

Community Recovery Newsletter #5

This newsletter contains information and advice for people impacted by the fires across Northern NSW



Are you ok?

Bush fires are distressing and you might still be feeling sad or anxious, or have trouble sleeping or remembering things. This is a normal reaction and it is not a sign of weakness.

If you are still not feeling great it's a good idea to reach out and get some support. There are different people you can talk to, like your local GP or health care provider.

You can also contact any of the following free services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week:

Mental Health Line	1800 051 511
Lifeline	13 11 14
Beyondblue	1300 224 636
MensLine	1300 789 978
Kids Helpline	1800 55 1800

Fencing Help

Volunteer organisation BlazeAid recently set up camp in Tenterfield and their volunteers are already helping to rebuild fences that were damaged or destroyed in the fires.

If you live in the Tenterfield or Tingha area and were impacted, you need to register with BlazeAid as soon as possible. There's no cost involved and no job is too big or too small but landholders do need to provide fencing materials.

To register for **Tenterfield** area please contact:

Judy Bland **0427 614 546**

Ed Bland **0427 614 540**

Or email: Tenterfield.blazeaid@gmail.com

For **Tingha/Inverell**

Blazeaid.inverell@gmail.com

Tony Samuels **0407 583 544**

If you would like to support BlazeAid through volunteering or donating please visit:

<http://blazeaid.com.au/>

If your property boundary borders a National Park and this boundary fencing was burned by the Northern NSW Fires, contact National Parks and Wildlife Services on **02 6739 0700** for assistance.

Hazards When Cleaning Up

Houses, sheds and other buildings that have been burnt in a bushfire can leave potential health and safety hazards in the remaining rubble and ash.

Hazardous household materials that may be present after a bushfire include asbestos, ash from burnt treated timbers (i.e. copper chrome arsenate or CCA), medicines, garden or farm chemicals, other household chemicals and cleaning products, damaged gas bottles, metal and other residues from burnt household appliances as well as ash and dusts.

Chemical Disposal

Chemicals and chemical containers with no labels, or the chemical is unidentified, can be dropped off as part of the ToxFree Household Chemical program.

Date	Time	Location
Wednesday 1 May 2019	9am – 2pm	Tingha Landfill
Thursday 2 May 2019	9am – 2pm	Drake Oval

ToxFree will require some information on where the unlabelled chemicals were stored.

Take due care when handling containers with unknown chemical contents.

Legal Assistance

Legal Aid NSW can provide a range of help and advice with any legal problems and insurance claims following a disaster.

Legal Aid NSW lawyers can provide free legal advice and minor assistance to people the fires on a range of issues including insurance, tenancy and credit and debt problems.

Legal Aid NSW: **1800 801 529**

www.legalaid.nsw.gov.au

Red Cross

Red Cross offers a range of information and practical tools to support communities to recover from disasters and emergencies.

Everybody responds to disasters differently but many of us experience the same sorts of feelings and emotions afterwards. Find out more about how to talk about it and how to check in with friends and family members of all ages at:

<https://www.redcross.org.au/get-help/emergencies/after-the-emergency/get-info>

Disaster Relief Grants for Individuals

Disaster relief grants are for eligible people on low incomes with no insurance whose homes and essential household contents have been damaged or destroyed by a natural disaster.

For more information about eligibility for a disaster relief grant call Disaster Welfare Services on 1800 018 444

Disaster Relief for Farmers

A range of assistance measures are available to eligible farmers and primary producers impacted by fire, including:

- Concessional fixed-rate loans up to \$130,000
- Transport subsidies for the carriage of livestock, fodder and water

For more information contact:

NSW Rural Assistance Authority **1800 678 593**

rural.assist@raa.nsw.gov.au

Australian Government Assistance

The Australian Government is providing additional disaster assistance for eligible people in the Local Government Areas of Armidale, Inverell, Kyogle, Tamworth and Tenterfield. It includes:

1. Australian Government Disaster Relief Payment (AGDRP)

The AGDRP is a one-off payment for eligible people who have been significantly affected by a disaster e.g. you have been seriously injured or the house you live in has been damaged or destroyed. It is not for minor damage or inconvenience.

If you're eligible you'll receive:

- \$1,000 per adult
- \$400 per child under 16 years old

2. Disaster Relief Allowance (DRA)

The DRA is a short term payment to help you if you have lost income as a direct result of a disaster.

You can get this payment for a maximum of 13 weeks and it is payable from the date you lose income as a direct result of the fires.

To be eligible you will need work or live in one of the affected areas and provide evidence of your income loss.

For more info on either payment or to check your eligibility call the Commonwealth Department of Human Services: **180 22 66** or visit:

<https://www.humanservices.gov.au/disaster>

Claims need to be submitted by **20 August 2019**.

Animal Welfare

Local Land Services has been assisting with emergency fodder, stock water and medical assistance for animals impacted by the fire.

Landholders are encouraged to call the Agriculture and Animal Hotline to request assistance or report any stock losses.

Animal & Agriculture Hotline **1800 814 647**

Tax Help

If you have been affected by the fire you don't need to worry about your tax affairs right away. The Australian Taxation Office (ATO) will give you time to deal with your more immediate problems first and can help you to sort out your tax affairs later.

Depending on your circumstance, the following assistance may be available to you:

- more time to lodge, pay and respond
- early access to your money
- assistance payments
- help with damaged or destroyed property
- reconstructing your tax records
- fuel tax credits for individuals, businesses and others

For more information and updates

Visit our website at
www.emergency.nsw.gov.au

Or follow our Facebook page at
[NSW Disaster Recovery](#)

Dr Younger & Anne Leadbeater Visit



David and Anne chatting with locals at Tabulam Hall

Dr David Younger and Anne Leadbeater recently visited Tingha, Drake and Tabulam for a chat with locals. David is a trauma psychologist who specialises in working with communities after a disaster. Anne and her family lived through the Black Saturday bush fires in Victoria and now works to support communities recovering from fires.

Some thoughts that Anne and David shared about recovery include:

- Everybody recovers at their own pace and in their own way
- Try to take some time out for yourself, even just a few minutes a day
- Keep contact with friends, family and neighbours
- It's ok to not feel ok but if it continues have a chat to your local GP or healthcare provider.

Listen to Dr Younger's podcast *Recovery Hour, Life After Disasters & Emergencies*

<https://www.buzzsprout.com/251344>