



Ararat Rural City

COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

GRAMPIANS NATIONAL PARK, BELLFIELD FIRE UPDATE

TUESDAY, 5TH MARCH 2024

HOW TO TELL IF BUSHFIRE HAS CONTAMINATED YOUR WATER SUPPLY

The signs of water contamination include your water looking, smelling or tasting unusual. Do not use the water for drinking or food preparation. Do not give water to animals.

Boiling water does not remove fire retardants or other chemicals from your water.

- Do not reconnect tanks until:
- the rooftop is clean
- the bushfire has passed
- the smoke has subsided.

You can also get general advice from the Department of Health in relation to the following:

- bushfires and your private drinking water supply
- using rainwater as drinking water
- After a fire: private drinking water and water tank safety - translated information.

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO TO PROTECT YOUR WATER TANK AFTER A BUSHFIRE

If you did not disconnect your downpipes before the bushfire passed, disconnect them as soon as possible. You can also: activate the first flush diverters block the inlet to the downpipes with waxed cardboard boxes or thick plastic.

Before reconnecting or opening the inlet to your downpipes, you should either: hose off your roof catchment area clean or wait for a good period of rain to flush and prevent contaminants from entering your tank.

Always take care when cleaning your roof manually. Finding a professional cleaner is a good option.

Before reusing your water for drinking purposes, contact your local council for advice.

Water tanks and fire retardant

What you need to know



CHECK YOUR HEALTH AND WELLBEING

During an emergency people tend to exist in a survival state to get through the incident, using up considerable emotional reserves.

They are likely to have a targeted focus and work hard for long periods, putting aside essential needs including food, water and sleep. It's also important to recognise that after this demanding period a low often follows.

PERSONAL WELLBEING

It is normal to have strong reactions following a distressing or frightening event and people can experience a range of physical, mental, emotional and behavioural reactions.

There are a number of support services available (listed below) to assist you and your family recover from the strong emotional or physical reactions you may be experiencing.

If at any time you are worried about your mental health or the mental health of a loved one, call Lifeline on 13 11 14 or contact:

- your doctor, local community health centre
- a counsellor or psychologist
- Parentline 13 22 89 or the Kids Helpline 1800 55 1800
- Nurse-On-Call 1300 60 60 24 – for expert health information and advice (24 hours, 7 days)

Australian Psychological Society Referral Service 1800 333 497

For information about symptoms associated with stress following an emergency, visit https://emergency.vic.gov.au/relief/#current_events

TRANSFER STATION HOURS

Pomonal Transfer Station will be open 8:30am - 4:30pm daily

WILDLIFE IMPACTED BY FIRE?

CALL BALLARAT ICC WILDLIFE COORDINATOR

1300 322 060

Or download the Wildlife Emergency App



FOREST FIRE MANAGEMENT VICTORIA



BLAZE AID BASE CAMP AT BUANGOR

www.blazeaid.com.au/buangor

blazeaid.com.au

**VOLUNTEERS HELPED
REBUILD THIS FENCE**



BlazeAid
Helping Communities Rebuild
After Natural Disasters



About Us

BlazeAid is a volunteer organisation that helps rural property owners clear and rebuild fences after damage by natural disasters.


- We deploy teams of volunteers to work with property owners to clear and rebuild rural fences
- Team leaders are experienced fences
- We have our own equipment and fencing trailers
- Property owners supply materials, BlazeAid supplies the labour

Contact Us

Melissa Jones CEO 0436316955

Debbie Buttler National Business Manager 0418990267

 admin@blazeaid.com.au

 www.blazeaid.com.au

 PO Box 73, Kilmore Victoria 3764

To register for assistance, please email admin@blazeaid.com.au or call into your local basecamp



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TRAUMA AFFECTS THE WHOLE FAMILY IN DIFFERENT WAYS

When a family is affected by a crisis, everyone in the family will react in a different way. Understanding distress reactions and their effect on family dynamics can help the family to cope. Don't hesitate to seek professional help if you think your family is struggling to recover.

www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/trauma-and-families

www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/trauma-and-children-two-to-five-years

www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/trauma-and-teenagers-common-reactions

www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/trauma-and-teenagers-tips-for-parents



**NATIONAL
DEBT
HELPLINE**
1800 007 007
ndh.org.au

get back on track with **free** financial counselling



I'm feeling
overwhelmed!



How can I pay
these debts?

Speak with someone

Call us for **FREE** advice on how to manage your debts.



1800 007 007



Project of Lions Clubs



SINCE 2006
15 Years

Need for Feed
AUSTRALIA

needforfeed.org

Supporting
our farmers and
rural communities in
times of need since 2006

FOR UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION: VISIT ararat.vic.gov.au/pomonal-fire-recovery

SOCIALS





Ararat Rural City

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WHAT HAPPENS TO ASBESTOS DURING AND AFTER A FIRE?

During a fire, the amount of asbestos fibres released into the air is relatively low. Air monitoring during and after fires has confirmed this.

After a fire, pieces of asbestos cement materials can become brittle and may release fibres if they are disturbed while cleaning up.

Where it's suspected that materials containing asbestos are likely to be present, cleanup should be conducted in line with WorkSafe requirements.

My home burnt down. How do I know if the building rubble contains asbestos? What should I do to protect myself while inspecting building rubble?

Asbestos cement used to be commonly used in the construction of residential buildings. As a result, approximately a third of Australian homes may contain some form of asbestos.

A total ban on the manufacture, use, reuse, importation, transportation, storage and sale of all forms of asbestos came into force in 2003. Houses built after 2003 should not contain asbestos.

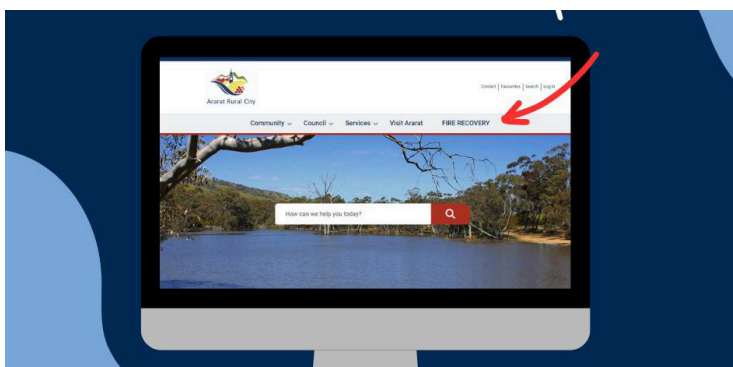
We recommend you do not inspect burnt building rubble. If you do decide to inspect building rubble you should wet it down to prevent dust. You should also wear personal protective equipment (called PPE, it typically consists of dust mask, gloves and coveralls).

More information is available from asbestos.vic.gov.au

DEDICATED POMONAL BUSH FIRE RECOVERY RESOURCE PAGE

Ararat Rural City Council has updated its website with all the latest information, FAQs, and helpful links for the Pomonal community, this information will be helpful for other fire effected communities.

Check out our website for more details: www.ararat.vic.gov.au/pomonal-fire-recovery



GETTING ON WITH THE JOB OF DISASTER CLEANUP

A lead contractor has been appointed for the Federal and Victorian Government's coordinated cleanup in the aftermath of last week's devastating fires and storms.

Hansen Yuncken is a disaster recovery specialist with the expertise to work on complex projects and will work with local sub-contractors to get communities back on their feet.

Cleanup activities for impacted households and communities will be jointly funded through the Commonwealth-State Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements.

Demolition of damaged houses, asbestos and other hazard removal will be included as part of the cleanup in the affected communities while hazardous tree removal will also be part of the work completed.

The Victorian Government will also establish a centralised green waste facility for the cleanup and is continuing to work with the Commonwealth Government to finalise its location.

This program builds on the support being provided by the Federal and Victorian Governments, which includes:

- Personal hardship payments of \$640 per adult and \$320 per child up to a maximum of \$2,240 per eligible family to help cover the costs of essentials like food, clothing, medication and accommodation.
- Australian Disaster Recovery Payments for people affected by fires in the Rural City of Ararat. Payments of \$1,000 per adult and \$400 per child are available to that community.
- Emergency re-establishment grants of up to \$49,300 for people who are uninsured and their primary place of residence has been destroyed or is uninhabitable.
- Prolonged Power Outages Payments of up to \$1,920 per week for households and up to \$2,927 per week for up to three weeks for affected small businesses.
- A Community Recovery Officer deployed to Ararat Rural City, Casey City, Cardinia Shire, South Gippsland Shire and Yarra Ranges Shire to help identify the recovery needs of individuals and families.
- The Emergency Recovery Hotline has been activated to process calls from anyone affected by fires or storms. To access recovery support, affected residents can call the Hotline on 1800 560 760.

The Recovery Support Program has also been stood up and is available for people to access via the Emergency Recovery Hotline on 1800 560 760. This includes mental health support, case management, business support and can connect people with the additional and existing services.

FOR UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION: VISIT ararat.vic.gov.au/pomonal-fire-recovery

SOCIALS





Ararat Rural City

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TUESDAY, 27TH FEBRUARY 2024

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING SUPPORT FOR BUSINESS

Partners in Wellbeing is a free and confidential helpline available seven days a week. Speak to trained financial counsellors, business advisers and wellbeing coaches for confidential 1:1 support. Call 1300 375 330.

www.vic.gov.au/Mental-health-and-wellbeing-support

Partners in Wellbeing

Support for your mental health and wellbeing.



If you are not coping or have been feeling distressed, anxious or down over several weeks, help is available through Partners in Wellbeing service.

The **FREE SERVICE** offers one-on-one support to help you improve your wellbeing, develop strategies to cope and provide emotional support when and as you need it.

Work out what is wrong

Working with a Wellbeing Coach, you explore what is causing your stress or anxiety and help you gain clarity on your thoughts, feelings and experiences.

Get things under control

Through coaching and practical advice, your Wellbeing Coach will help you find strategies to manage stress, anxiety and improve your wellbeing and resilience.

Get on with life

We help you to identify people in your life, support services, and other resources to draw on during times of stress. If required, a Wellbeing Coach will assist you in linking with other support services in your local community.

Keep Connected

We keep in regular contact with you to provide emotional support, practical assistance and help you use the strategies you have identified to manage your stress, anxiety and improve your wellbeing.

Small Business Support

If you're a small business owner, you can receive FREE and confidential specialist support which includes business advisory and financial counselling.



Eligibility

To be eligible for this service, **you need to be 16 years or over** and:

- experiencing increased life stressors and your usual coping strategies are not working
- noticing signs of anxiety and/or depression that have lasted more than a few weeks, such as:
 - low mood i.e. feeling down
 - feeling overwhelmed and unsafe
 - low energy
 - feelings of hopelessness
 - fear, nervousness or worrying
 - avoidance of social situations
 - thoughts of self-harm or harm to others.
 - are not currently using a community mental health psychosocial support service.

Carers may experience these challenges in their own right in addition to providing care to a loved one.

Get started or refer someone

Call **1300 375 330** to contact the service in your area.

If you would like to refer someone you know, you must first discuss this with them and have their consent to make the referral on their behalf.

We encourage referrals from people who identify as LGBTIQ, culturally diverse, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people, veterans and people experiencing homelessness.



Contact Partners in Wellbeing



Phone **1300 375 330**

Live chat **available online**

Monday to Friday 9am-10pm
Weekends 9am-5pm

Free wellbeing support

We provide phone support to any Victorian aged 16 and up, including people who identify as LGBTIQ+, multicultural, Veterans, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people and international students. There are no Medicare or visa requirements to receive support.

For more information visit www.partnersinwellbeing.org.au

@PartnersInWellbeingFB
 @partners_in_wellbeing

About Partners in Wellbeing

Partners in Wellbeing is funded by the Victorian Government and is being delivered by EACH, Neami National and the Australian Community Services Organisation (ACSO) across Victoria.



We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land we work on and pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

We celebrate, value and include people of all backgrounds, genders, sexualities, cultures, bodies and abilities.



RFCS Victoria West

GET TO KNOW YOUR LOCAL

Rural Financial Counselling Service



Confidential, independent and free business and wellbeing support for farmers and small business owners navigating financial stress and uncertainty, including operating through drought, bushfire and COVID-19. All industries across Victoria's regional west.



RFCS Victoria West Wellbeing support on farm & in business

Through your local Rural Financial Counselling Service



A PROBLEM SHARED IS A PROBLEM HALVED.

If you're a farmer or small business owner and engaged with one of our Financial Counsellors, we can offer you confidential, independent and free wellbeing support.

Our Wellbeing Counsellors are here to walk alongside you through a range of life's challenges.



RFCS Victoria West Small Business Support

Through your local Rural Financial Counselling Service



Confidential, independent and free business and wellbeing support for small business owners facing challenges or experiencing financial stress in uncertain times.



Counselling and Mental Health Supports

The following services are available for anyone affected by the recent Grampians bushfires who needs support.

Grampians Community Health Intake
Phone: 5358 7400

Uniting Mental Health Hub
Phone: 5332 1286

Budja Budja Social and Emotional Wellbeing Centre
Phone: 5356 4751 (Halls Gap) or 5352 6700 (Ararat)

The Orange Door Wimmera
Phone: 1800 271 042

Headspace (for people aged 12 to 25 years)
Phone: 1800 650 890
headspace.org.au

13YARN (First Nations Support)
Phone: 13 92 76

Beyond Blue
Phone: 1300 224 636

Rural Financial Counselling
Phone: 1300 735 578

Information also available from the Grampians General Store Pomonal
Phone: 5356 6294

For all Primary Care needs including referrals to mental health support contact your local GP Clinic.

For people needing urgent mental health support
Contact Grampians Health
Phone: 1300 247 647