

Community Information Newsletter

Cobden-Camperdown Peat Fires

Tuesday 24th April 2018

RECOVERY AND REHABILITATION ADVICE IS NOW AVAILABLE

Reminder: - the Incident Management Team advises its readers that the final newsletter issued from the Incident Control Centre will be on Thursday 26th April.

Fire Recovery Newsletters will continue to be distributed by local councils.

Fire Recovery Update and information

After Thursday 26th April the community is strongly encouraged to utilise the recovery information available from the Corangamite, Moyne and Southern Grampians Shire Councils. There is a wealth of information on these sites, ranging from recovery from a personal perspective (health and well-being, loss of personal documentation), issues relating to stock & wildlife health, pasture management and water quality, financial management and opportunities for people to donate. Details of the respective websites are:

Corangamite Shire Council:

<https://www.corangamite.vic.gov.au/Property/Emergency/South-West-Complex-Fire-March-2018>

Regular newsletters can be accessed from

<https://www.corangamite.vic.gov.au/Property/Emergency/South-West-Complex-Fire-March-2018/Fire-Recovery-updates>

Moyne Shire Council:

<http://www.moyne.vic.gov.au/Emergencies/South-West-Fires-Recovery>

The Moyne Shire Recovery Plan and regular newsletters can also be accessed from this page.

Southern Grampians Shire Council

www.sthgrampians.vic.gov.au/Page/Page.aspx?Page_Id=2798

Contact your local council if you require further assistance in obtaining any of this documentation:

- Corangamite Shire (03) 5593 7100
- Moyne Shire Council 1300 656 564
- Southern Grampians Shire Council (03) 5573 0444

Fire Suppression activities

For any information regarding any fire suppression activities, contact the Incident Management Team located Warrnambool (03) 5559 2500.

Financial Assistance / Advice

Disaster assistance – Financial assistance is available to eligible fire-affected community members. Please call your VicEmergency on 1800 226 226 for more information.
www.emergency.vic.gov.au/relief/

Disaster assistance has been extended to primary producers in the Corangamite South, Moyne West and Southern Grampians areas who were affected by the bushfires in South West Victoria from 17 March 2018.

The assistance is being provided through the jointly funded Commonwealth-State Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA).

Recovery grants of up to \$10,000 and concessional interest rate loans of up to \$200,000 are now available for eligible primary producers to help them with a range of restoration activities. This includes clean-up for primary producers, including the removal of debris, re-seeding impacted pasture land and repairing damaged equipment and machinery.

To apply for a recovery grant, primary producers can contact Rural Finance on 1800 260 425 from Monday 23 April onward or visit <http://www.ruralfinance.com.au> for further information. Eligible primary producers are reminded to keep receipts for reimbursement purposes.

Assistance for small business – contact the Australian Taxation Office with all your queries: www.ato.gov.au/tax-professionals/your-practice/tax-and-bas-agents/natural-disasters/ or call 1800 806 218 to discuss how they can assist you.

Rural Financial Counselling Service – phone 1300 735 578.

Assistance with Stock & Pastures

Injured stock – Contact Agriculture Victoria on (03) 5336 6721

Stock feed – contact the VFF on 1300 882 833.



Pasture recovery – talk to an extension officer from Agriculture Victoria or WestVic Dairy about your situation or to organise a free visit:

- WestVic Dairy
Helen Chenoweth on (03) 5557 1000
- Agriculture Victoria
Michele Jolliffe on 0428 581 883

A quick reference guide is also available at www.agriculture.vic.gov.au/firerecovery

Fencing and Control Line Rehabilitation – see www.ffm.vic.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0016/21283/Rep-air-of-fences-damaged-by-bushfire-and-fire-control-line-rehabilitation-policy-2015.pdf

Rebuilding your fences – call Blaze Aid camp leaders directly:

Cobden: Chris & John Male,
0418 745 994 blazeaid.cobden@gmail.com

Terang: Vicki and Malcolm McIntosh
0437 817 330, blazeaid.terang@gmail.com

Warnings and Advice messages

There are currently two (2) community notifications in place for air quality in the areas of Cobrico, Elingamite, and Elingamite North.

Health and Wellbeing

If you are concerned about your health, or wish to get your CO levels checked, visit:

- Cobden Health, 5 Victoria Street Cobden
- Terang Hospital, 13 Austin Avenue Terang
- Camperdown Hospital, Robinson Street Camperdown

*A referral from your GP is not necessary

Any residents who still have CO monitors in their possession are requested to return them to Betty Robilliard at the Cobden Fire Station (phone: (03) 5595 1395).

For access to local emotional support services, please call South West Healthcare on (03) 5563 4000 or (03) 5232 5180.

If you have urgent concerns about your own, or the mental health of others, please contact Mental Health Services on 1800 808 284 (24 hours).

Other 24 hours helplines include:

Lifeline: 13 11 14 **Kids Helpline:** 1800 55 1800
Nurse on Call: 1800 022 222 **Mens Line:** 1300 78 9978

More helpful information is also available here: www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/trauma-reaction-and-recovery

Incident Situation and Update

The Incident Management Team would like to thank the Cobden community for their continued support of the crews based at the Staging Area in Cobden. With the smaller number of people needed to be involved at the Incident Control Centre (ICC) it means that we are now in an ideal position to start planning a move of the ICC to Cobden in the near future.

Crews continue to monitor the peat fires at both Cobrico Swamp and Lake Elingamite. A number of methods are being used to detect hotspots over these areas, including Aerial Imaging fly overs, drones, hand held thermal imaging cameras, crew observations and thermal probing equipment.



Air monitoring The Environment Protection Authority (EPA) will soon remove remaining stations as data collected from air monitors shows there is no scientific / air quality reason to continue to monitor, which means there is now only a low risk from smoke to human health. EPA will continue to provide daily air quality reports to the Incident Controller until all the stations are removed. The large monitoring site at Cobden will remain and continue monitoring until further notice. Data from the monitoring stations is available on EPA's AirWatch website www.epa.vic.gov.au/EPAirWatch.

If members of the community are in any way concerned with the proposed decommissioning of the air monitoring sites, please call the ICC on (03) 5559 2500.

The fire danger period is due to cease on 1 May 2018. Stubble and planned burning is a typical activity at this time of the year which can cause smoke drift in the air. Please consider delaying burn offs.

As the temperature drops and Victorians turn up the heat, EPA is encouraging households with wood heaters to take practical steps now to help reduce smoke from their heaters over winter. For further information see their latest media release: <http://www.epa.vic.gov.au/about-us/news-centre/news-and-updates/news/2018/april/23/epa-encourages-households-to-prepare-their-wood-heaters>

The next and final newsletter from the ICC is due for release on Thursday 26th April 2018.