

Community Recovery Information #3

This newsletter contains recovery information for people impacted by bush fires in the Hunter, Greater Sydney, Blue Mountains, Southern Highlands and South East NSW regions.

Emergency accommodation

Emergency accommodation is available to people affected as a direct result of the fires.

Short-term housing support for up to three months is available to all people in urgent need of housing because of a natural disaster. This covers people who would not normally be eligible for social housing.

Housing Contact Centre: 1800 152 152

Animal welfare

Local Land Services can assist with emergency fodder, stock water and assessment of animals impacted by the fire. Landholders are also encouraged to report any stock losses or animal welfare issues.

Local Land Services: 1800 814 647

Potable water assistance

Replacement of potable water is available for residential properties in rural areas, not on town water supply, where RFS has taken water or contaminated roofs with fire retardant

Disaster Welfare Assistance Line:

1800 018 444

For more recovery information and updates visit:

Website:

www.emergency.nsw.gov.au

Facebook:

[@NSWDisasterRecovery](https://www.facebook.com/NSWDisasterRecovery)

Financial assistance

A range of assistance measures are available to support people affected by bushfires. These are aimed at providing for immediate and short term needs, to support recovery from the bushfires across NSW. *Please note, a number of these measures have eligibility requirements.*

Commonwealth Government Disaster Recovery Payment – \$1,000 per adult and \$400 per child for people severely affected by bushfires. Human Services: 180 22 66.

Commonwealth Government Disaster Recovery Allowance – short term income assistance for people severely affected by bushfires. Human Services: 180 22 66.

Emergency Bushfire Response in Primary Industries Grants Program – up to \$75,000 recovery grants for eligible primary producers. Contact 1800 900 090

NSW Government Disaster Relief Grants – financial assistance for eligible individuals with low income and limited assets. Disaster Welfare Assistance Line: 1800 018 444.

Volunteer Firefighters' Financial Support – payments for eligible volunteer firefighters who are self-employed or employed by a small or medium business and have lost income. Service NSW: service.nsw.gov.au.

Primary producer assistance - \$15,000 recovery grants, concessional loans and transport subsidies for eligible primary producers. NSW Rural Assistance Authority: 1800 678 593.

Small business assistance – \$15,000 recovery grants and concessional loans for eligible small businesses. NSW Rural Assistance Authority: 1800 678 593.

Sporting club assistance – concessional loans for eligible sporting clubs. NSW Rural Assistance Authority: 1800 678 593.

Church and non-profit organisation assistance – \$15,000 recovery grants, concessional loans for eligible churches and non-profit organisations. NSW Rural Assistance Authority: 1800 678 593.

Motor vehicle stamp duty relief – financial assistance for eligible motorists whose cars have been written off as a result of bushfires. Office of State Revenue: 1300 139 814.

Replacement of documents – free replacement of licences, permits and certificates, including NSW Fair Trading permits/licences. Service NSW: 13 77 88.

Clean-up health and safety

- Do not enter your property until you are advised that it is safe to do so by emergency services, utilities companies or your local council.
- Electrical hazards could exist such as live power lines that may be down or active solar panels.
- Buildings and other structures may be unstable to enter or walk over.
- Sewerage and septic systems may be disrupted causing health risks.
- Be aware that hot, smouldering coals and other potentially hazardous materials may be hidden under the rubble.
- Building rubble should not be buried as it may contain hazardous materials.
- Waste generated as a result of the fires needs to go to lawful facilities to ensure soil, water and human health is protected.
- Don't spread ash around your property, particularly if asbestos materials were used in your home or other structures, or CCA-treated timber was burnt.
- Moisten the ash with water to minimise dust and keep damp but do not use high pressure water sprays.
- Asbestos dust and fibres have the potential to present a health risk.
- Asbestos clean-up and removal must be done by a licensed asbestos removalist.

NSW Government to coordinate clean-up

The NSW Government will coordinate the clean-up of fire damaged residential and commercial properties. This includes both insured and uninsured properties, and it also includes the clean-up of potentially hazardous materials like asbestos.

The Public Works Authority will manage the full clean-up and removal of bushfire debris from your residence and immediately adjacent outbuildings. The cost of the clean-up will be met by the NSW Government. **Call Service NSW on 13 77 88** to register your details and provide consent so contractors can access your land.

The **Insurance Council of Australia** can be contacted with any questions, complaints or concerns about insurance matters on 1800 734 621.

The **Disaster Response Legal Service NSW** can provide free legal advice, and minor assistance, to people affected by disasters on a range of issues, including insurance, on 1800 801 529.

NSW Government Disaster Relief Grants are also available for eligible individuals and families.

To be eligible for this assistance you must:

- Be a low-income earner and meet an income assets test
- Demonstrate that the affected home is your principal place of residence
- Not be covered by insurance
- Demonstrate that the damage was caused by the disaster
- Lodge the application within four months of the disaster occurring

Disaster Welfare Assistance Line: 1800 018 444

Mental health and wellbeing

Major events, such as the current NSW bush fires, that cause widespread loss and distress impact the whole community.

If you have been impacted by the recent fires, you might feel things like frustration, sadness and anxiety, or have trouble sleeping or remembering things.

This is a normal reaction to an abnormal event. Having someone to listen and support you at times like this is important.

People recovering from bush fires are being encouraged to access mental health and counselling services. The following free services are available 24/7:

- **Mental Health Line: 1800 011 511**
- **Beyondblue: 1300 22 4636**
- **Lifeline: 13 11 14**
- **Mensline: 1300 789 978**
- **Kids Helpline: 1800 55 1800**

If you or someone you know is in **immediate danger call 000.**