



Dereel Fire Community Newsletter

Issue 7 – Tuesday 7 May 2013



The Dereel Community Recovery Group met again on Wednesday 1 May to discuss the major issues facing people in the recovery from the fire. The list of Group members and phone numbers are on p4. Anyone needing assistance or a chat is urged to make contact.

Welcome to Issue 7 of the Dereel Fire Community Newsletter.

The hard work is beginning as we all see how much work there is to do and figure out how to coordinate what needs to be done with the offers of help. **Please call Doug Braddy on 5346 1073 if you need help on your property.**

The windy weather in the past couple of weeks has highlighted the need to remove dangerous trees and the colder nights mean people need firewood. Good news on both fronts, the trees are gradually coming down on private properties and the roadsides will soon be cleared. The Council is organising the wood to be cut and delivered to people who need firewood for next year.

For those fire-affected residents and landowners who need firewood now, there has been a kind offer from Emma of free firewood from her property. **If you need firewood call Trish McEntee on 5220 7162.** Trish will coordinate the cutting and delivery of the available firewood. First in best dressed, so call soon!

The Community Hall is only open Monday to Friday 10am-12 noon and the goods will be cleared on Wed 15 May. On this day everything will be packed up so that the Hall can get back to being a Community Hall and activities can resume.

Please SMS or call Julie on 0400 045 962 to arrange a private time to collect goods or just go to the Hall during opening hours and take as much as you can manage BEFORE WEDNESDAY 15 MAY.



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Update – A to Z

Some of the news is changing each week but we will also keep the same information in the newsletter for as long as it remains relevant. If it is particularly important or time sensitive it will be highlighted in red.

Bushfire Appeal at Bendigo Bank



The Dereel Bushfire Appeal is being managed by an Advisory Committee with representatives from the Dereel Community Recovery Group, the Council and the Buninyong Community Bank.

Cash donations can be made to the Dereel Bushfire Appeal at the Bendigo Bank or online at:

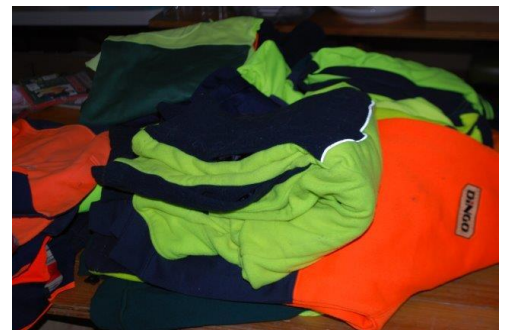
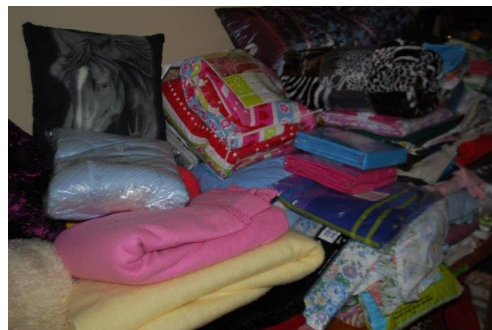
www.bendigobank.com.au/foundation/dereelbushfireappeal

Community Hall – last weeks of hosting donated goods

The Community Hall is filled with clothes, food, boots, shoes, coats, linen, household items and tools. A lot of it is brand new and it is available for FREE for anyone affected by the fire. The Hall is open Monday – Friday from 10am - 12noon until Wednesday 15 May, so please come and take as much as you can manage.

We are looking at a voucher system at one of the community shops in Ballarat for the next 12 months for people needing things such as furniture, crockery, clothes and ongoing needs.

If you know what you need, please come and get it in the next two weeks!





Community activities back at the Centre and Hall soon

The Community Recovery Group is keen for business as usual at the Hall and Community Centre by end of May if not before.

Remember what's on:

- Walking Group meets 8.30am Tues and Thurs
- Line Dancing is 7.30pm on Friday nights
- Health Nurse Benita is at the Community Centre every Tues and Thurs at 8am -12noon
- Playgroup is 10am -12noon every second Tues
- CERT meets monthly on a Tuesday
- CFA meets on the last Wednesday of every month
- Campfire Conversations are first Thursday of each month 6-7pm meal then talk.



Community Recovery Group contact details

Doug Braddy 5346 1073 – contact Doug if you need help or can volunteer to help. Doug's current priorities are fencing, tools and tree lopping.

Julie Donaghy 0400 045 962 – Julie is managing the donated clothing and goods at the Hall as well as taking down information about people needing help. Please visit Julie between 10am -12 noon at the Hall.

Charlie Munro 0407 045 042 – call Charlie if you need stockfeed or have any to donate.

Tracey Taylor (bocinder2112@hotmail.com) and Jade Woodall – Tracey and Jade are keeping everyone connected online through the Facebook **Dereel Fire 2013 Fire Help Page**.

Ruth Uren 0400 480 308 – Ruth is managing Hall bookings and sits on the Committee for the Bushfire Appeal Fund, along with Jill Evans from Golden Plains Shire and representatives from the Buninyong Community Bank.

Kim and Ian Stanley-Eyles, Caroline Everrett, Justine Fox and Eric and Lesley Dell are also committee members, which meets as a group with the Council every second Wednesday.

Council contact

Trish McEntee is the dedicated contact at the Golden Plains Shire to coordinate all Dereel fire-related queries. Contact Trish on 5220 7162.



Facebook Page

Tracey and Jade from the Recovery Group are managing a Facebook page **Dereel Fire 2013 Fire Help Page**. This is where people can ask for assistance and arrange to borrow items or donate items. Please log on if you can either offer assistance or require personal support items.



Fencing

If you have fire-affected fences, you should first contact your insurance company to establish if fencing is included under your cover.

Replacement fencing on private land or adjacent to Council land is the responsibility of landowners, who also need to cover the cost of the materials. If your property is next to Crown land, you can contact the Victorian Bushfire Information Line on 1800 240 667 and ask for Recovery Services.

If you don't know who owns the property next to yours, Council can assist but needs the form attached at the back of this newsletter to be completed. Enquiries can be directed to Trish on 5220 7162.

Community members who wish to volunteer for fencing work on fire-affected properties or wish to donate fencing materials should contact Doug Braddy.



Financial assistance

The government is making low-interest concessional loans of up to \$200,000 available to eligible small businesses, primary producers and not-for-profit organisations affected by the Dereel fire.

The low-interest loans are in addition to the Victorian Personal Hardship Assistance Program, which provides:

- Emergency relief assistance; payments of up to \$480 per adult and \$240 per child up to a maximum of \$1,200 per household to cover emergency shelter, food, clothing, or personal items.
- Emergency re-establishment assistance, including up to \$30,000 per household for cleanup, emergency accommodation, repairs, rebuilding and replacing some damaged contents. It is available to eligible Victorians in extreme hardship whose homes have become uninhabitable due to the current crisis, and whose insurance won't be sufficient to make their homes habitable again.

People seeking emergency support or advice about their eligibility for financial assistance under the Victorian Personal Hardship Assistance Program should contact Council or the Victorian Emergency Recovery Information Line on 1300 799 232. Information about the Personal Hardship Assistance Program is also available at www.dhs.vic.gov.au/emergency.

Information on low interest loans is available from Rural Finance on 1800 260 425 or at www.ruralfinance.com.au.

Information regarding the range of assistance that is available in Victoria can be found on the Australian Government's Disaster Assist website at www.disasterassist.gov.au.

Firewood – this year and next year

There has been a generous offer of firewood that is ready to be cut up and used by anyone needing wood for these cool nights. Please contact Trish on 5220 7162 if you need firewood and she will organise woodcutting and delivery until it's all been taken.



For next year's firewood supplies, Council is engaging contractors to remove the timber on roadsides as a result of the fire. The timber will be cut up and a single truckload delivered to nominated properties in Dereel to be used as firewood (next year as it is too green now).

The plan is for the Community Recovery Group to sell the excess firewood to raise funds for ongoing recovery activities. If you have a need for firewood, contact Trish on 5229 7162 and she will coordinate the delivery.



Girls Time Out

A great day/night was had by all at the Girls Time Out pampering session organised by Lee-anne Henriksen. Hundreds of dollars worth of prizes were given away and the funds raised from the event will go to the community recovery. The fact that many people stayed out after midnight says it all!

Help available for property work

Doug Braddy is coordinating the volunteers with the landowners who need help. If you have any work to be done on your property please let Doug know.

Insurance

The documentation required by insurance companies can vary. If you are making an insurance claim, remember to check what paperwork is needed and whether photos or other evidence needs to be supplied.

If you experience any problems with your insurance provider, you can contact the Financial Services (Insurance) Ombudsman on 1300 78 08 08 between 9am-5pm weekdays or visit the website http://fos.org.au/centric/home_page.jsp

Planning Permit Requirements and Building Notices

If you have any questions about Planning Permits, Building Notices and Minor Works Orders please contact Trish in the first instance, on 5220 7162.

A planning permit may be required to re-build a dwelling or outbuilding that was lost in the fire, particularly where a property is located in the Bushfire Management Overlay (BMO). In the process of pre-planning to rebuild, your first step should be to contact the Planning Team at Golden Plains Shire Council to determine whether or not you need a planning permit. The Planning Team can also provide all the relevant information to assist you in making an application.

A planning permit application in the BMO will most likely require a Bushfire Management Statement (BMS). The BMS requires a property owner to address a number of issues in response to the threat of wildfire attack. The Planning Team has a list of qualified consultants available to assist in the preparation of a BMS. It is also necessary to refer any application in the BMO to the Country Fire Authority (CFA). The Planning Team will provide you with the relevant contacts.

Further information, including a template for a BMS, is available on the Department of Planning and Community Development (DPCD) website: <http://www.dpcd.vic.gov.au/planning/plansandpolicies/bushfire-planning-and-building-resource>

Please contact Trish on 5220 7162 if you require assistance.



Post Impact Assessment Inspections

Council officers and other support agencies will continue to conduct assessments on the impact of the fire. If you require further information call Trish on 5220 7162.

Postal redirection

Residents who have lost their house in the fire can apply for a mail redirection service to a temporary address at no cost. Application forms are at the post office.

Power

Powercor advises that residents should first contact a Registered Electrical Contractor (REC) for meter damage and/or reconnection. REC electricians know the Powercor process for fire damaged properties and will be able to restore service and provide advice.

Red Cross visits 3-6 May

You may have noticed Red Cross vehicles driving around for the past few days as four pairs of trained volunteers offered assistance to Dereel residents. Thank you to the kind and experienced Red Cross folk who saw many local people and handed out a range of information about going through a bushfire and the long term recovery process.



Removing asbestos

During a fire, the amount of asbestos fibres released into the air is relatively low, however, asbestos clumps and some fibres may remain in the ash. This may present a risk if disturbed while cleaning up. Dust should be wetted down and dust mask, gloves and overalls should be worn. If asbestos-containing materials have been burnt on your property, a licensed asbestos removalist should be arranged to clean up. It is illegal to dispose of asbestos waste at other sites, in household rubbish bins, or skips. Asbestos must be disposed of at registered facilities.

Rubbish, recycling and waste

The Rokewood tip is now open for two extra days each week and residents are encouraged to make use of the extended hours. All waste should be separated into: general waste, metal/steel waste, brick/timber waste. The tip is open Wed & Fri 2–5pm, Sat & Sun 9am–12 noon. This will continue to Saturday 1 June, at which time the need for extended hours will be reassessed.

This service will be provided at no cost to fire-affected residents. Persons delivering waste to the tip will need to provide proof of identification that he/she is an owner of property within the fire-affected zone. Any contractors working for locals will need to supply some form of identification illustrating that the waste has come from the fire-affected zone, otherwise tipping fees will apply.

All vehicle registration numbers, volume of waste and type of waste will be recorded. Please note that all asbestos on properties is to be removed and disposed of by licensed contractors and will not be accepted at the Rokewood tip.

Please contact Trish McEntee at Council on 5220 7162 if you need replacement rubbish or recyclables bins (wheelie bins).



Safety first

Safety is the most important thing. If you are doing any property work, please ensure everyone is briefed on safety practices and wearing appropriate clothing.

Scammers

Unfortunately there are people who use unexpected disasters as an opportunity to try and trick people into giving away money. If anyone approaches you asking for money in return for services of any kind, make sure to check identification and do not pay for services in advance. If you note any suspicious behaviour let the Recovery Group know by visiting the Community Hall Mon-Fri at 10am-12noon.

Septic Tanks

Be aware that your septic tank may have been weakened in the fire so do not drive or walk over it. If you suspect your septic tank has been physically damaged, contact Trish on 5220 7162 to organise an assessment.

Stockfeed

If you require stockfeed or can donate hay or grain, please contact Charlie Munro on 0407 045 042.

Street numbers on your property

It is important that your property is identifiable for many reasons, for example insurance assessors and other individuals looking to provide assistance. If the street number, letterbox or other signage to your property was damaged in the fire, please make sure to put a clear sign up on the gate, fence or nearby tree.

Telstra – Telecommunications

Residents who have lost mobiles phones, modems or other Telstra telecommunication devices as a result of the fire, or have any fire-related connection issues, can contact Jim Boag of Telstra Country Wide on 0427 833 172 or email jim.boag@team.telstra.com.

Temporary accommodation

In December 2012, in response to Black Saturday Bushfire Commission, Council introduced a new local policy about sheds and temporary residences on vacant land. Landowners and residents of Golden Plains Shire are no longer permitted to live in sheds or temporary residences. These structures do not meet safety standards in regards to water and power supplies and often do not have safe structural foundations, so pose a very significant risk to those who reside in them.

Council has also made a change to the Local Laws to permit camping on private land for up to 60 days per annum. This Local Law caters for landowners who like to visit and stay on vacant land, it offers them flexibility to camp regularly and enjoy their blocks. However, this Local Law prevents people from permanently living in sub-standard accommodation without a certificate of occupancy.

For further information about how these changes may affect you or your land, please contact Council on 5220 7111. To see if your property is affected by the Bushfire Management Overlay, obtain a 'Planning Property Report' from www.land.vic.gov.au or view maps online at www.planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au.



Treated Timber

Copper chrome arsenate (CCA) is a wood preservative that is fixed into timber and used to protect wood from rotting, fungi and insects, and resist leaching. Freshly treated CCA timber can be identified by its yellow/greenish colour which fades to grey over time.

If you know that you had structures made from CCA-treated timber, when cleaning up the ash, remember that:

- it is not possible to tell if ash contains arsenic just by looking at it so you should treat the ash as containing copper, chromium and arsenic.
- this ash may pose a health hazard if swallowed by children or grazing animals.

For concerns about CCA ash contaminating stock water supplies or dams, phone the Department of Primary Industries on 136 186. For further advice on the disposal of CCA treated timber, please contact Trish on 5220 7162.

Trees on roadsides and property

Please note that while Council is responsible for roadside trees and vegetation, it is not responsible for dangerous trees on private property. If you suspect you have dangerous trees on your property please make arrangements to have the trees inspected and if necessary removed.

The following contractors undertake vegetation management works for and may be available to assist landowners; A1 Tree Solutions (5331 8029), Bellarine Tree Services (5240 0500), Sky rider Tower Hire (5339 6111), Tree Top Tower Hire (5345 8212), LTW Pty (5289 5330).

Volunteer Workers

Fire-affected residents who do not have insurance cover can register with Doug Braddy to access volunteer workers that become available. Doug can be contacted on 5346 1073. The Community Recover Group is working on a simple registration process to ensure people are acting safely and are appropriately covered by public liability insurance.

Water – rainwater tanks and replacing essential water

Your water source could be contaminated from debris, ash or small dead animals. If the water tastes, looks or smells unusual do not drink it or give it to animals. Also, you should not source water from a creek that has been affected by bushfire as the water may be contaminated. Water drawn from deep bores or wells should continue to be safe to use. Signs that your water may be contaminated include: cloudiness, floating particles and unusual smell and/or taste.

Residents who were not able to clean their roofs before the rain will need to dump the water currently in the rain water tank and arrange for cleaning of the tank. There is a cost for cleaning the tank so it is advised to contact your insurance company if you are insured, to see if it is covered.

Please note that the offer from Central Highlands Water (CHW) for replacement water expired on 22 April. While CHW did an extra round of refilling as the notice went out in the last newsletter, the offer has formally expired so no more free refills.

Water taken for fire fighting by the CFA or DSE can be replaced where the water is essential for the health of residents and the health and productivity of stock. If water was taken from your water supply (dams or tanks) for fire fighting by the CFA or DSE and you need the water replaced, contact Trish on 5220 7162. There is a form attached to this newsletter that needs to be completed.



Support Services and Information

Centacare Ballarat

Centacare Ballarat is able to assist you and your family with information about resources available to you, including practical support, counselling services and referral to other support services and organisations.

You may have already talked to one of the Centacare staff (Jacinta is pictured right) or you may have seen staff at the Centre. If you haven't had the opportunity to talk to Centacare staff or would like to follow up on a previous discussion, you can telephone Centacare Ballarat on 1300 303 988 and ask to be put through to Lauren.



Centrelink

Priority treatment will be provided on all services at Ballarat Centrelink to those affected by the Doreel fire. Please mention on arrival at Ballarat Centrelink that you are a fire-affected resident to receive priority treatment.

Visit Ballarat Centrelink at 12 Albert Street, Ballarat or 1800 050 004. Centrelink can also be contacted on 132 850 for Exceptional Circumstances Relief Help. This number can be accessed Monday to Friday 8:00am - 5:00pm.

Bushfire Legal Help

Do you need legal help? In bushfires people may have lost property, pets and livestock. In this difficult time it is important to understand your legal rights. There are many things to sort out. You may have questions about your rights.

Central Highlands Community Legal Centre can assist with free legal advice for:

- Dealing with insurance companies-house and car
- What to do if you are uninsured, underinsured or denied a claim
- Tenancy
- Dealing with electricity, phone and water companies
- Money problems, paying your excess, mortgages and other debts
- Getting your superannuation
- Sticking to Court Orders (ie family court)
- Your identification and documents
- Replacement of Wills or Powers of Attorney documents
- Fencing Issues

A Community Lawyer can talk to you about how the law applies to your legal problem and what you can do about it. For enquiries about free legal assistance please call Lisa Buckland at the Centre on 5331 5999 or email lisa_buckland@clc.net.au

Red Cross – resources available online

Red Cross has many online resources for families affected by fire. These include 'Coping with a Major Personal Crisis', 'After the Emergency' and other useful booklets and brochures. Visit www.redcross.org.au to access these resources.

Forms and letters (see over page)

Water Replacement Request / Authorisation Form

LANDHOLDER	
Name:	
Address:	
Contact Phone Number:	
Fire Name:	
Municipality:	

Water Required

Location of Water Source	Type of Water Source Dam or Tank	Quantity of Water Required	Units of Water (Litres or Gallons)	Date(s) water was used for fire fight

Submit this form to your local municipality

Signature:				
Date:				
*It is a fraudulent activity to put in a false claim for replacement of essential water				
OFFICE USE ONLY				
Key Questions	Decision	Name	Signature	Date
Was the water used for fire fighting?	Yes or No			
Is the water essential?	Yes or No			

Date of Request Submission	
Name of Water Supplier	
Name of Water Carter	
Date of Delivery	

Confirmation of Delivery	Name	Signature	Date
Yes or No			



Golden Plains Shire Council
2 Pope Street
P.O. Box 111
Bannockburn VIC 3331
Telephone: 03 5220 7111
STD Toll Free Within Shire: 1300 363 036
Facsimile: 03 5220 7100
www.goldenplains.vic.gov.au

Request for ownership details for fencing purposes only

Name: _____

Address: _____

Property Number: _____ Property Address: _____

Description of land for which information is requested: _____

I, the adjoining owner OR agent of the adjoining owner*, hereby request Council to provide the ownership details of the abovementioned property.

This information is requested solely to facilitate a fencing matter between my land and the adjoining land owner. It is requested under Section 9(1) (b) of the Fences Act 1968. The land owners details will NOT be retained, copied or disseminated for unrelated purposes and will be kept secure and only used for advising and serving of fencing matters.

I acknowledge having been advised by Council of the Information Privacy Principles relating to personal information.

SIGNATURE: _____ **DATE:** _____

Telephone: _____ **Facsimile:** _____

Email: _____

***An agent will be required to provide proof that they are authorized to act on behalf of the adjoining owner.**

The Golden Plains Shire considers that the responsible handling of personal information is a key aspect of democratic governance, and is strongly committed to protecting an individual's right to privacy. Council will comply with the Information Privacy Principles as set out in the Information Privacy Act, 2000. The personal information required on this form will only be used by Council for the purpose of property related issues. The information will not be disclosed to any other party unless Council is required to do so by law. You can view and change the information by contacting Customer Service on 5220 7111.