

Community Newsletter

Southern Hume (Longwood Berry's Lane)

28th January 2026

Information about the current fire situation:

The fire area is 132,653 hectares with a fire perimeter of over 500 kilometres. The fire is now contained. Multiple resources continue to work across the fire affected area completing blacking out, patrol and hazardous tree work.

Road reopening efforts are a key priority for the Incident Management Team, affected councils, and the Department of Transport. While the process is complex and takes time, please be assured that we are working tirelessly to restore access as quickly and safely as possible.

We are happy to announce on Thursday 29th January at 9am, the Goulburn Valley Highway, Maroondah Highway and Eildon-Mansfield Roads will re-open.

Visitors are welcome and encouraged to come and support local communities and business where it is safe to do so, but with respect and consideration for those impacted by fire.



Hot spots may remain within the burnt area for some time. Burning trees or stumps inside this zone don't require a 000 call. If you see fire outside the burnt area or feel concerned, please call 000.

Recovery & Information Hubs:

Mansfield - Visitor Centre, 175 High Street.
Seymour - Library, 125 Anzac Avenue.
Yea - Library, 15 The Semicircle.
Alexandra - Library, 49 Grant Street.
Euroa - Tourist Information Centre, 50 Binney Street.

Community Hubs:

Yarck - Community Hall, 6583 Maroondah Highway.
Fawcett – Community Hall, 655 Spring Creek Road.
Highlands – Community Hall, 1603 Ghin Ghin Road.
Terip Terip – Tennis Club, 8 Springs Road.
Ruffy – Community Hall, 3 Nolans Road.
Creightons Creek – Creightons Creek Fire Station, 1489 Creightons Creek Road.
Merton – Memorial Hall, 17 Shaws Road.

Heat Health:



Victoria has experienced extended widespread heatwave conditions. Forecasts indicate these conditions will continue for the remainder of the week.

High temperatures increase the risk of serious heat-related illnesses. Take steps to protect yourself and others by keeping cool, staying hydrated, planning ahead and checking in with others.

Signs of heat exhaustion include:

- dizziness and headache
- pale complexion and sweating
- rapid heart rate
- nausea and vomiting
- muscle cramps and weakness
- fainting.

Seek immediate medical help by calling Nurse-on-Call on **1300 60 60 24** or Contact the Victorian Virtual Emergency Department at vved.org.au/patient

For guidance on staying safe during extreme heat, visit:
<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/extreme-heat>

Returning Home

Emergency Recovery

A simple factsheet has been developed which lists all available support:

<https://www.vic.gov.au/january-2026-victorian-bushfires>

For help accessing support, call the Emergency Recovery Hotline. **1800 560 760 (9am to 5pm)**

- 🌐 Sign up for updates to new recovery programs at <https://www.vic.gov.au/january-2026-victorian-bushfires>

Before you return home stock up on basic non-perishable food, bottled water, medications and take protective clothing, boots, gloves and equipment like P2/N95 masks.

<https://www.redcross.org.au/emergencies/coping-after-a-crisis/returning-home-and-coping-after-a-crisis/>

Generator Program:

Families impacted by prolonged power outages as a result of the fires can now apply to loan a small generator.

More than 250 generators will be made available to those in need. Small generators are able to supply small electrical appliances such as fridges, laptops and LED lights.

They cannot power your entire property.

More information can be obtained by calling the DEECA customer call centre on 136 186.

Insurance Claims:

Free legal support and financial counsellors are available for any questions or advice about insurance claims.

In these early days, consider getting a second opinion before accepting cash settlements or temporary accommodation payments.

ARC Justice (legal): 03 5445 0909 or 1800 450 909

National Debt Helpline (financial counselling): 1800 007 007

Access to Drinking Water

Each household may be eligible to receive 20,000L of relief drinking water. Visit [Emergency relief drinking water 2026](#) to see if you are eligible and to fill out an online form.

For help with the form, **call the DEECA Customer Contact Centre on 136 186 - press 0.** Monday to Friday 8am to 6pm

Free Waste disposal / Tip fees

There are no fees at local waste disposal facilities for fire affected properties until 13 May 2026. Show proof of residence, such as a driver's licence.

Essential Water Replacement

Water used for firefighting can be replaced within 3 months of it being taken from your property. If essential water supplies run out, urgent replacement can be arranged.

Register for water replacement

- 📞 customer call centre 136 186 and press 0.
- ✉️ emergency.recovery@deeca.vic.gov.au
- 🌐 <https://www.fmm.vic.gov.au/recovery-after-an-emergency/public-land-recovery>

Power and Phone

Mobile generators are being installed in some of the worst impacted communities where AusNet may not be able to restore power for some time.

AusNet

- 🌐 www.ausnetservices.com.au/outages
- 📞 Bushfire Support Line on **1300 561 171**. Ask about payments for prolonged power outages



Telstra

📞 Disaster Support Hotline **1800 888 888**
Extra mobile data has been applied to customers in impacted areas. Telstra can also pause billing for services that cannot be used due to fire.

Agriculture and Livestock

Wildlife Welfare

Report wildlife impacted by bushfire:
1300 322 060 or
 email iccale.wildlife@icc.vic.gov.au

**Fire grounds are dangerous,
even after the fire front has passed.
Individuals, wildlife rescue and rehabilitation
groups must not enter the fire ground area to
search for wildlife.**



To request emergency fodder,
contact the Victorian Farmers Federation:

1300 882 833 or www.vff.org.au
https://www.vff.org.au/vff-emergency-fodder-program/



Pictured: Need for Feed Project arriving in Alexandra
 25/01/2026

AGRICULTURE VICTORIA

Report fire impacts to Agriculture Victoria online to help us direct support efforts where they are needed most.

Please use the Loss and Damage form to report:

- Dead or injured animals
- Crop loss or damage
- Fodder and water needs

[Bushfires](#) | [Emergency management](#) | [Farm management](#) | [Agriculture Victoria](#)

Fences and Control lines after Bushfires

Assistance may be provided to affected landowners for the stabilisation of fire control lines and/or the repair of rural fencing where those works or damages were directly related to activities undertaken by fire agencies during the bushfire emergency.

To find out if your damage is eligible for support, you can contact DEECA:

- on 136 186 (8am – 6pm Monday to Friday)
- visit <https://www.ffa.vic.gov.au/recovery-after-an-emergency/public-land-recovery>.
- Email the [Bushfire Recovery Assistance Form](#)

Livestock Disposal

Disposal is managed by the landholder. Agriculture Victoria can support you with guidance, information and technical advice. on **0407 145 007** or by email at livestock.disposal@agriculture.vic.gov.au

If you have urgent domestic stock welfare needs, call VicEmergency Hotline on 1800 226 226 then dial 0 (incident) then 3 (recovery).

Before burying livestock, **Dial Before You Dig by calling 1100** or go to www.byda.com.au to avoid damaging your infrastructure.

Further information and support available at <https://agriculture.vic.gov.au/farm-management/emergency-management/bushfires>

Taking Care of Yourself

It is normal to have strong emotional or physical reactions after a distressing event.

Look out for changes or signs that someone's mental health might be changing. Help is available through your doctor – request a Medicare Mental Health Plan.

For immediate support, contact:

[Lifeline - 131 114](https://www.lifeline.org.au/)

[Beyond Blue - 1300 224 636](https://www.beyondblue.org.au/)

[MensLine - 1300 789 978](https://mensline.org.au/)

[Kid's Help Line - 1800 55 1800](https://www.kidshelpline.com.au/)

[National Centre Farmers Health \(03\) 5551 8533](https://www.nationalcentrefarmershealth.com.au/)

Stay Informed

 VicEmergency Hotline 1800 226 226
 www.emergency.vic.gov.au

Emergency Radio Broadcasters

UGFM

106.9FM - Alexandra / Lake Eildon / Mansfield

88.9FM - Yea / Highlands

99.7FM - Radio Mansfield

ABC

91.1FM, 97.7FM – Euroa / Seymour

103.7FM – Mansfield

98.1FM – Yea / Highlands

2026 Victorian Bushfire Appeal

If you're looking to help people impacted by the bushfires, go to <https://vic.gov.au/2026-Victorian-Bushfire-Appeal>

100% of donations go direct to those who need it most for immediate relief, long term recovery efforts, community projects and programs to regenerate wildlife and the environment.

 **1800 837 733 (9am to 5pm)**

Donations of food cannot be accepted, contact the Salvation Army if you wish to donate goods. Go to www.givit.org.au to donate funds or give specific items people have requested.



Family Violence

 1800 737 732 (1800RESPECT)

 Visit www.vic.gov.au/familyviolence

Emergency psychosocial supports guide

The guide to emergency psychosocial supports explains what psychosocial supports are available in emergencies.

www.dffh.vic.gov.au/guide-emergency-psychosocial-support-word

Australian Red Cross practical tips to help you cope physically and mentally after a crisis:

[http://www.redcross.org.au/emergencies/coping-after-a-crisis/returning-home-and-coping-after-a-crisis/](https://www.redcross.org.au/emergencies/coping-after-a-crisis/returning-home-and-coping-after-a-crisis/)

Insurance claims

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