

SORELL/TASMAN Recovery News

Edition 7: 22 April 2013

TASMANIAN BUSHFIRE RECOVERY

Welcome to Recovery News. This newsletter will provide those affected by the January bushfires with practical information and advice. There will be future editions providing updates as required.

Building back better

Building a home can be a daunting job at the best of times, but when you've lost your home to bushfire, there's undoubtedly an extra layer of stress.

To ease the burden, the Bushfire Recovery Unit has produced a guide to rebuilding your home.

'Building Back Better' provides information and referral advice to help you through the process. Importantly, it will be backed up with on-the-ground assistance, with a **Rebuilding Expo** planned for **Wednesday 8 May**, from 4pm-8pm at the Dunalley School Hall.

This will provide a chance to have a chat with the experts and council representatives, who will be there to answer your questions.

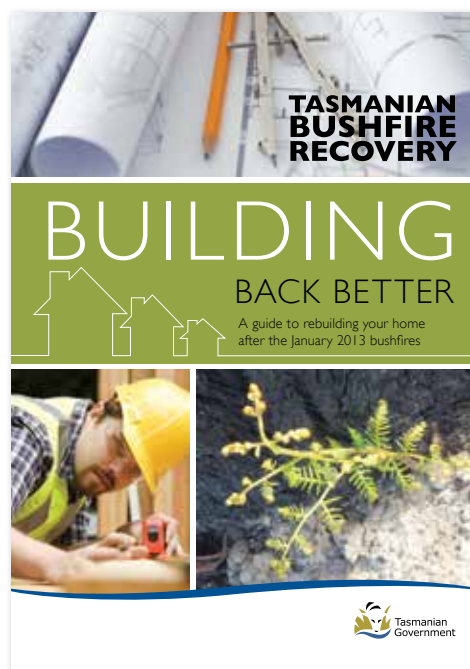
"A key part of recovery is rebuilding the 203 homes and shacks lost in the January bushfires," said the Chair of the Bushfire Recovery Taskforce, Damian Bugg.

"We recognise that dealing with all of the tasks involved in designing, planning and building a home is complex and confusing, and hope that this guide goes some way to reduce the anxiety."

The guide has been produced with the cooperation of local councils and industry associations covering the design, building, planning and construction industries.

'Building Back Better' will be mailed to those who lost their homes or shacks in the January bushfires, and will also be available at the Information and Service Hubs at Dunalley, Sorell and Murdunna and the Sorell Tasman and Glamorgan-Spring Bay councils.

You can also download a copy from our website
www.bushfirerecovery.tas.gov.au



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It's okay to take your time

Marysville resident Bruce Ackerman is a survivor of the 2009 Black Saturday bushfires in Victoria and has since become a leader within his community's recovery. Bruce recently travelled to Tasmania and spoke – along with Clinical Psychologist Dr Rob Gordon – at the Dunalley 'Moving Forward' Community Forum. Happily, Bruce also kindly agreed to share his thoughts with Recovery News...

“Things won't ever be the same again – they can't be. But some things will eventually be even better!”

Be patient. Don't make any rash decisions. That's my main message for the fire-affected people of Tasmania. In Marysville, we were given exactly the same advice following the 2009 bushfires; we were warned against making any major decisions for the first 12 to 18 months, and that's because the loss of your property is like any life-changing grief that can stop you from thinking clearly. Today, more than four years after the Black Saturday bushfires, I can see that the people who had knee-jerk reactions – such as selling their land cheap and moving elsewhere – lived to regret it. They regret not giving themselves the time to properly consider things. It's fine for people to mothball their plans and go away for a year, or rent outside the district. But from what I've seen in Victoria, the people who sold quickly are the ones who largely regret making an anxious decision.

Accessing donated goods

Do you know how to access goods that have been donated by the public for bushfire-affected individuals and families?

St Vincent de Paul is the central point for donated goods, and is maintaining a register at the Dunalley Information and Service Hub and Op Shop to match donations with people who need items.

The Salvation Army is also sourcing whitegoods and furniture.

If there's anything you need, please visit the hub at 160 Arthur Highway to see if we can help.

When I met the locals at the Dunalley meeting, I sensed they had amazing strength; they are resilient and they're all pulling together. It's important that the community continues to do this. I'd like to thank Dunalley residents Lyn and Fred Steele, who invited me to Tasmania and billeted us. I brought with me the President of the Marysville and District Lions Club, Neil Guscott. Lions Clubs in Tasmania had networked closely with the Marysville Lions during the Victorian bushfires – our time of need – and Marysville is keen to reciprocate that support now. The Marysville Lions and I propose to build on our friendships with the Dunalley people to see how we can help in the future. I hope to organise a visit to Marysville for your community leaders to show what we've been doing. I'm really looking forward to us all working together closely.

It was a treat for me to again listen to Dr Rob Gordon when he spoke in Dunalley. I got even more out of what he said this time because I've now got the value of hindsight. Rob spoke about adrenaline and how it can lead to rash decisions, and that's why I again say to sit on your hands for at least 12 months. And don't lose sight of the fact that there is light at the end of the tunnel. My favourite saying is that things won't ever be the same again – they can't be. But some things will eventually be even better.

Bruce Ackerman,
Marysville, VIC.

Clean-up statistics

Number of people registered and eligible for clean up	325
Number of consent forms still to be received from insurance companies	37
Total properties cleared by Hazell Bros	190

as at 1.30pm 17 April 2013



Photo by Kylie McLaren

Police station finds temporary home

Constable Dave McKenzie had been a member of Tasmania Police for 10 years when he transferred from Hobart to Dunalley in late 2012. At the time he was dreaming of a quiet country life filled with fishing, boating and crayfish platters. As you know, it hasn't turned out that way (yet).

But today, as Dave settles into the temporary police station at the site of the Dunalley fire station, he can see that some good has emerged from his baptism of fire.

"That event showed me the resourcefulness of the Dunalley community," he said. "That's what has struck me through this whole experience – there have been so many people who know what to do. These people ask us for a little bit of information and then they roll out their response. It's great to be surrounded by people like that."

The police station was among the losses in the January fires – the police residence would have suffered the same fate, Dave said, except that a couple of locals were travelling past, noticed it had caught on fire and fought to put it out. "Just fantastic," he's quick to add.

But the losses for the police – including all of their local records and equipment – have made their operations a challenge in recent weeks. The opening of the temporary police station in Bay Street has been a big step in getting on top of these obstacles, along with the announcement that Constable Danny Jackson has joined Dave and Constable John McGuinness (Nubeena) in the district.

"We're hopeful that a new police station will be built on the site of the old one," Dave said. "But while all the options are being assessed, the fire station is a great location because the locals are familiar with it and it's close at hand."

"We want the community to have the reassurance of knowing we're here to help and that we empathise with their concerns, because we're also going through the same experience. We're often out and about in the community and we'd welcome the chance to have a chat with locals, even about minor matters."

A feature of the official police response to the fires was the fact that many former Dunalley Officers volunteered to help; Dave and John McGuinness were joined by Robert Jones, Tim Stevens, Mark Ringwaldt, Gary Whittle and Andrew McKenzie (who is not Dave's father, despite what everyone seems to assume). Dave said he was delighted, but not surprised by their determination to come back and help.

"When you form a connection to the community as a local police officer, it becomes deeply ingrained," he said. "Many of these guys put their hands up to come down on their days off. I know myself from past communities in which I've lived that you form deep connections that remain with you – these connection never really break."

Police contact numbers

The old telephone number for Dunalley Police Station should be re-connected any day: Ph. **6253 6066**

In the meantime the station number is **6253 5423**. General police enquiries can be made on **131 444** or **6230 2111** and a message left.

For emergencies ring 000.



Constables Dave McKenzie (L-R), Danny Jackson and John McGuinness outside the temporary police station, which is located within the Dunalley fire station.

Rebuild and Revitalise: Community grants update

We've received some good feedback from you so far via surveys, meetings and informal consultation about the types of community projects you'd like to help restore and revitalise your communities.

Ideas for restoring or revitalising your communities included walking and bike tracks, picnic areas and community spaces, access to beaches and waterways, arts and culture, and projects to enhance relaxation and recreation. Also important were improved signage, road infrastructure and access to services.

Nineteen expressions of interest for the first round of Community Assistance Grants were received. The second round closes at the end of May, so don't worry if you weren't ready for the first.

First round projects are being assessed for eligibility by a community based panel, including Kerry Vincent, Geoff Martin, Kathy Spaulding, Bob Millington, Caroline Bignell and John Harkin. Details on the assessment and approvals process are on our website

www.bushfirerecovery.tas.gov.au

We encourage anyone with a project idea for round two, or anyone who is interested in participating in the process, to get in contact with us or come along to one of the workshops listed below. If these dates don't work for you, please let us know and we'll meet with you or your interest group separately. Our aim is to make the process easy and flexible.

If you would like to discuss a project idea, you can speak to Michael, Jo or Sakura directly:

Michael Palmer – **0447 551 050**

Joanne Cook – **0403 077 019**

Sakura Oddie – **0438 204 604**

WORKSHOPS

Where:

Dunalley Information and Service Hub
Copping Community Hall
Dunalley Information and Service Hub
Forcett Community Hall
Connellys Marsh (to meet at the DISH)
Murdunna BBQ area
Dunalley Information and Service Hub
Dunalley Information and Service Hub

When:

Tuesday 30 April
Wednesday 1 May
Monday 6 May
Thursday 9 May
Saturday 11 May
Saturday 11 May
Tuesday 14 May
Tuesday 21 May

Time:

2 – 4 pm
7 – 9 pm
7 – 9 pm
7 – 9 pm
12 – 2 pm
3 – 5 pm
7 – 9 pm
2 – 4 pm

Meeting rooms available at Murdunna

The demountable buildings that are used as the Information and Service Hub at Murdunna is now also available for public use.

Each building has basic tea and coffee making supplies (kettle, tea, coffee, sugar, bottled water and paper cups), but there are no facilities for washing up. Both rooms can be heated and include basic furniture, although further equipment can be organised, if needed.

The Murdunna rooms are currently open on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday between 1pm and 4pm; call in to see the rooms or to have a chat about what you might like to see happening there (such as a play group).

For further information, please contact
Evey Vincent **0427 785 547** or Ann Millar **6253 5715**.

The gift of the Stawell

A history-making win by a Tasmanian runner in the Stawell Gift will be a boost for the Dunalley community, hopes athletics coach Ray Quarrell.

Twenty-year-old Andrew Robinson recently took out the \$40,000 Victorian event by 0.02 seconds – the first Tasmanian runner to win since 1941. Andrew dedicated the victory to his coach Ray, who lost his family home in the January bushfires.

“After everything that happened I used that as personal motivation to do it for someone who I love like a second Dad,” Andrew said. “I just really wanted to go out there this weekend and make him proud ...”

Well Ray IS proud, and he’s champing at the bit to share the joy in Dunalley.

“I’d like to think this win will be a terrific lift for Dunalley,” Ray said. “No-one in Tasmania has won this race for 72 years and I want Dunalley to know that we’ve done this for the whole community – for the town in which I live and the people I grew up with.”

Ray and his wife Kathleen escaped from the bushfires with only the shirts on their backs ... as well as a determination to remain positive. Their home was the house in which Ray’s 99-year-old mother had lived as a little girl; she returned last Christmas to spend the holiday with her grandkids and great-grandchildren, and slept in the bedroom that was hers as a child. Weeks later, it was all gone.

“We could have thrown our hands in the air and asked ‘why’, but it’s moments like these that build you,” Ray said. “I guess it’s from our involvement with athletics over the years that we’ve learnt to push even harder when things get tough. For sure the sentimental side of losing our home is devastating and, to start with, I wondered what we were going to do. So we decided to throw all of our energy into being positive.”

This attitude has seen Ray’s squad of runners claim an unprecedented 18 of the 20 events they’ve contested this season, including 16-year-old Jacob Despard’s victory as the youngest-ever winner of the Burnie Gift.

“It’s positive thinking that’s helping us to move forward and I know the same positivity is embracing the whole Dunalley district,” Ray said. “When you go through a tragedy, everyone can see what’s bad. But already we’re seeing that a lot of good will come out of this event as we rebuild the town and move forward as a group.”



Athletics coach Ray Quarrell (right) said he wants to share the joy of Andrew Robinson’s Stawell Gift victory with everyone in the Dunalley district. Photo by Shane Goss - The Licorice Gallery

A helping hand for those in need

Do you need warm clothes for the winter? Have you sometimes stopped buying food in order to make ends meet? Or do you just want to sit down for a cuppa with friendly people? If you answered ‘yes’ to any of these questions, then the Community Care Centre at Copping could be the answer.

Kerry Chilcott, Minister for the Copping Christian Fellowship, said the Community Care Centre has attracted individuals and families from Sorell to Nubeena (and everywhere in between). Its primary focus is simply to help the community.

“We just want to provide people with an opportunity to rise above their circumstances,” he said. “We hope to help anyone who is feeling discouraged to get back in touch with life.”

The Community Care Centre opened in 2005 as a top quality pre-loved clothing store and, in 2008, began providing nutritional food and hampers. Today it continues to provide these services, in co-operation with food welfare agencies such as SecondBite and Foodbank.

“We are sharing from a Christian perspective that cares for the whole person,” Kerry said. “Resources such as food, clothing, toys, household goods, basic handyman services and limited financial support are available and we also have an area where people can sit down and have a chat. Sometimes people just need to feel that they’re not alone.”

The Community Care Centre is located at 2186 – 2188 Arthur Highway, Copping. It is open on weekdays, between 9am to 4pm. The staff are all volunteers and donations are gratefully received.

Making sure the kids are alright

beyondblue is working with children and families from Tasmania's fire-affected communities to help them deal with ongoing emotional difficulties.

The Child and Adolescent Bushfire Disaster Response is a ground-breaking program to support children traumatised by the January bushfires; it was also used to help Queenslanders after the 2011 floods.

beyondblue Chairman, the Hon Jeff Kennett, said the project (which is backed by the Tasmanian government and the Red Cross Bushfire Appeal) is a medium to long term approach that will offer free support to bushfire survivors.

"A natural disaster can be an incredibly stressful time for children and parents alike and, if this stress is prolonged, it can lead to serious mental health conditions such as depression and anxiety," Jeff said.

"This approach is about ensuring people – and particularly children affected by the bushfires – get the very best help from experts in the field."

The first community consultation has already occurred in Dunalley and more are expected to follow across Tasmania in the coming weeks. Factsheets and links to online resources are being distributed at the consultations, which also involve a question and answer session to help people know if they're experiencing symptoms that may need treatment.

The next phase will be to offer training for school teachers and seminars for parents and caregivers to help them identify emotional and behavioural difficulties that may be part of a child's post trauma response. A *beyondblue* child response team, made up of professionals from Brisbane's Mater Hospital, will then screen children in local schools (after obtaining parental consent) to identify those who are distressed.

Clinical Psychologist Assoc Prof Vanessa Cobhan – who co-founded the program with Prof Brett McDermott – said it proved very effective after the Queensland floods. At one badly affected primary school, around one third of the children experienced post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

"Several months later, after completing the trauma-focused cognitive behaviour therapy program, an evaluation found that the affected students had improved markedly to the stage where they were classified as having mild or no symptoms," Vanessa said.

This initiative is expected to cost \$650,000, with \$250,000 donated by *beyondblue* and \$400,000 coming from donations to the Red Cross Tasmanian Bushfire Appeal.

beyondblue is an organisation that is working to reduce the impact of depression and anxiety in the community by raising awareness and understanding, empowering people to seek help, and supporting recovery, management and resilience.

For more information on the Child and Adolescent Bushfire Disaster Response, call the program manager Kate Weller on **07 3163 2237**.

Bushfire inquiry

Former South Australian Police Commissioner, Malcolm Hyde, will head-up the inquiry into January's devastating bushfires.

Making the announcement, the Premier, Lara Giddings, said the bushfire inquiry was an important part of the recovery process and would report back by 30 September 2013.

Mr Hyde has 45 years of policing experience, holds a Bachelor of Laws (first class honours) and MBA from Melbourne University; and is a Fellow

of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and the Institute of Public Administration Australia.

Ms Giddings said interested members of the public would be encouraged to come forward with relevant information to be taken into account during the inquiry.

An initial allocation of \$670,000 has been earmarked to cover the costs of the inquiry, including salary costs, administrative support and specialist consultant services on an as-needed basis.

Further information, including the Inquiry terms of reference, can be found at www.justice.tas.gov.au



Photo by Charles Tewes

Regrowing the community

The deafening shrill of chainsaws is not the sound you'd normally associate with Landcare volunteers, but it's all part of the group's ongoing commitment to help local landowners rebuild and rehabilitate the Tasman catchment.

On Monday 29 April at the Dunalley Tasman Neighbourhood House, the Tasman Landcare Group (TLG) is offering training in basic chainsaw usage, safety and strategies. The free course is designed to help locals identify which burnt trees and bushes won't recover and how woody debris can be used to your advantage in the garden.

Jen Milne, Project Officer for the Tasman Landcare Group, said this event is just one aspect of the support and education currently available.

"We're also running garden assessment programs for property owners and a revegetation project to improve the condition of native vegetation," Jen said.

The TLG includes landowners not just in the Tasman municipality, but all areas of the Tasman Catchment: the land south of Forcett, Nugent and Marion Bay, including the Peninsulas.

"We want everyone affected by the fires to know that we will aim to assist landowners where possible," Jen said. "We're currently seeking funding for priority works such as weed control, revegetation and stock fencing."

Meanwhile Landcare Tasmania has helped fundraise for the Landcare Bushfire Recovery Appeal, recruit volunteers for BlazeAid and future projects, and support the work of Plant Aid – which is a collective of 'green thumbs' growing plants for those whose gardens, shelter belts and wildlife corridors have been affected by the January bushfires. The first plant giveaways will be available at the Bream Creek Farmers Market on Sunday 5 May.

As a movement, Landcare has been around for more than 20 years; it's about people with a shared interest in a local area, working together on projects that improve natural and working landscapes.

Many volunteers have registered with Landcare Tasmania to help in the fire recovery. Fire-affected property owners are invited to phone **6234 7117** if extra hands are needed for on-ground landcare projects.

For updated information of the TLG's local fire recovery initiatives, you can view their newsletter at: www.landcaretas.org.au

While you're online, visit the Landcare Tasmania's Bushfire Recovery webpage at: www.landcaretas.org.au/landcare/bushfire-recovery/



Weed control after a bushfire is vital. This African boxthorn is regenerating quickly but effective treatment and weed-prevention measures can save money and time in the future.

Would you like to be a volunteer?

Australian Red Cross is looking for volunteers to help people accessing recovery support in the Sorell and Tasman areas and to be part of other recovery activities around the fire affected communities.

If you want to help others in need, have a caring nature, and are available to help on weekdays this is a great opportunity to support locally run recovery.

To participate you would need to attend a half day induction which we will hold locally, a free one day training course, and complete a volunteer application process which includes a police check and interview.

If interested, please email tasemergencyservices@redcross.org.au with your name and contact details and a short description of why you would like to be an emergency support volunteer. Any questions call **(03) 6235 6015**.

Bushfire stories: a record of your experience

The individual experiences of Tasmanians affected by the January bushfires is being caringly documented by Dunally resident Joanne Curran, who hopes to produce a lasting and healing record of the event.

Joanne said she, along with her husband Geoff, was fortunate enough to defend their home against the fires, but it was several days before the couple ventured far into the community with their four-year-old son Daniel.

“And when we did get out and we began to meet up with others, we shared our stories and started our personal recovery,” Joanne said.

“I was amazed that although we’d all been through the same fire, everyone’s experience had been different – different observations, feelings, responses and outcomes.

“I knew then that I wanted to capture the stories of those affected by this natural disaster and, by sharing these accounts, contribute in some way to the recovery of the region.”

As well as producing an honest and tangible record of the bushfires, Joanne hopes the project will provide everyone in the community with a chance to be heard. She also wants to harness the positivity, unity and community spirit that characterised the event, and record the generosity of the individuals and volunteers who continue to give so much.

“The response to the project so far has been very positive and I’ve been greatly encouraged – I think there is a view that this should be done,” Joanne said.

“Although there has been loss and grief, people are putting their best foot forward. It is not easy, and not every day is good. But, incrementally, things are improving.”

Joanne would love for you to share your memories, photos or creative outpourings in this publication. Even if you can’t contribute right now, she’s still keen to hear from you. Joanne can be contacted by phone on **0437 566 660**.



Joanne Curran is working on a record of the individual experiences of Tasmanians affected by the January bushfires.

Hobart City Council allocates \$30,000 towards community infrastructure

In addition to an ongoing offer of assistance with services and staff, Hobart City Council has allocated \$30,000 to help the Tasman and Sorell Councils restore and improve infrastructure that benefits the community, such as parks and playgrounds.

Possible projects are to be identified by representatives from the fire-affected communities within the Tasman and Sorell municipal areas.

During the emergency Hobart City Council waste management services were deployed to the Tasman Peninsula and, more recently, Council equipment (including tree chippers and mobile toilet facilities) have been provided to the fire affected communities.



In addition to assistance with services and staff, Hobart City Council has allocated \$30,000 to help fire-affected communities.

Keeping communities safe: family violence after natural disasters

Studies show that relationship violence, child abuse and divorce can increase in the wake of natural disasters. This is tough to face, but it is something we cannot ignore.

In the United States, a recent study showed a four-fold increase in family violence after Hurricane Katrina in 2009. New Zealand Police reported a 53% increase in call-outs for family violence after the Canterbury earthquake in 2010. There was a similar spike after the Christchurch earthquake in 2011.

Over the next few months we will be running a series of articles on the impacts of natural disasters on relationships. The aim is to highlight how to stay safe or seek help if you need it in the aftermath of the January bushfires our community experienced. This is the first of those articles.

Concerns about family violence were expressed after the Victorian Black Saturday fires. Agencies, including family violence services, recovery authorities and community leaders all reported increased family violence. As a community we need to recognise and respond to this issue, just as much as we need to respond to the issues of grief, homelessness and lost infrastructure.

Explanations for increased family violence

Vulnerability to family violence increases after disasters for a variety of reasons, including the strain of grief, loss and trauma. Disasters can lead to homelessness and unemployment and the recovery and reconstruction phase can be very demanding. Tensions can increase when couples spend more time together including in unfamiliar accommodation.

Men can feel a loss of control which challenges their provider and protector role. One researcher spoke of 'men feeling unmasked and unmanly' and found some men turn to drugs, alcohol and aggression. Other researchers have identified a form of 'hyper-masculinity' resulting from stress and loss sometimes leading to violence in their relationships.

There are no excuses for partner/family violence. It is not alright to justify it as being out of character because of the great stress that disasters can place on individuals and communities.

Support is available right now if you need it:

- Family Violence Counselling and Support Service: **1800 608 122**
- Tasmania Police in an emergency: **000**
- Mensline: (24 hour support) **1300 789 978**
www.mensline.org.au
- Sexual Assault Services: (24 hour support) **6231 1817**
www.sass.org.au

Pick up the phone and get help if you are dealing with relationship violence, child abuse or divorce.

Over the next few months articles will focus on:

- What is family violence
- The impact of family violence on children
- What services are available for victims and offenders
- Men's Health

Written by Jane Fleming, State Manager of the Family Violence Counselling and Support Service, DHHS.

The author acknowledges the work of the Women's Health Goulburn in writing this article.

TASMANIAN BUSHFIRE RECOVERY

Have you applied for round three of the Red Cross Appeal funds?

If the house you own and live in was damaged, or a structure on your property needs fixing, replacing or cleaning up because of the January bushfires, you may be eligible for up to \$5,000.

You may be eligible if....

You have water or fire damage not covered by insurance that has, or will, cost you over \$2,000.

Eligible items may include: windows, decking, carport or garage, paintwork, outbuildings, sheds, barns, water tanks, pumps, septic tanks, irrigation equipment, tractors, cars, garden furniture, barbecue, children's play equipment

For more advice about whether you are eligible, call the Bushfire Recovery Unit on **1800 567 567** or visit bushfirerecovery.tas.gov.au

If you would like help filling out the application form visit the Information and Service Hubs at Dunalley, Murdunna or Sorell.



Grants and financial assistance

Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payments

The Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment (AGDRP) is available in the Sorell, Tasman and Glamorgan-Spring Bay Local Government Areas and in the district of Ellendale. Payments of \$1,000 per eligible adult and \$400 per eligible child are available to assist people who have been adversely affected by bushfires.

For more information call **180 22 66** (between 8.00am and 8.00pm) or visit: www.humanservices.gov.au/disaster

Customer service staff are available at the following locations:

- **Barrack Street Service Centre**
30-38 Barrack Street, Hobart
8.30am to 4.30pm (Monday to Friday)
- **Sorell DHS Service Centre**
Shop 3, 5 Fitzroy Street, Sorell
8.30am to 4.00pm (Monday to Friday)
- **Tasman Health and Community Service**
1614 Nubeena Rd, Nubeena
8.30am to 4.30pm (Monday to Friday)

Clean-up and Assistance Grants

The Tasmanian and Commonwealth Governments are providing Clean-up and Assistance Grants to provide short term targeted assistance for clean-up, removal of debris and further restoration following the bushfires in cases where the impact on the small business, farming and not for profit sector has been particularly severe.

All claims must be lodged by 30 June 2013.

Further information and claim forms are available from www.bushfirerecovery.tas.gov.au or by calling **1800 567 567** or at all Service Tasmania shops.

Representatives from the Department of Economic Development, Tourism and the Arts (DEDTA) are based at the Dunalley Information and Service Hub to answer any enquiries and help applicants complete their applications. Tony Ryan, a Project Manager from DEDTA is based at Dunalley and can be contacted on **0400 531 094**.

For further assistance with the small business and non-profit claim forms, please call the Business Tasmania Team on **1800 440 026**. For assistance with the primary producer claim form, please call **1300 368 550**.

Housing assistance grants

If you are affected by the bushfires you can access housing assistance grants. You must register your interest by calling **1800 808 340** (between 9.00am and 5.00pm, Monday to Friday). These grants will be means-tested based on income, assets, age, and residential status in line with eligibility for the Private Rental Assistance Scheme.

Aurora Energy Assistance

Aurora Energy has announced a package of measures to help customers across Tasmania who have been affected by the January 2013 bushfires.

If you wish to contact Aurora to register your eligibility for this relief call **132 004** or complete a form on Aurora's website www.auroraenergy.com.au.

Disaster Income Recovery Subsidy Payments for Sorell & Tasman

If you experienced a loss of income as a result of the January bushfires, you may be eligible for the Disaster Income Recovery Subsidy (DIRS).

The DIRS is available to help eligible employees, small business owners and farmers in the Sorell and Tasman Local Government areas whose income has suffered as a direct result of the Tasmanian fires. This payment is equivalent to the maximum applicable rate of Newstart Allowance or Youth Allowance, and is for a maximum period of 13 weeks from the date of the impact of the fires (or from when your loss of income commenced).

You have until **7 October 2013** to lodge a claim for this payment.

Assistance is also available under the Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment – a one-off payment for people who have been badly affected by a disaster. If you are eligible, you may receive \$1,000 per adult and \$400 for each child (aged under 16).

Social workers are available to further explain these payments, and to help you find out if you're eligible; they can be contacted on **180 22 66**. For more information and claim forms, visit an office of the Department of Health and Human Services (such as Centrelink or Medicare), or go to the Department's website at www.humanservices.gov.au/disaster

Grants and financial assistance

Money donated to the Red Cross Tasmanian Bushfire 2013 Appeal will be used to assist individuals, families and communities directly affected by the January bushfires. Australian Red Cross is not deducting any funds from public donations for administration costs or other Red Cross services. The funds raised are being distributed through the independent Tasmanian Bushfire Appeal Distribution Committee (TBADC).

Stage One Bushfire Recovery Grants

The Tasmanian Bushfire Appeal Distribution Committee has agreed to distribute \$3,000 per adult and \$1,000 per child to every resident of a household destroyed or damaged to the point where it is unliveable, to a maximum of \$10,000 per household.

To be eligible, your property must be your primary place of residence (i.e. you lived there for more than half the year)

For more information please call **1800 567 567**.

Stage Two Bushfire Recovery Grants

Homeowners, tenants and community projects are eligible for second stage funding grants from the Red Cross Bushfire Appeal.

TBADC has approved the criteria for the grants, which include the:

- **Destroyed Homes Grant** – \$10,000 per household to assist homeowners with re-housing and replacing household contents where their primary residence was destroyed in the bushfires.
- **Tenant Contents Grant** (including boarders) – \$5,000 per household to assist tenants replace contents where their primary residence was destroyed in the bushfires.
- **Community Assistance Grant** – a minimum of \$1 million for community projects which contribute to community cohesion, resilience and recovery.

Affected Area Recovery Committees (AARCs) will work with the Tasman/Sorell and Central Highlands communities on the applications for community assistance grants. The AARCs are made up of local council and community representatives and will provide recommendations to the TBADC on which projects will most benefit the communities.

Stage Three Bushfire Recovery Grants

Grants of up to \$5,000 will be made available to help home owners repair bushfire damage to their primary residence (or surrounding external structures) under the third stage.

A further \$300,000 has also been allocated for a Revegetation and Garden Restoration Program in the Tasman and Sorell areas, to be led by the Dunalley Tasman Neighbourhood House.

The focus of the third round of grants has been on easing the personal distress caused by the ongoing sight of fire-damaged property around homes – structures which may include decking, children's play equipment, garden furniture, barbecues, sheds, and water tanks.

The grant is only available to owners of a primary residence who continue to live in their residence in the fire affected community.

It is not available to:

- non-primary homes
- businesses (who may be eligible for Clean-Up Assistance Grants)
- tenants (who may be eligible for the Tenants Contents Grant)
- recipients of the \$10,000 Destroyed Homes Grant.

To apply eligible residents need to fill in an application form and return it to their local council or the Information and Service Hubs at Sorell, Dunalley or Murchison. The form is available online at www.bushfirerecovery.tas.gov.au or from councils or the Hubs.

To register interest in, or donate to, the Revegetation and Garden Restoration Program, please contact the Dunalley Tasman Neighbourhood House on **6253 5579** or email reveg@dunalleytasman.org.

The TBADC will continue to assess the needs of affected communities to determine how the remaining funds will be distributed.

There are specific rules governing how money raised by charity organisations can be distributed.

Statistics

The Tasmanian and Commonwealth Governments have so far distributed over \$10 million in financial assistance to those affected by the bushfires in Tasmania. This includes:

- **\$785,000** from the Tasmanian Government in Emergency Assistance Grants.
- **\$838,803** from the Tasmanian Government in Housing Assistance Grants.
- **\$7.5 million** from the Commonwealth Government in Disaster Recovery Payments.
- Over **\$1 million** from the Tasmanian and Commonwealth Governments in Clean-Up and Assistance Grants.
- The funding is in addition to the **\$8.4 million** (not including pledges) raised to date in the official Red Cross Bushfire Appeal. So far **\$4.5 million** has been allocated for distribution which includes **\$1.8 million** reserved for community projects.

as at 3.00pm 17 April 2013

Distribution of recovery news

This is the last edition of Recovery News to be automatically delivered to people living south of the Eaglehawk Neck postcode of 7179 as part of a mass mailout.

We've received feedback that a group mailout to these areas is no longer necessary, and under the Australia Post distribution rules, we can't remove individuals from the delivery because it's done on a postcode by postcode basis.

However, we have an "opt-in" choice. If you live in these areas and wish to continue receiving the newsletter, please email us at recoverycomms@dpac.tas.gov.au or call the hotline on **1800 567 567** to be added to our distribution list. Copies will also be available at various locations on the peninsula, including the Tasman Council offices.

We're keen to continue to provide you with information and advice that may be helpful in the recovery process, so please send us your ideas – they're always welcome.

Calendar of events

Meals and Conversations for the Whole Community

Rotary Club BBQ
Murdunna Playground from
5pm every fortnight

11 May
25 May
8 June
22 June

Out of the Ashes Photographic Exhibition

Tasman Health &
Community Service

21 June
4.00pm to 6.00pm

Enquires **6250 9000**

Rebuilding Expo

Information and referral
advice to help with the
rebuilding process

Dunalley School Hall

8 May
4.00pm to 8.00pm

Plant Aid

Plant giveaways at the
Bream Creek Farmers
Market

5 May

New growth: Photo by Coralie Walker, Canberra



Do you have feedback for us?

This newsletter aims to provide advice that is relevant and useful to you. We welcome your input on the information you would like included in future editions.

If you have any suggestions please contact recoverycomms@dpac.tas.gov.au or call the hotline on **1800 567 567**.

If you know of someone who would like to receive Tasmanian Bushfire Recovery updates, please email recoverycomms@dpac.tas.gov.au or call **1800 567 567**.

PHONE
1800 567 567

EMAIL
recovery@dpac.tas.gov.au

ONLINE
bushfirerecovery.tas.gov.au

SORELL INFORMATION AND SERVICE HUB
Shop 4, 31 Cole Street, Sorell
(Access via Station Lane)

DUNALLEY INFORMATION AND SERVICE HUB
160 Arthur Highway, Dunalley
(the old Post Office)

MURDUNNA INFORMATION AND SERVICE HUB
Arthur Highway, Murdunna
(Murdunna Playground)

TASMANIAN BUSHFIRE RECOVERY