

Community Newsletter Storm & Flood Event June 2021

No. 6 Monday 21 June 2021

Weather forecast

Benign conditions at the start of the week. Rain across Victoria from Wednesday, continuing through to end of week before easing Saturday. Heaviest falls across the north of the Dividing Range with lighter falls expected in the south. Some potential for damaging winds over elevated areas from Wednesday to Friday.

Recovery

- [BlazeAid](#) is setting up camps at [Heyfield](#) and [Yinnar](#), starting on Friday 25th and Monday 28th respectively. Volunteers are needed for set up, cooking, administration and to rebuild fences for flood-affected farmers. A farmers meeting is planned for Wednesday 23rd at the Heyfield Netball Complex. To volunteer or register for help, contact the camp coordinator directly.
- The [Personal Hardship Assistance Program](#) is available to people whose homes are damaged or destroyed and are uninhabitable. A one-off payment is provided to help meet immediate needs, including emergency food, shelter, clothing, medication and accommodation. Contact your council or email emergencyhardshippayments@dfh.vic.gov.au for more information.
- The [Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment](#) (AGDRP) provides one-off assistance to eligible Australians adversely affected by the storms and floods. AGDRP is available for people who have been seriously injured, lost their homes or whose homes have been directly damaged, whose major assets have been directly damaged or are the immediate family members of a person who has died as a direct result of the storms and floods.
- The [Disaster Recovery Allowance](#) (DRA) provides income support payments to those who have lost income as a direct result of the storms and floods. DRA is not available if you already receive another income support payment.
- The AGDRP and DRA are available until 16 December 2021 in the local government area of Latrobe.
- Please note: Australian Red Cross has deactivated the [Register.Find.Reunite](#) service.

Support

Recovery centre – Gippsland Regional Indoor Sports Stadium from 10am to 5pm. Connecting community members with a range of services and information.

Information centre – Yinnar RSL. Representatives from Latrobe City Council available from 10am to 3pm. Council officers can refer people for assistance.

Virtual emergency relief centre – Bass Coast
www.basscoast.vic.gov.au/virtual-emergency-relief-centre

Final newsletter for this event

Agriculture

- [Agriculture Victoria](#) has a team in place to work with producers and industry following the recent storms and floods. Producers should get in contact if they have horticultural, livestock or other agricultural issues.
- If sewage contamination is suspected on your property notify Agriculture Victoria – cattle and pigs that come into contact with untreated sewage can develop parasitic infections. The infection of *Taenia saginata* in cattle is called Cysticercus bovis (“beef measles”) and is notifiable in Victoria.
- Technical support and advice is available for:
 - grazing and pasture recovery
 - water budgeting and quality
 - soil erosion management
 - land class fencing
 - animal health and nutrition
 - whole farm planning.
 Contact Darren Hickey on 0457 609 140 or darren.hickey@agriculture.vic.gov.au.

For urgent animal welfare issues, call 1800 226 226.

Forest and park closures

Selected parks, state forests, reserves, campgrounds and tracks are currently closed for public safety. Go to [FFMVic](#) and [Parks Victoria](#) for current information.



Banding together: Community members came together at the Traralgon Rec Reserve on Saturday and Sunday for a BBQ lunch and coffee supported by the Filipino Community Association, Red Cross and Churchill & Districts Lions Club.

Roadside wood

Illegal roadside collection of storm damaged timber is causing traffic hazards and impacting the safety of emergency workers still trying to make the area safe.

Road authorities **do not** give permission for the removal of roadside timber and will advise of any possible wood collection sites when areas have been declared safe.

Power

A small number of customers in Erica, Stony Creek, Foster North, Wonga, Boolarong, Mount Best and Toora North who are still without power are expected to have service restored this week. Please check [Outage Tracker](#) for the most up-to-date information.

The Victorian Government is providing a [Prolonged Power Outage Payment](#) of \$1680 per week, which will be administered by AusNet. You are eligible for this if you:

- have a residential electricity account and fall within AusNet's distribution area, and
- were without power as at 12.01am Thursday 17 June, due to the recent severe weather event.

Customers whose power remains out as at 12:01am Thursday, 24 June will be entitled to the second week's payment. **AusNet will directly contact all customers who are eligible for relief payments.**

If you are eligible you should have received an SMS from AusNet. If you haven't received an SMS, complete [this form](#). Assistance is also available via the dedicated storm relief hotline 1300 561 171 from 8am to 8pm, 7 days.

If there are fallen powerlines stay more than 8 to 10 metres away. Standing near fallen powerlines can be fatal. Always treat fallen powerlines as live even when they are broken. To report powerlines down, call [Ausnet](#) on 13 17 99.

Portable generators

- Never modify an extension cord to plug into household wiring. Never try to power the house wiring by plugging the generator into a wall socket or connecting to the switchboard.
- Only use heavy-duty outdoor rated extension cords that are in good condition and rated in watts or amps at least equal to the sum of the connected appliance loads. Never drive over the extension cord between your house and the generator.
- Generators pose safety risks including electrocution, fire or asphyxiation when not used correctly.
- Never use generators indoors or in enclosed areas – they emit carbon monoxide that you can't see or smell.
- Keep the generator out of dry grass, stored on a dry surface under an open canopy-like structure and away from rain or wet conditions.
- Make sure your hands are thoroughly dry before touching a generator.
- Ensure fuel is stored in proper safety containers and away from ignition sources. Turn the generator off and allow it to cool down before refuelling.

Turning your power back on

Check that there is no damage to any electrical cables, wiring or other electrical equipment. If you identify any damaged electrical equipment or cables do not turn on the power, do not touch the equipment or cable and call a licensed electrician to make it safe.

Unplug or turn off all electrical appliances and equipment before switching the power back on. If there are continuing power supply problems such as fuses blowing and circuit breakers or safety switches turning off please call a licensed electrician.

Water

[Gippsland Water](#) asks customers in Tyers, Rosedale, Cowwarr, Toongabbie, Glengarry and Willung to put off any non-essential water use.

The recent storms stirred up some of the raw water supply from the Moondarra reservoir, and the capacity to treat water at the Tyers water treatment plant has been reduced.

If you're thinking about washing your cars, cleaning down hard services, cleaning and topping up your pools, please hold off for the time being.

If you see any water leaks or bursts around town, please call the Faults and Emergencies line on 1800 057 057. Go to www.gippswater.com.au/emergencies for the latest updates.

Insurance

If you have property or contents insurance you should contact your insurance company as soon as possible.

- Ask your insurer for advice on actions you should take.
- Do not discard or throw away damaged items without first consulting your insurance company.
- Make a list of items that have been damaged and take photographs if possible.
- Keep receipts for any emergency repair work.

For assistance with insurance contact the Insurance Council of Australia on 1800 734 621 (24/7 hotline). You can find information on lodging a claim following a disaster at www.disasters.org.au

Stay informed

- Go to www.emergency.vic.gov.au
- Download the VicEmergency app
- VicEmergency Hotline 1800 226 226
- Latrobe City Council [website](#) and [Facebook](#)
- Wellington Shire Council [website](#) and [Facebook](#)
- Bass Coast Shire Council [website](#) and [Facebook](#)
- Baw Baw Shire Council [website](#) and [Facebook](#)
- South Gippsland Shire Council [website](#) and [Facebook](#)
- SES East Region [website](#) and [Facebook](#)
- Listen to ABC Gippsland on 100.7 FM and 828 AM or visit their [website](#) and [Facebook](#)
- Listen to [TRFM](#) 99.5 FM and 99.9 FM or [Gippsland's GOLD](#) 1242 AM and 98.3 FM

Rubbish and green waste

Latrobe City Council – PineGro, Morwell is accepting uncontaminated green waste for no charge on presentation of a driver's licence or proof of identity that notes your address and is open Monday-Friday 8.30am-4pm and Saturday-Sunday 9am-5pm. Other flood damaged goods, materials and spoiled food will be accepted free of charge at Latrobe City Council transfer stations for affected residents.

South Gippsland – all transfer stations are accepting green waste from rate payers and residents impacted by the flood and storm until June 30 at no cost.

Wellington Shire – impacted residents can dispose of waste material at the Yarram Transfer Station free of charge. Green waste can be disposed of free of charge at Kilmany, Maffra, Loch Sport, Seaspray, Heyfield, Stratford and Yarram.

Wellbeing

It is normal for a distressing or frightening event to affect you physically, mentally and emotionally. Seek help if you or a family member are experiencing any of the following:

- feel that you are not beginning to return to normal after three or four weeks
- physical symptoms, disturbed sleep or nightmares
- avoid anything that reminds you of the experience
- relationships with family and friends are suffering
- using more alcohol or drugs
- cannot return to work or manage responsibilities
- feel on edge and can be easily startled.

If you are worried about your mental health or the mental health of a loved one, call [Lifeline](#) on 13 11 14.

You can also contact:

- Your doctor, a counsellor or psychologist
- [Parentline](#) 13 22 89 or [Kids Helpline](#) 1800 55 1800
- [NURSE-ON-CALL](#) 1300 60 60 24.

Family violence

Emergencies put a lot of additional stress on families as they struggle to deal with stress. If you need help there are services you can call, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

- The [Orange Door](#) is the access point to services for adults, children and young people who are experiencing family violence.
- [Safe Steps](#) provides confidential support for women and children living with family violence.
- The [Men's Referral Service](#) is a confidential telephone service for men who have been victimised by a partner or family member or who might be using violence towards a family member. Call 1300 766 491.

Donations

GERF is accepting financial donations to provide flood-affected Gippslanders with immediate support. Financial donations can be made at www.gerf.org.au or to donate goods or services go to www.givit.org.au.

Cleaning up

- Check for building damage before you enter.
- Skin contact with mud and floodwater can cause illness and skin infections. If you are injured or suffer a cut, clean the wound and contact your doctor immediately.
- Flooding can cause sewage to overflow inside your home, which can make people sick – contaminated areas must be cleaned and disinfected. Keep children and pets away until the area is cleaned up.
- Private water supplies may be contaminated from floodwater, debris and chemicals. If your water supply tastes, looks or smells unusual, do not use it for drinking or preparing food and do not give it to animals. Boiling water will not make it safe to drink.
- Wild animals like rodents, snakes or spiders may be trapped in your home, shed or garden. If you get bitten or injured by an animal or insect, seek medical advice.
- Mosquitoes can breed rapidly in stagnant waters – drain water from plant pots, tyres, buckets and roof gutters to control mosquitos around your home.
- High mould levels are likely if your house has been flooded for more than two days. Be aware of any visible mould or a musty smell. To prevent mould growth, clean up and dry out the house as quickly as possible.
- Wastewater systems including septic tanks and their absorption area can be weakened by a flood, so do not drive or walk over them.

Roads

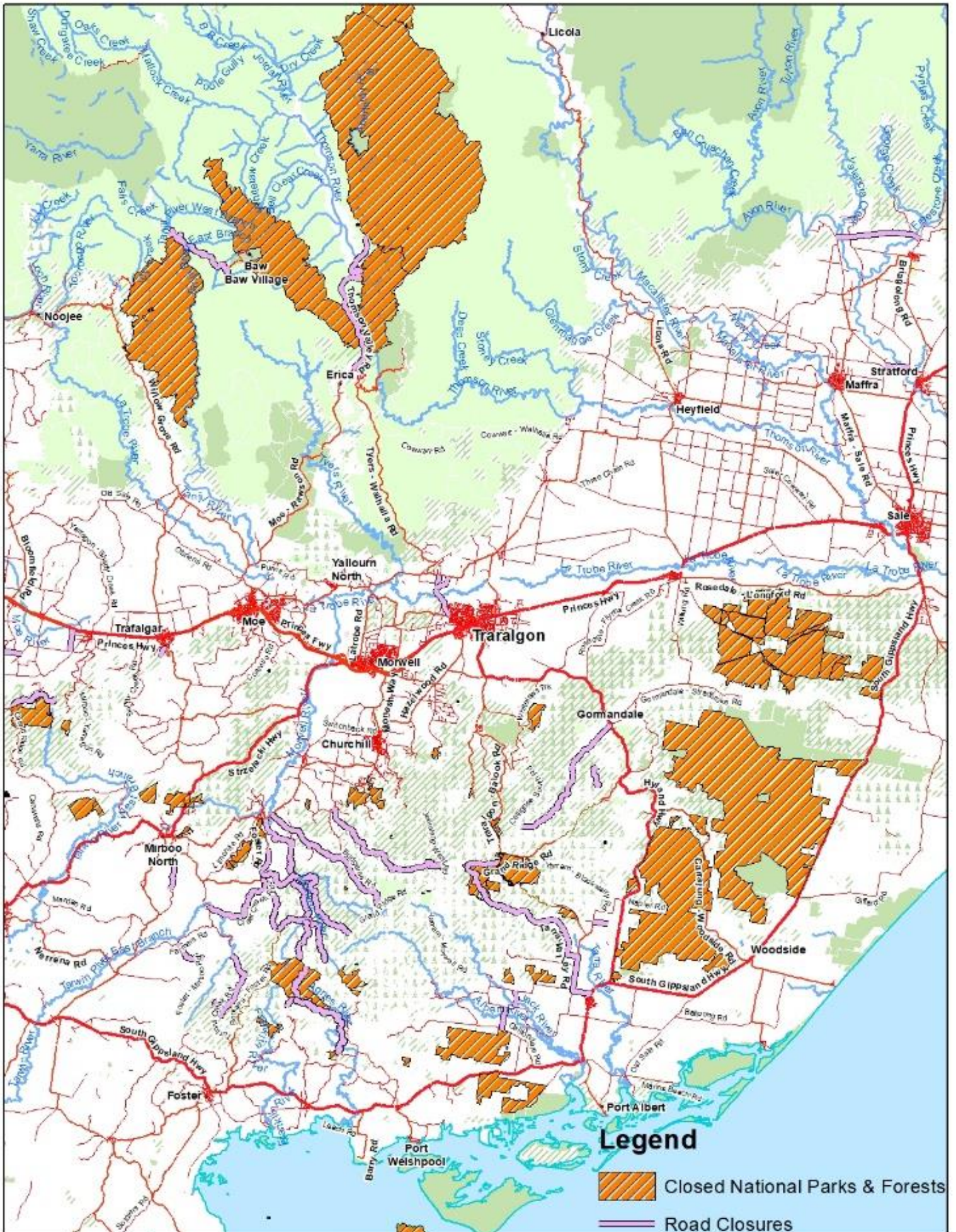
SES, CFA, ADF, FFMVic, Regional Roads Victoria and local council ground crews are working together to clear local roads and restore direct access to properties, as well as check and open public areas (e.g. recreation reserves), forests, parks and tracks. In total, 196 road closures were caused by this storm and flood event – as of Monday morning, only 23 remain.

Crews are working to open Thompson Valley Rd, Tyers Rd and Tara Valley Rd as soon as possible. Baw Baw Tourist Road has been significantly damaged by 13 landslides and will be closed long-term. To make a road safe, crews have to clear any large trees that have fallen over the road as well as remove debris from the roadside, restore road signs and check culverts/drains.

Information on updated road closures is available via 13 11 70 or the VicTraffic website: traffic.vicroads.vic.gov.au



Closures - Public Information Overview Map Traralgon - 0800hrs 21 Jun - A4P 1:500,000



Disclaimer: This map is an unprinted generalised map of Victorian Government data. The State of Victoria does not guarantee the accuracy or reliability of any data or is not liable for any loss or damage arising from its use. All persons receiving this information should make appropriate enquiries to the relevant authorities.