, other general chemicals (e.g. Cleaning products, pool chlorine, etc.), metals and other residues from burnt household appliances as well as ash and dusts.

If you have any enquiries in relation to hazardous waste please contact our Waste Officer on 1300 367 700.

Potential Health Hazards

Private Water Safety

- If the tank water tastes or smells unusual, is cloudy or discoloured, or contains particles, you should assume it is contaminated. Do not use it for drinking, food preparation or making ice until the tank has been cleaned and refilled with new rainwater or clean water brought in by a reputable water carter.
- If there is any doubt, assume the tank water is contaminated.

- You may choose to have the tank water tested before deciding whether to use it for drinking. A laboratory analyst can test a sample of tank water for chemical (fire retardants), microbiological and algae levels.
- Water that is not suitable to drink may be used for other purposes such as watering the garden, etc.
- Do not give contaminated water to animals to drink.

Private Water Maintenance

- Use the first flush diverter on your tank to divert any residual debris away from your drinking water storage.
- If you do not have a first flush diverter, disconnect the inlet from the roof to the tank until the roof has been cleaned of debris.
- When safe to do so, arrange to clean debris from the roof and gutters before it rains.
- Dead birds or other animals found in gutters should be removed using gloves and placed in a plastic bag for disposal.

Food Safety

- Ensure the proper refrigeration of food occurs. All food products that require refrigeration should be stored in a unit that keeps the temperature constantly below 5°C. Any perishable food kept above 5°C should be discarded after 2 hours.

Occupation

- Should you desire to return to your property and wish to reside in a temporary or movable dwelling (caravan) please obtain /complete an application form which shall be available from any of Council's Recovery Centres.
- Assessments shall be undertaken to determine the status of your septic system. Should you have any sewage disposal issues, please contact Council's Health Services for advice.

Should you have any enquiries in relation to public health issues please contact our health team on 1300 367 700.

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	http://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 44	www.lifeline.org.au/gippsland
Department of Sustainability & Environment	13 61 86	www.dse.vic.gov.au
Bush fire Information Hotline	1800 240 667	www.cfa.vic.gov.au