

# BUSHFIRE RECOVERY NEWS

NOVEMBER 2020, ISSUE NO. 3  
SPRING EDITION

*Budgeree, Jumbuk & Yinnar South*



## WELCOME

**This newsletter goes out to our communities in Boolarra, Boolarra South, Budgeree, Jumbuk, Jeeralang Junction, Yinnar South and parts of Yinnar by Australia Post delivery. Extra copies are available from the Yinnar General Store. The newsletter is to let you know that work on the long term recovery continues during the COVID-19 pandemic.**

A message from Annette Deppeler, Chair of the Budgeree, Jumbuk, Yinnar South Community Recovery Committee:

*Following the March 2019 fire in the Yinnar South, Budgeree and Jumbuk areas, a Community Recovery Committee (CRC) was formed consisting of community representatives and various local and state government agencies. Some months later a Recovery Officer was appointed by Latrobe City to work with the Committee to access funding for projects that were nominated by local residents.*

*One area of concern was the dangerous trees that were affected by the fire and the aftermath of the tree felling immediately after the fire. We have been working with the concerned landowners and hopefully this concern will be concluded to everyone's satisfaction very shortly.*

*We also recognised two major projects that were put forward – the first one, a large 90,000 litre water tank for CFA access in the Jumbuk area. Funding for the tank was provided by the Community Enterprise Foundation and it has been installed on the site of the old Jumbuk Hall that was burnt down in the fire. Quotes are now being sought for the fencing to protect the tank and fittings.*

*The second project is the construction of a ford over Middle Creek on the Upper Middle Creek Road. The former bridge over the creek was never replaced and the crossing has been declared impassable for emergency fire, ambulance and police vehicles.*

An application for funding this has been submitted to the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal. Hopefully that will be successful. Unfortunately Upper Middle Creek Road has now been closed due to a major road slip so until the road is declared safe for heavy vehicles, the project may be delayed for some time.

If you have any ideas or concerns for the Community Recovery Committee to consider, please contact our Recovery Officer Linda Snell or any of the community representatives listed below:

- Annette Deppeler (Chair),
- John Harris (Deputy Chair),
- Laura Myer (Jumbuk Park),
- Kerry Campbell (Friends of Morwell National Park),
- Rohan Gordan (HVP) or
- Linda Snell, Yinnar South Recovery Officer on 0400 828 685.

The CRC is also supported by several government agencies including Latrobe City Council. All committee members can be contacted via their email [BJYScommittee@latrobe.vic.gov.au](mailto:BJYScommittee@latrobe.vic.gov.au)



**Missed an Edition?** Catch up here -

[www.latrobe.vic.gov.au/Community/Emergencies/Yinnar\\_South\\_Bushfire\\_Recovery](http://www.latrobe.vic.gov.au/Community/Emergencies/Yinnar_South_Bushfire_Recovery)

## Can you tell us about the history of Jumbuk?

**The CRC would like to add a small plaque to the former site of the Jumbuk Hall at 4 O'Reillys Hill Road.**

The Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation have provided us some of the history as the traditional owners of a large part of Gippsland. Alma Glover has sent us information from around 1870 onwards. Do you have a story to tell or something to share?

### **This is what we have so far:**

*This is the site of the second Jumbuk public Hall. It was destroyed by fire in March 2019.*

*Jumbuk encompasses Calder Junction (South East), Middle Creek Valley (West) and is bounded by O'Reillys Hill Road (North) and Jumbuk Road (North West).*

*Respect is paid to the original owners of this land, the Gunaikurnai people.*

*White settlement began in the late 1870's. By the year 1914 some 38 farming families were supported by mail delivery, the first public hall opened in 1914 but destroyed by bushfire in 1939, and two schools (SS3349 and SS3867). Farming included dairying, sheep, pigs and cropping eg. potatoes and maize.*

*After World War 1 noxious weeds and rabbits caused a regression, followed during the Depression years (1930's) when several sustenance families were allotted abandoned blocks thereby increasing population again.*

*Timber harvesting has long been a feature of the area. As at the year 2020, plantation growth (began circa 1950's) continues to occupy the upper reaches. Hobby farms now mainly adorn the lower reaches ....*

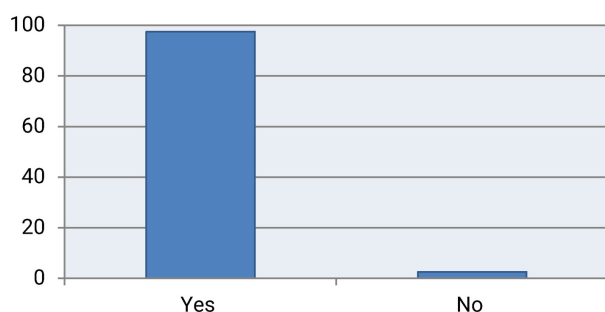
# SHOULD I STAY OR SHOULD I GO?

Thank you to all the residents who have already completed our emergency preparedness survey. Can you spare three minutes to complete it? This will help us work together with your community to make sure in the next emergency event, everyone is prepared! The survey includes an option to have some help with making sure you and your property are well prepared.

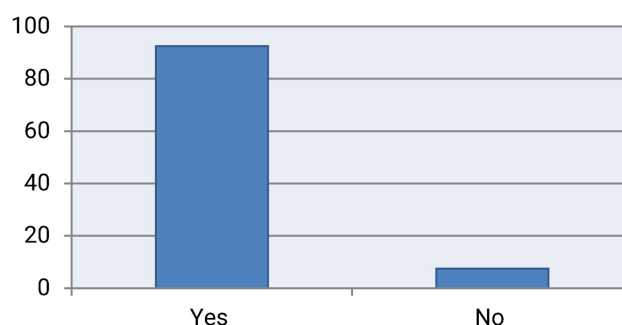
Survey Link: [www.surveymonkey.com/r/areyouprepared2020](https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/areyouprepared2020)

Here is some of what your community have told us so far!

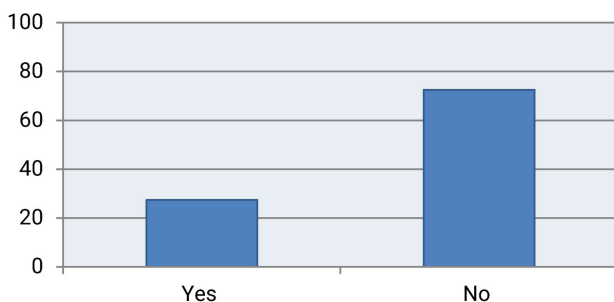
***Has your family/household discussed what you would do in the event of an emergency such as storm damage, house fire, flood or bush fire?***



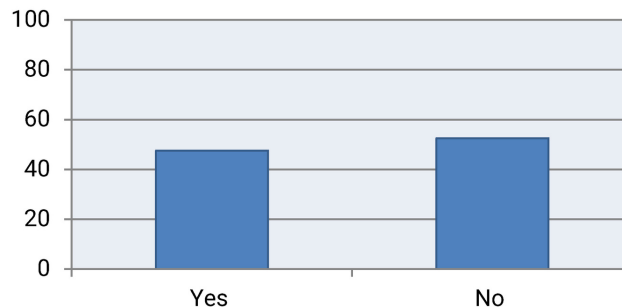
***Is your address/property number clearly visible from the road day and night for emergency service vehicles including ambulances?***



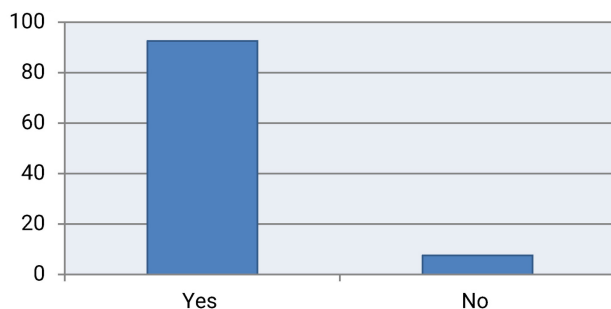
***Do you have a written emergency plan that the whole household are aware of?***



***In the event of an emergency does your household have an agreed meeting point elsewhere to wait if you're separated at any point?***



***Do you know how to set a watch zone on the VicEmergency App?***

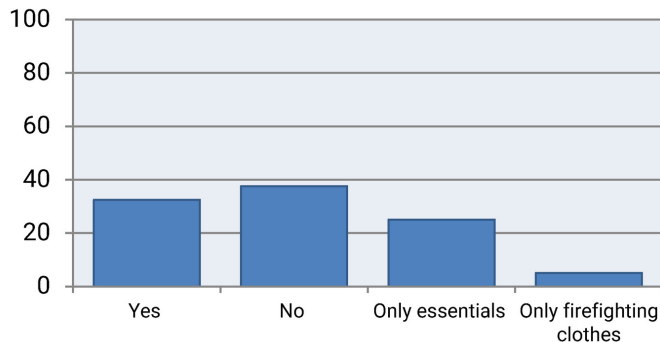


Find out how to set up your 'watch zone' here. Set one up for home, work and include anywhere you regularly attend. <https://vicemergency.zendesk.com/hc/en-gb/articles/235478427-How-do-I-create-a-watch-zone->

You can also add map overlays within the app which include wind direction and speed, fire danger ratings/total fire bans, rain radar, thunderstorm tracker, heat health alerts and thunderstorm asthma forecast. <https://vicemergency.zendesk.com/hc/en-gb/articles/115001539287-What-are-map-overlays-and-how-do-I-use-them->

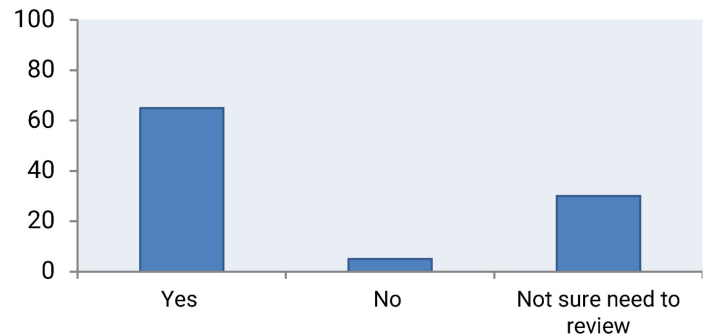


*Do you have two emergency kits prepared – one with appropriate firefighting clothing and one with your essentials?*



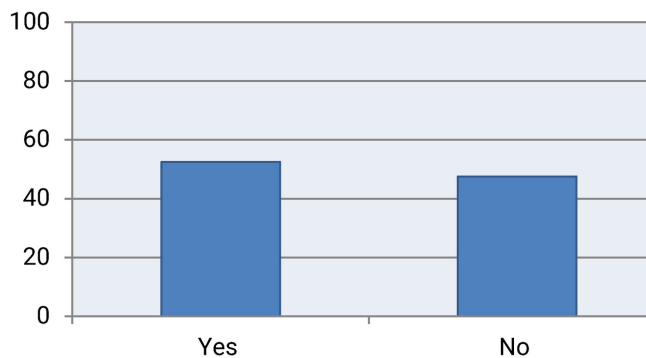
In the lead up to the fire season, check your pumps and fire hoses and make sure everyone in your home knows how to start the pumps. Have written instructions nearby the pump in case of panic.

*Does your insurance cover full replacement of your home including clean-up including any asbestos on your property that needs to be considered?*



Read on for our article from Disaster Legal Help Victoria to help you be more prepared.

*Do you know about the Latrobe Valley Information Network (LVIN) and Attentis App?*



The Latrobe Valley Information Network is now available as an App and can be downloaded for free through the Apple Store and Google Play Store. Customisable alerts will be available as a premium feature at the start of the 2020 fire season.

Available on the App Store or Google Play



**Attentis® - Smart Sensors**  
Real-time data monitoring  
Attentis Pty Ltd  
★★★★★ 5.0 • 4 Ratings  
Free

## Introducing Australia's first real-time environmental sensor network

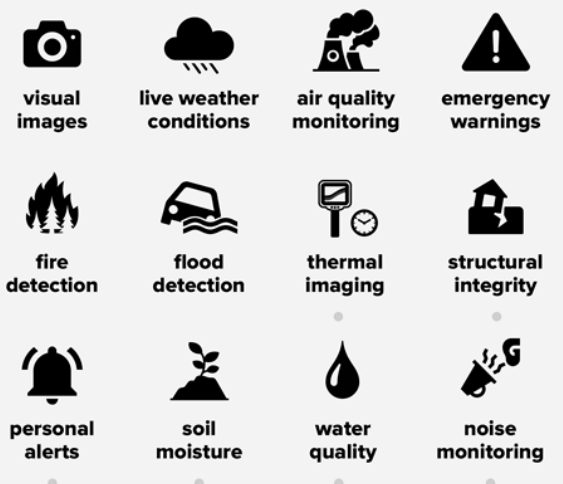
<https://www.LVIN.org>

Attentis®



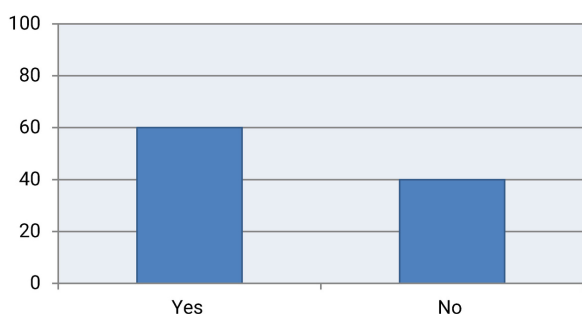
## Stay informed in the valley

Launched on 1 May 2019, the LVIN website provides all residents of the Latrobe Valley with 24-hour access to:



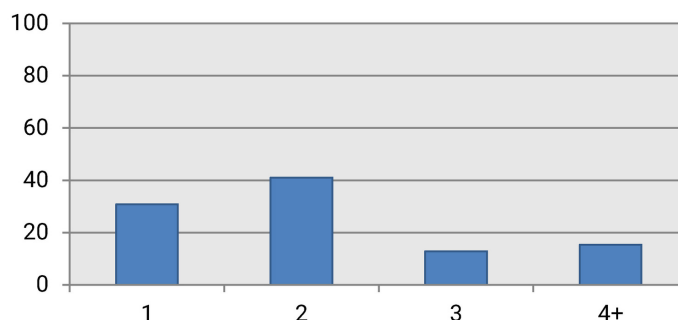


*Do you know where to access the regulations on native vegetation removal from around your home?*



More information can be found here - [www.planning.vic.gov.au/policy-and-strategy/bushfire/your-property/vegetation-removal-for-bushfire-protection](http://www.planning.vic.gov.au/policy-and-strategy/bushfire/your-property/vegetation-removal-for-bushfire-protection)

*How many roads can you use to get out in an emergency?*



Would you like assistance with preparing or reviewing your emergency plans, or improving your emergency preparedness? Like a hand? Contact Linda Snell, Yinnar South Recovery Officer on 0400 828 685 to be put in touch with a representative from your local CFA Brigade.

## BUSHFIRE PREPAREDNESS

*With summer almost here, Latrobe City residents should ensure their properties are prepared for the high risk of bush and grass fires.*

Bushfires devastated East Gippsland last summer and Latrobe City residents also live in a bushfire prone area – and not just those in rural areas.

Council Officers continue to undertake fire prevention inspections throughout the fire danger period inspecting that may pose a fire risk by being overgrown and having combustible materials close to buildings. All grass, weeds, undergrowth and/or combustible materials should be no taller than 75 millimetres.

If you receive a fire prevention notice, you can request an extension of time to complete all or any works stated on the notice by contacting Council before the due date.

On hot, dry, windy days, fires can start and spread quickly. If the Fire Danger Rating is Severe, Extreme or Code Red, leaving early before a fire has started is the safest option. Be sure you and your family have a fire action plan in place so that everyone knows how to leave your property and where to meet.

It's also advisable to have a box of valuables and important documentation such as insurance papers within easy reach in the event you need to leave quickly.

For more information about preparing for emergencies, including bushfire, visit this page on Council's website: [www.latrobe.vic.gov.au/Emergency\\_Management](http://www.latrobe.vic.gov.au/Emergency_Management)

If you have any concerns, contact Council on 1300 367 700.



# PREPARING YOUR INSURANCE FOR BUSHFIRE SEASON

*1 in 2 Victorians either don't have insurance or are underinsured. Getting the right insurance will protect the things that are most important to you and help you get back on your feet and avoid financial hardship if disaster strikes.*

Disaster Legal Help Victoria has prepared resources to help you be more prepared. We are collaboration between Victoria Legal Aid, the Federation of Community Legal Centres, the Law Institute of Victoria, the Victorian Bar and Justice Connect. We were originally formed in response to the 2009 Black Saturday bushfires.

Our key messages to help you legally prepare are:

## **Keep an electronic copy of your important documents on the cloud:**

- Collect an electronic copy of your important documents; this includes things like leases, land titles and insurance policies. You can scan a paper copy or even take a picture with your phone, if you don't already have an electronic copy. Once you have the documents together save them on the cloud. This will mean you won't lose access if you lose your device. An easy way to do this is to email them to yourself.

## **Get insurance to protect the things you care about:**

- There are different kinds of insurance products and they cover different things. Generally, insurance for your home, the contents inside your home and your motor vehicle are all different kinds of insurance products. Double check that you have all the right kinds of insurance you need.

## **Get enough insurance to properly cover you:**

- Make sure you get insurance that will pay enough money to cover the things that are important to you. When it comes to home insurance, products cover you either with sum insurance (a total amount you can claim) or with total replacement (will pay the amount necessary to replace destroyed or damaged property). With sum insurance, make sure you get enough coverage. If a disaster strikes, a rebuild is likely to be more expensive than usual because the demand for materials and trades increases. You may also have higher than average replacement costs if you have certain needs for your property, like removing asbestos.

## **Make sure the insurance covers you:**

- Most insurance products will protect you for storms and bushfires; however, not all do for flood damage. Make sure that your insurance product protects you for all the disaster events from which you want protection. Also, get your insurance now if you can afford it. Most insurance products won't cover you for bushfire damage if it happens within 48-72 hours of you starting the policy.

For more information you can contact us on 1800 113 432 and visit our website at [www.disasterlegalhelp.org.au](http://www.disasterlegalhelp.org.au)



# PROTECT YOUR PRIVATE DRINKING WATER TANK FROM CONTAMINATION

## *Before a bushfire*

Develop a Home Emergency Plan Consider how to protect your private drinking water supply as part of your Home Emergency Plan. Talk to your family to make sure more than one person knows what to do and how to manage your private drinking water supply.

### **Protect your private drinking water supply from contamination**

- Know your private drinking water supply including where your water comes from, for example rainwater or groundwater supply.
- Make sure your water tank is properly sealed and tank covers are fitted.
- Install first flush diverters, leaf stoppers on downpipes, and gutter guards.
- Disconnect the downpipes from your tank as soon as there is a fire risk to avoid windblown ash, debris, fire retardants or water from water-bombing, entering the tank and contaminating your drinking water.

## *After a bushfire*

Prior to reconnecting your downpipes, hose off the roof catchment area or wait for a good flush of rain to prevent contaminants entering your tank. If you need to clean your roof manually, take care to prevent slips and falls. This can be done by a professional cleaner. You can find out more information through your local council.

### **What happens if my downpipes have not been disconnected prior to a fire?**

If you suspect your tank water is contaminated, or the water tastes, looks or smells unusual, do not drink, use for food preparation, brushing teeth or give to animals (pets or livestock) as it may be affected by the following:

- fire retardants or water from water-bombing, which may have been used around your property. There is a potential that these may have entered your tank.
- ash or debris on your roof catchment. Disconnect your downpipes prior to a rain event. This will help prevent further debris and ash entering your tank.

Use bottled water for drinking.

Boiling water does not remove fire retardants or other chemicals from your water. Fire affected water in your tank can still be used for irrigation and firefighting purposes. Water testing is not necessary.

If your tank needs to be cleaned, get a professional tank cleaner. Never enter a tank. Tanks are confined spaces and are very dangerous; the risks include loss of consciousness, asphyxiation and death.

Once the tank has been professionally drained and cleaned, refill with water from a source known to be safe for drinking.

For more information visit

[www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/bushfires-and-water-tanks](http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/bushfires-and-water-tanks)



# YINNAR SOUTH CFA PRE-SEASON BUSHFIRE PREPAREDNESS

*6 December 2020*

*150 Middle Creek Road, Yinnar South*



Meet your local Country Fire Authority volunteers, chat about your family emergency plans, learn how to use a fire extinguisher and meet other community members. Boolarra Koffee Kart will be there with free tea, coffee and milkshakes.

Due to the changing nature of the COVID-19 restrictions please check the Yinnar South Fire Brigade Facebook page for details and to book. [www.facebook.com/Yinnar-South-FIRE-Brigade-381979645579330](https://www.facebook.com/Yinnar-South-FIRE-Brigade-381979645579330)

## INTERESTED IN TAKING ACTION TO PROTECT OUR UNIQUE KOALAS?

Latrobe City Council's Environment Team is available to provide information and advice to landowners as to how they may preserve and restore habitat corridors to better protect local Koala populations without increasing bushfire risk.

### **Why is the Strzelecki Koala population unique?**

For a number of years, the evidence has been building of the importance of the Strzelecki Ranges / Southern Gippsland koala population. It is one of the most genetically diverse, and therefore genetically resilient, koala populations remaining in south-eastern Australia. Key locations of populations found in Latrobe City include the Morwell National Park linking to Jumbuk, Jeeralang, Yinnar South and Billy's Creek localities.

### **What can landowners do?**

If you are keen to find what you can do to better protect your local Koala population (in particular recovery and resilience of local populations which may have been impacted by fire), advice can be provided by speaking with a representative of Latrobe City Council's Environment team.



Types of activities might include:

- Undertaking Koala surveys on their property
- Revegetating properties with preferred Koala food trees (whilst not increasing bushfire risk);
- Working with neighbours to identify key corridors and agreeing on land management practices to remove hurdles or other risks;
- Accessing grants and other support for conservation works.

### **Where can I find more information?**

To find out more information, please email Latrobe City Council's Environment Team at:

[rre@latrobe.vic.gov.au](mailto:rre@latrobe.vic.gov.au)