

## Community Newsletter

# Southern Hume (Longwood) Fires – January 2026

Issued 7am Thursday 15th January

### What happened?

A fire started on Wednesday January 7 on the Hume Freeway. The fire has burnt approximately 142,000 ha with a fire perimeter of approximately 330 km. Today there are 560 personnel working on the fire with aircraft continuing to assist.

Six warnings remain current. Stay informed and be aware of the warnings current to you.

### What is happening now

Community safety is priority; roads will be opened with it is safe to do so. It is expected that some roads will reopen in a few days, whereas other roads with significant damage or in active fire grounds will take longer.

Local traffic is being made available as quickly as possible.

Longwood- Ruffy-Road is now opened for residents and recovery services only. This allows access for residents returning home and the delivery of essential recovery services.

After bushfires, rain and the loss of plants and roots can make the ground soft and heavy, leading to greater chance of landslides. Landslides can carry debris such as boulders and trees downhill and cause serious damage to buildings. Avoid walking in burnt areas or along riverbanks and gullies during and immediately after rainfall.

### Convoy Details

Emergency services will be facilitating strictly controlled, escorted access for specific priority needs only. **This is NOT open to the public for routine travel.**

Access is restricted to Emergency Stock Feed & Water Transports, Emergency Services Personnel and vehicles, Essential workers (healthcare workers, utility repairs, critical infrastructure etc, and Personal critical needs such as urgent medical supplies.

**Departure point** Traffic Management point on the Goulburn Valley Hwy, Yea.

### Departure times:

7am	8.30am	12.30pm	3.30pm
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### Road closure information

☎ 13 11 70 🌐 [traffic.vicroads.vic.gov.au](http://traffic.vicroads.vic.gov.au)

### Community meeting

Alexandra Shire Hall,  
55 Grant Street Alexandra.

#### **Thursday 15 January at 6pm**

- Live stream via Murrindindi Shire Council Facebook Page
- Listen live via UG FM - 106.9 Alexandra /Lake Eildon and 88.9 Yea / Highlands

Once local roads are accessible further meetings will be scheduled.

### Landslide threat

Weather predictions for Thursday have thunderstorms expected across large parts of the east of the state with the potential for heavy rainfall.



**Important  
Water information**



### Emergency Water Fill Points

Water fill sites are operating at Euroa, Bonnie Doon, Alexandra and Yea for people who have been affected by the fire and need access to safe drinking water.

Standpipes located in fire-affected towns are available to access water free of charge. This includes Euroa, Yea, Bonnie Doon and Alexandra.

GVW has a water tanker located at the Ruffy CFA Station with a drinking water supply available to the Ruffy community between 8am and 4pm. Bottled water remains available 24 hours a day and a tanker is onsite at the Longwood.

Recreation Reserve from 8am-4pm, supplying safe drinking water to the community while Longwood and Longwood East remain on a Boil Water Advisory.

GVW are working hard to ensure the communities have a safe supply of drinking water to Longwood and Longwood East so they can lift the Boil Water Advisory as soon as possible.

#### **Water Fill point locations:**

- Euroa - Friendlies Oval - 9 Gobur St
- Bonnie Doon - Bonnie Doon Recreation Reserve - 2 Davon Street,
- Alexandra - Alexandra Rotary Park – Opposite 49 Vickery St,
- Yea - Yea Recreation Reserve, 18 Snodgrass St,

The water in the pipeline that is being used for this supply is safe for people to drink - bring containers, IBCs and small water trailers.

#### **Fodder Information**

Emergency fodder is on its way for farmers in fire-affected areas.

The **Victorian Farmers Federation** is working to make sure fodder reaches those who need it.

If you need fodder, please contact VFF on 1300 882 833 or visit [vff.org.au](http://vff.org.au).



#### **Air Quality Poor or Very Poor**

Minimise time outside, exercise indoors and wear a P2/N95 mask when working outside. Close windows, set air-con to recirculate. Use a HEPA air purifier if you have one. Bring pets inside.

**Call Triple Zero 000** for trouble breathing or chest pain/tightness.

#### **Using Generators Safely**

It is likely that some areas will be without power for some time. If you plan to use a generator please read the following advice from Energy Safe Victoria:

<https://www.energysafe.vic.gov.au/community-safety/emergencies/using-generator-safely#generator-safety-fact-sheet>

Forest Fire Management Victoria staff conducting burning out operations to strengthen containment lines between Merton and Bonnie Doon overnight 13 January 2026.



#### **Waste disposal fees waived**

People from the local LGAs impacted by the fire won't need to pay any fees at waste disposal facilities if they show proof of residence, like a driver's license.

The fee waivers will run for 120 days to 13 May 2026 to ensure impacted communities have enough time to clean up their property and start getting back on their feet.

LGA's include: Mansfield Shire, Mitchell Shire, Murrindindi Shire and Strathbogie Shire.

## Information about returning home

Be mindful when working in and around trees. Practical tips to help you cope and clean up following a bushfire are available <https://www.redcross.org.au/emergencies/coping-after-a-crisis/returning-home-and-coping-after-a-crisis/>

Stock up with basic items such as nonperishable food, bottled water, medications before you go back home. Wear suitable clothing, boots and necessary protective equipment to ensure you safety when moving around you home.

### **Water tanks**

Private drinking water tanks can be contaminated after a fire. Visit Better health for tips on what to consider as you return home. <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthy-living/bushfire-aftermath-safety-tips>

### **Essential water replacement**

You can request water that was used for firefighting purposes to be replaced.

You must request within 3 months of it being taken from your property. If essential water supplies run out, we will replace the water within 48 hours of your request, as long as it's safe.

### **Register for water replacement**

☎ customer call centre 136 186  
✉ [emergency.recovery@deeca.vic.gov.au](mailto:emergency.recovery@deeca.vic.gov.au)  
🌐 <https://www.ffm.vic.gov.au/recovery-after-an-emergency/public-land-recovery>

### **Food spoilage**

Check your food when you return, food poisoning is caused by bacteria from foods that have been stored not appropriately. Food contaminated with food poisoning bacteria may look, smell and taste normal.

Find more information by visiting [www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/food-safety-and-storage](http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/food-safety-and-storage)

### **Wildlife Welfare**

☎ Wildlife Victoria on (03) 8400 7300  
It is important to be conscious of your own safety when handling wildlife, instances of bites and stings have been reported in recent days.

### **Power and Telecommunications**

Check websites for updates on outages and restoration timelines.

#### **AusNet**

🌐 [www.ausnetservices.com.au/outages](http://www.ausnetservices.com.au/outages)  
☎ Bushfire Support Line on 1300 561 171.

#### **Powercor**

🌐 [www.powercor.com.au/outages](http://www.powercor.com.au/outages)  
☎ 13 24 12

#### **Telstra**

☎ Disaster Support Hotline 1800 888 888  
Additional data has been added to mobile services automatically, to impacted areas.

### **Agriculture and Livestock**

**Emergency fodder** is available for farmers in fire-affected areas. **Daily deliveries** are now occurring, prior registration for convoys is required.

#### **Victorian Farmers Federation VFF**

☎ 1300 882 833  
🌐 [www.vff.org.au](http://www.vff.org.au)

#### **Agriculture Victoria**

☎ 1800 226 226  
🌐 [www.agriculture.vic.gov.au/farm-management/emergency-management/bushfires](http://www.agriculture.vic.gov.au/farm-management/emergency-management/bushfires)

If you have urgent animal welfare needs contact ☎ **VicEmergency Hotline** on 1800 226 226 then dial 0 (incident) then 3 (recovery).

Agriculture Victoria can help with information about how to assess stock welfare.

Before burial of livestock, **Dial Before You Dig by calling 1100** or go to [www.byda.com.au](http://www.byda.com.au) to avoid damaging your infrastructure.

## Relief and Recovery Information

### Emergency Recovery Hotline

☎ 1800 560 760 (9am to 5pm)  
🌐 <https://www.vic.gov.au/january-2026-victorian-bushfires>

### Emergency Relief Centre locations

**Mansfield Sporting Complex**  
35 Highett Street,  
**Seymour Sports and Aquatic Centre**  
Pollard Street  
**Whittlesea Community Activity Centre**  
57–61 Laurel Street

### Financial Assistance

Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payments. Eligible people may receive a one-time payment to cover essentials like food, clothing, medication and accommodation.

- \$1,000 per adult
- \$400 per child

Further funding is available for those that have lost their homes including those uninsured. Free confidential wellbeing support alongside financial and business counselling is available via

☎ **Rural financial counselling** 1300 834 775

### Victorian Bushfire Appeal

🌐 Visit [www.vic.gov.au/2026-Victorian-Bushfire-Appeal](http://www.vic.gov.au/2026-Victorian-Bushfire-Appeal)  
☎ 1800 837 733 (9am to 5pm)



Donations over \$2 are tax deductible. 100% of funds raised go directly to those in need. Donations of food cannot be accepted, contact the Salvation Army if you wish to donate goods. Go to [www.givvit.org.au](http://www.givvit.org.au) to donate funds or give specific items people have requested.

### Business support

Information about support for businesses will become available in coming days.

🌐 Business Victoria website  
<https://business.vic.gov.au/>

## Health information

It is normal to have strong emotional or physical reactions following a distressing event. Look out for changes or signs of someone's mental health might be changing. There is always help available through your doctor – request a Medicare Mental Health Plan.

### Access support by contacting

[Lifeline](http://lifeline.org.au) - 131 114  
[Beyond Blue](http://beyondblue.org.au) - 1300 224 636  
[MensLine](http://mensline.org.au) - 1300 789 978  
[Kid's Help Line](http://kidsline.org.au) - 1800 55 1800  
[Parent Line](http://parentline.org.au) - 13 22 89  
[National Centre for Farmers Health](http://nationalcentreforfarmershealth.org.au) (03) 5551 8533

### Protect your health

Staying hydrated helps protect your physical and mental wellbeing. Dehydration can be dangerous. Drink plenty of fluids, ideally water.

You can speak to a registered nurse 24 hours a day by calling **Nurse-on-Call on 1300 60 60 24.**

**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/>

**Stress management** techniques are available <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/mental-health/what-is-stress#stress-management-techniques>

### Family Violence

☎ 1800 737 732 (1800RESPECT)  
🌐 Visit [www.vic.gov.au/familyviolence](http://www.vic.gov.au/familyviolence)

### Stay informed

☎ VicEmergency Hotline 1800 226 226  
🌐 [www.emergency.vic.gov.au](http://www.emergency.vic.gov.au)

### Emergency Radio Broadcasters

#### Southern Hume (Longwood Fires) UGFM

106.9 - Alexandra / Lake Eildon / Mansfield  
88.9 - Yea / Highlands  
98.5 - Marysville / Lake Mountain  
98.9 - Flowerdale / Hazeldene  
94.5 - Kinglake Ranges

#### Radio Mansfield - 99.7FM

#### ABC

91.1FM, 97.7FM – Euroa / Seymour  
103.7FM – Mansfield and 98.1FM – Yea / Highlands