



Bushfire Recovery Guide

Supporting our community to recover

6 October 2020

Foreword



This *Bush Fire Recovery Guide* has been developed in conjunction with the NSW Office of Emergency Management and Hawkesbury City Council, to provide information that can assist our community through the recovery process.

Council is committed to supporting our community and residents who have been impacted by recent bush fires, and to make the recovery journey as easy as possible. No recovery is perfect, but we will not stop trying to do our best for our community.

The information in this guide, that includes important recovery information from Blue Mountains City Council as well as useful links and recovery details from State and Federal Government agencies, will be updated regularly. We will ensure we are providing the most accurate and up to date information possible.

The fires have been hard for our community, and we learnt from the 2013 bush fires that the recovery process will be long, but I know we will come through this. We will do it by working together and leaning on each other.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of several fluid, overlapping strokes that form a cursive name.

Councillor Mark Greenhill OAM
Mayor of the City of the Blue Mountains

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Bush fire Customer Care – Service NSW

Issue	Information	Where to get help
Bush fire customer care	<p>The Bush Fire Customer Care service is designed to help individuals and businesses impacted by bush fire to navigate the support that is available to them across all levels of government.</p> <p>If you have been impacted by the recent bush fires, you're encouraged to get in touch with the new service, who can help with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Accommodation advice• Relevant charitable services• Mental health and wellbeing services• Support for businesses• Clean-up services• Financial assistance• Grants and rebates• Insurance and legal support• Replacing lost ID• Volunteer RFS and SES payments• Council rates relief <p>You will be asked how you have been impacted and what help you need, so they can ensure you get the right information.</p> <p>If you are a Blue Mountains residents and you have registered with Council, you will automatically be registered with Service NSW unless you advise us not to.</p>	<p>You can contact the Bush Fire Customer Care service by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Visiting any Service NSW Centre or Mobile Service Centre• Calling 13 77 88• Going to: service.nsw.gov.au <p>NSW Bushfire Clean-up Info Hub Get information about where clean-up work is happening and how you can talk to someone in person about your clean-up needs: https://cleanup.inbr.com.au</p>

Health and wellbeing

Issue	Information	Where to get help
Health advice	Bush fires can present a range of health concerns and issues, including poor air quality due to smoke. It's important to be aware of those issues and how you can protect yourself and your family.	<p>For general bush fire health advice, please visit: health.nsw.gov.au/environment/air/Pages/bushfire-smoke.aspx.</p> <p>If you have specific health concerns/complaints please call Health Direct on 1800 022 222 or your GP for clinical advice.</p>
Wellbeing support	<p>It's completely normal to experience a range of emotions after a fire, including anxiety, depression, anger, forgetfulness, concern for the future and sleep disturbance.</p> <p>Having someone to listen to and support you through this is very important.</p> <p>Check in on your friends and neighbours and if you or someone you know needs help, reach out.</p>	<p>Free services available 24 hours per day, 7 days per week:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lifeline (dedicated bush fire support) – 13 43 57 • Mental Health Line – 1800 011 511 • Men's line – 1300 789 978 • Kids Helpline – 1800 551 800 • Beyond Blue – 1300 224 636 <p>Free services available during business hours, for people impacted by fires and drought:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mountains Care – 4720 6100 • Gateway Family Services Blaxland – 4720 6500 • Gateway Family Services Katoomba – 4782 5326 <p>If you or someone you know is in immediate danger call 000.</p>
	Residents affected by the recent bush fires or other emergency events can now access Step by Step Recovery Support Service , a free mobile support program. The service is focused on wellbeing, providing immediate emotional and social support. The program can also help with accessing grants, dealing with applications, insurance issues and by linking people to other recovery resources and services. Step by Step is provided by Gateway Family Services.	To access the Step by Step Recovery Support Service call 0417 298 832 or email stepbystep@gatewayfamilyservices.org.au . The Service is available Monday to Saturday, 9am-6pm and can be accessed by phone and online or in special circumstances, face-to face.

Emergency temporary accommodation	<p>Emergency temporary accommodation is available to people affected by the recent bush fires.</p> <p>Short-term housing support for up to three months is available to all people in urgent need of housing because of a natural disaster. This covers people who would not normally be eligible for social housing.</p>	<p>Contacts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service NSW Bush Fire Customer Care on 13 77 88 • Housing Contact Centre on 1800 422 322 (24/7) • Wentworth Community Housing on 4777 8000 Local support. Open 8.30am – 4.30pm, Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. Closed Wednesday
Belong Blue Mountains	<p>Belong Blue Mountains run community and neighbourhood services throughout the Blue Mountains. They offer services and care for families, young people and children, disabled and aged people, and transport services.</p>	<p>Contacts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upper Mountains – 4782 1117 • Mid Mountains – 4759 2592 • Lower Mountains – 4739 1164
Blackheath Area Neighbourhood Centre	<p>The Blackheath Area Neighbourhood Centre offers a range of services to support the local community, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • wellbeing in fire and other emergencies • emergency food relief packages, community pantry, food vouchers, • no interest loans for people on low income • free access to the internet, email, computers and scanning 	<p>Contact the Blackheath Area Neighbourhood Centre (BANC):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phone: 4787 7770 • Email: community@bancnsw.org.au • Website: www.banc.org.au • Address: Gardiner Crescent, Blackheath <p>Opening hours:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monday – Thursday: 9.30am – 12.30pm & 1.30pm – 4.30pm • Friday: 9.30am – 12.30pm
Springwood Neighbourhood Centre	<p>The Springwood Neighbourhood Centre offers a range of community support and wellbeing services.</p>	<p>Contact the Springwood Neighbourhood Centre:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phone: 4751 3033 • Website: sncc.org.au • Address: 104-108 Macquarie Road, Springwood NSW (ground level of the Blue Mountains Theatre and Community Hub)

<p>Winmalee Neighbourhood Centre</p>	<p>The Winmalee Neighbourhood Centre offers a range of services to support the local community, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • community lunch at Springwood Baptist Church for the homeless/financially disadvantaged/socially isolated (Mondays) • Winmalee Community Food Cupboard – subsidised food and groceries (Fridays) • free fresh food, collected daily and delivered to Thrive, Blackheath, Pinaroo, Rainbow and Springwood Neighbourhood Centre • utility, water and Telstra bill assistance (by appointment) • Coles, Kmart and Fuel vouchers (by appointment) • food hampers • no interest loans for car repairs, Greenslips, white goods and educational. In-house and outreach • community programs to increase financial resilience • generalist with referral to Debbie Deasy counselling • Domestic Violence support 	<p>Contact the Winmalee Neighbourhood Centre:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phone: 4754 4050 • Address: 62 White Cross Road, Winmalee <p>Opening hours:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monday – Thursday: 8.30am – 4pm • Friday: 8.30am – 1.30pm
<p>CatholicCare Bushfire Support & Counselling</p>	<p>CatholicCare offer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • free counselling that can come to a town near you, as well as at Springwood Drop-In Centre. • community support programs focusing on different aspects of recovery. • individual support to access services, funds and things specific to your needs and circumstances. 	<p>Contact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bushfire Support & Counselling on 8843 2550 or 0499 077 511 (after hours) • Springwood Drop-In Centre on 8843 2545 or visit 3/163 Macquarie Road, Springwood
<p>Caring for pets and wildlife</p>	<p>Taking care of pets and wildlife is a priority during and after a bush fire. There are a number of places you can go to get advice and assistance caring for your pets and animals.</p>	<p>Animal care and welfare contacts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RSPCA fact sheets and advice, visit: kb.rspca.org.au • Native wildlife care, contact NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service on 1300 072 757. • Injured wildlife, contact WIRES on 4754 2946.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency livestock fodder, water, vet help and stock euthanasia and burial, contact Local Land Services on 1800 814 647. • Information on how to help local wildlife is also available on Council's website: bmcc.nsw.gov.au/documents/local-wildlife-need-your-help
Missing pets	If you are missing a pet or need to update registration details, please contact Council and we will try to assist you.	Contact Council on 4780 5000 or at council@bmcc.nsw.gov.au

Safety and site access

Issue	Information	Where to get help
Accessing your property	<p>Please do not enter your property until a property impact assessment has been completed.</p> <p>NSW Rural Fire Service, Fire and Rescue NSW, Public Works Advisory and the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) conduct assessments of the fire impacted properties to identify hazards so you can take the proper action to protect yourself. Houses, sheds and other buildings damaged in a bushfire can leave potential health and safety hazards in the remaining debris and ash.</p> <p>Entering your property before you have approval can be very dangerous as a range of safety risks may be present, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Live power lines or active solar panels. • Buildings and other structures may be unstable to enter or walk over. • Sewerage and septic systems may be disrupted causing health risks. • Hot, smouldering coals and other potentially hazardous materials may be hidden under the rubble. 	<p>Service NSW – to register for the bushfire recovery clean-up program call 13 77 88 or go to www.service.nsw.gov.au. Service NSW also has other useful information.</p> <p>If you are uninsured or your claim does not cover make safe works contact the Public Works Advisory on 1800 885 539.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asbestos dust and fibres have the potential to present a health risk during and after a fire if not properly managed. 	
Insured properties	Clean-up can only start once you have clearance from your insurer. Once the site is made safe, we advise you to take photos or video of the damage to your property and possessions as evidence to support your claim, before you begin the clean-up.	<p>Contact your insurer in the first instance.</p> <p>Questions, complaints or concerns about insurance, contact The Insurance Council of Australia on 1800 734 621.</p> <p>Free legal advice and minor assistance to people affected by disasters, including insurance help, contact Legal Aid NSW on 1800 801 529.</p>
Uninsured properties	<p>The Public Works Advisory will arrange the clean-up, undertake demolition and removal of building waste for uninsured properties.</p> <p>The NSW Government is offering a Disaster Relief Grant for if you are not insured and have limited income. Grants are available for eligible individuals and families whose homes and essential household contents have been damaged or destroyed by a natural disaster.</p> <p>To be eligible for this assistance you must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be a low income earner and meet an income assets test Demonstrate that the affected home is your principal place of residence Not be covered by insurance Demonstrate that the damage was caused by the disaster Lodge the application within four months of the disaster occurring. 	<p>Contact the Public Works Advisory on 1800 885 539.</p> <p>For more information about the Disaster Relief Grant, contact the Disaster Welfare Assistance Line on 1800 018 444.</p>

<p>Government clean-up funding for all</p>	<p>The NSW Government is providing funding to help cover the cost of clean-up for both insured and uninsured properties.</p> <p>This will ensure hazardous materials, including asbestos, are removed and handled in the correct and safe way, and your insurance money is maximised towards rebuilding your home.</p>	<p>To find out more, contact the Disaster Welfare Assistance Line on 1800 018 444 or visit: service.nsw.gov.au/assistance-bushfire-affected-communities</p>
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The clean-up

Issue	Information	Where to get help
<p>Government provided clean-up</p>	<p>Everyone (insured or uninsured) whose property has been impacted by the bush fires will be able to access clean-up assistance. You need to be registered with Service NSW to access this support.</p> <p>Laing O'Rourke (LOR) have been appointed the contractor for the clean-up work. They will work with Public Works and local suppliers and subcontractors to clear properties.</p> <p>Clean-up may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Containment and removal of asbestos and other hazardous waste • Removal of all dangerous debris including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Destroyed material ○ Hazardous trees ○ Removal of concrete slab foundations (with the consent of building owners) <p>Once you're registered with Service NSW, there are five key steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. LOR staff will contact you to discuss the damage and assess your eligibility. 2. Once the area is declared safe Laing O'Rourke will meet with you on site. <p>Note: if you are seeking an asbestos</p>	<p>Contact Service NSW on 13 77 88 to register and give consent for them to access the land.</p> <p>NSW Bushfire Clean-up Info Hub: https://cleanup.lnbr.com.au/ Provides up to date information about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • where clean-up work is taking place • locations of Community Information Sessions where you can talk to someone in person <p>Contact Laing O'Rourke on 1800 007 539 or email nswbushfirecleanup@laingorourke.com.au</p>

	<p>certificate for your property, email nswbushfirecleanup@laingorourke.com.au.</p> <p>If the report has been completed and is available they will email it to you</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. You approve the scope of works. 4. The clean-up of the property will commence. 5. You confirm the completion of the agreed scope of works. <p>LOR will always arrange a household visit in advance and will not turn up unannounced or demand payment.</p> <p>This will ensure hazardous materials, including asbestos, are removed and handled in the correct and safe way, and your insurance money is maximised towards rebuilding your home.</p>	
<p>Demolition and clearing land</p>	<p>Removing rubble does not require Council's consent, but demolishing partial structures or heritage items might. Please contact Council to find out what approvals you may need.</p> <p>Structures over 4 metres in height do require demolition by a licensed contractor.</p> <p>When cleaning up your property, make sure you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • moisten ash with water to minimise dust and keep it damp, but do not use high pressure water sprays. • don't spread ash around your property, particularly if asbestos materials were used in your home or other structures, or CCA-treated timber was burnt. • don't bury building rubble as it may contain hazardous materials. 	<p>If you have a partial structure or heritage item, please contact Council on 4780 5000</p>

<p>Asbestos</p>	<p>Any structure built before 1987 is likely to have Asbestos Containing Materials (ACM). If in doubt, it's safest to assume asbestos is present unless you have confirmation in an Asbestos Assessment Report.</p> <p>You must have an appropriately licensed contractor remove asbestos materials. A list of licensed asbestos removalists can be found on the SafeWork NSW website.</p> <p>Talk to your insurance company to see if asbestos remediation is covered by your policy, and whether they organise demolition and or removal. If so, request a copy of the site clearance certificate. If not, you will need to engage a qualified specialist who is licensed to remove asbestos.</p> <p>If asbestos is present, after the clean-up works you will need an Asbestos Assessment Report or an Asbestos Clearance Report. This document is required before you can rebuild.</p>	<p>Find a licensed contractor on the SafeWork NSW website: safework.nsw.gov.au/asbestos-and-demolition-licence-holders</p>
<p>Fire retardant</p>	<p>The NSW Rural Fire Service (RFS) drops coloured fire suppressant retardants and gels from aircraft during firefighting operations to help slow the spread of a fire. These retardants are not hazardous. But there are some precautions that you need to take. Rainwater tanks may also have fire retardant in them. Find out more on page 24.</p>	<p>For more information about what to do if these suppressants have been used on your property, please read the fact sheet: emergency.nsw.gov.au/Documents/factsheets/using-fire-retardants.pdf</p>
<p>Trees and vegetation</p>	<p>Trees and vegetation are protected under legislation and planning policies.</p> <p>In an emergency you can remove trees if it is necessary to protect human life and property from imminent danger from a bush fire burning in the vicinity. Where possible, you should keep evidence that demonstrates why the tree removal was necessary, such as photographs or video footage, or</p>	<p>Contact Council on 4780 5000 or at council@bmcc.nsw.gov.au</p> <p>Contact the RFS at: rfs.nsw.gov.au/about-us/contact-us</p>

	<p>a written opinion from an arborist before removing the tree.</p> <p>If you feel that trees on your neighbour's property pose a bush fire risk to your property, you can contact the RFS and request they make an assessment of the neighbour's property and if necessary, issue a bushfire hazard reduction notice to that property owner.</p>	
10/50 vegetation clearing	<p>The 10/50 Vegetation Clearing Scheme gives people living near the bush an additional way of being better prepared for bush fires. The scheme allows people in a designated area to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear trees on their property within 10 metres of a home, without seeking approval; and • Clear underlying vegetation such as shrubs (but not trees) on their property within 50 metres of a home, without seeking approval. 	<p>Check if your property is in a 10/50 Vegetation Area: rfs.nsw.gov.au/plan-and-prepare/1050-vegetation-clearing/tool</p> <p>The 10/50 scheme is supported by the 10/50 Vegetation Clearing Code of Practice: rfs.nsw.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0003/18453/1050-Vegetation-Clearing-Code-of-Practice.pdf</p>
Assistance with removal of trees on private property	<p>If your land is insured</p> <p>Contact your insurance company to confirm if you are covered and discuss the next steps to deal with your situation.</p>	<p>Contact your insurance company directly.</p> <p>If you have any questions, complaints or concerns about insurance, contact the Insurance Council of Australia on 1800 734 621.</p>
	<p>If your land is under insured or not insured, the NSW Public Works Advisory can help you.</p>	<p>NSW Bushfire Clean-up Info Hub at https://cleanup.lnbr.com.au/ Laing O'Rourke 1800 007 539 Email: nswbushfirecleanup@laingorourke.com.au</p>
Marked trees not removed	<p>Trees are marked for removal by the RFS. Who you need to speak to will depend on where the marked tree is located.</p>	<p>Contacts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RFS on 4560 6400. • Transport for NSW on 8202 2200. • NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service on 1300 072 757.
Clean-up for businesses	<p>The NSW Government and Insurance Council of Australia have resources available to help small businesses manage the clean-up and get assistance from registered and approved trades and businesses.</p>	<p>To register for Government recovery work, visit: procurepoint.nsw.gov.au/buying/bushfire-affected-communities-rebuild</p> <p>To find a Tradie registered with the Insurance Council of Australia, visit: disasters.org.au/trades-register</p>

Disposing of waste and debris

Issue	Information	Where to get help
<p>Waste disposal at Blue Mountains Waste Management Facilities</p>	<p>Due to COVID-19, Blue Mountains Waste Management Facilities (WMF) are currently operating in a reduced capacity.</p> <p>Blaxland WMF is open 8am – 4:45pm, 7 day/ week.</p> <p>Katoomba WMFs are open to residents and businesses between 8am and 4:45pm Thursday, Friday and Saturday each week.</p> <p>Blaxland is open Monday – Saturday for registered businesses and BM generated waste. Contractors must provide a Blue Mountains address where the waste has been generated. Contractors may be registered with BMCC or out of area.</p>	<p>Please contact Council on 4780 5000</p>
<p>Waste disposal declaration form</p>	<p>You must present a completed ‘Waste Disposal Declaration form’ when you arrive at any facility, with your waste. If you don’t, the facility may not accept your waste or you may be charged full fees, in addition to the Waste and Environment Levy.</p> <p>Waste generated as a result of a bush fire needs to go to a lawful facility, no matter who is transporting it, to ensure soil, water and human health is protected. A list of where to take your waste is below. You must keep proof of the ‘lawful disposal’ – that means you need the receipt or a copy of the receipt. If a contractor is used, you’ll need to request that they provide you with a copy.</p>	<p>A copy of the Waste Disposal Declaration form is available online: bmcc.nsw.gov.au/recovery</p>
<p>Types of waste after a bush fire</p>	<p>Waste resulting from a fire is called fire damaged debris. There are 4 types of fire damaged debris:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minor site clean-up waste (uncontaminated property) Fire damaged debris where significant structural damage has not occurred to the residence on a property, but there is damage to other things on the property like trees, plants, landscaping, fences, sheds, vehicles, etc. Minor site clean-up can 	

	<p>be typically undertaken without the need for specialist equipment or personnel and the resulting quantities of waste can usually be transported by ute, trailer, small truck or skip bin. Minor site clean-up waste is from sites confirmed not to contain ACM.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bulk uncontaminated waste Fire damaged debris (that is not contaminated with ACM) where significant structural damage has occurred to the residence on a property that requires partial or total demolition of the structure. Bulk uncontaminated waste also includes any additional uncontaminated items damaged by fire on the property (e.g. trees, plants, landscaping, fences, sheds, vehicles, etc.). • ACM contaminated waste Fire damaged debris that has been identified by visual assessment only as potentially contaminated with ACM. Fire damaged debris identified as being potentially contaminated with ACM is deemed to be contaminated with ACM, unless confirmed otherwise by an occupational hygienist or, in the case of friable asbestos, a licensed asbestos assessor. This means that there is no need for forensic testing to confirm the presence of asbestos in situations where there is a high likelihood that the fire damaged debris is indeed contaminated with ACM. • Non-ACM hazardous waste Any other hazardous items that may be present in fire damaged debris such as unvented gas bottles, pesticides, petrol, oils, lead acid batteries, pool chemicals, paint, unidentifiable chemicals etc. Non-ACM contaminated waste will almost always be discrete items as opposed to bulk quantities of waste. 		
<p>Transporting and delivering waste</p>	<p>All wastes from fire damage debris must be transported lawfully. That means you must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • secure the load so it is not able to fall off the vehicle transporting it • cover the load to prevent waste blowing out of the vehicle transporting it (e.g. with a tarpaulin or retractable cover or similar) • take it to a facility that can lawfully receive it <p>You don't need to let the facility know you're coming if you have uncontaminated waste, at both the Blaxland and Katoomba Waste Management Facilities.</p> <p>If you have ACM contaminated waste, you must contact the Lithgow Solid Waste Facility at least 24 hours before you arrive, to let them know you'll be bringing ACM contaminated waste from a bush fire. If you don't do this, they may not accept the waste when you arrive. Handling, transport and disposal must be in accordance with SafeWork NSW and EPA requirements.</p>		
<p>Where to dispose of waste</p>	<table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>Katoomba and Blaxland Waste Management facilities.</p> <p>Minor clean-up waste from fire-effected properties will be accepted into Blaxland Waste Management Facility. Contractors must provide a Blue Mountains address where the waste has been generated.</p> </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>Blue Mountains City Council Waste enquiries phone: 4723 5000</p> <p>Blaxland Waste Management Facility:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8am – 4.45pm daily • Attunga Road, Blaxland NSW <p>Katoomba Waste Management Facility:</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p>Katoomba and Blaxland Waste Management facilities.</p> <p>Minor clean-up waste from fire-effected properties will be accepted into Blaxland Waste Management Facility. Contractors must provide a Blue Mountains address where the waste has been generated.</p>	<p>Blue Mountains City Council Waste enquiries phone: 4723 5000</p> <p>Blaxland Waste Management Facility:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8am – 4.45pm daily • Attunga Road, Blaxland NSW <p>Katoomba Waste Management Facility:</p>
<p>Katoomba and Blaxland Waste Management facilities.</p> <p>Minor clean-up waste from fire-effected properties will be accepted into Blaxland Waste Management Facility. Contractors must provide a Blue Mountains address where the waste has been generated.</p>	<p>Blue Mountains City Council Waste enquiries phone: 4723 5000</p> <p>Blaxland Waste Management Facility:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8am – 4.45pm daily • Attunga Road, Blaxland NSW <p>Katoomba Waste Management Facility:</p>		

	Contractors may be registered with BMCC or out of area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10am – 4pm, Monday – Friday • 10am – 2pm Saturday • Woodlands Rd, Katoomba
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Financial, rebuild and legal assistance

Issue	Information	Where to get help
<p>Disaster Recovery Payment</p>	<p>The Federal Government is providing a Disaster Recovery Payment to those significantly affected by the declared disaster.</p> <p>It is a one-off payment and if eligible, you will get:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$1,000 per adult (both members of a couple can claim separately) • \$400 for each child under 16 years of age. <p>Eligibility requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You have been seriously injured • You're the immediate family member of an Australian citizen or resident who died • Your principal place of residence has been destroyed or must be demolished • The interior of your principal place of residence has sustained major damage • Damage from the fire has exposed the interior of your principal place of residence to the elements • Your principal place of residence has been declared structurally unsound • The interior of your residence has been affected by sewerage contamination • You're the principal carer of a dependent child who has experienced any of the above <p>Note: this does not apply to holiday homes or investment properties.</p>	<p>Claim a Disaster Recovery Payment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go to a Centrelink location • Call Centrelink on 180 22 66 (8am – 8pm local time, Monday to Friday and 8am – 5pm Saturday and Sunday) • Print, complete and return the form: servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/forms/em194 <p>You can return the form, along with your supporting documents, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Fax to 1300 727 760 ○ Post to: Emergency Processing Centre Reply Paid 7815 Canberra BC ACT 2610 <p>Make sure you have your documents ready:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You will need to provide one document showing proof of birth or arrival in Australia. Alternatively, you can submit any other documents with a value of 50 identification points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Drivers licence (40 points) ○ Bank card/statement (40 points) ○ Medicare card (20 points) • You may need to show you are eligible (e.g. hospital admission, photos of damage). If you don't have these documents, you can still lodge your claim and you will have 28 days to provide the supporting documents.

Bushfire Community Recovery and Resilience Fund (BCRRF)	<p>Financial support for organisations and groups working on medium or long-term projects to support community recovery and help build resilience to apply for the Bushfire Community Recovery and Resilience Fund (BCRRF).</p>	<p>More details on funding eligibility can be found online at www.emergency.nsw.gov.au.</p> <p>Applications close 12pm, 10 November.</p>
Disaster Recovery Allowance	<p>The Federal Government is providing a Disaster Recovery Allowance to support people who lost income as a direct result of the bush fires in NSW from August 2019 – January 2020.</p> <p>You must have evidence to support your claim. You cannot receive the following payments for the same period you're claiming the Disaster Recovery Allowance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an income support payment or pension • Parental Leave Pay • Dad and Partner Pay • ABSTUDY living allowance • Farm Household Allowance • A Service Pension from the Department of Veterans' Affairs. 	<p>Claim a Disaster Recovery Allowance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go to a Centrelink location • Call Centrelink on 180 22 66 (8am – 8pm local time, Monday to Friday and 8am – 5pm Saturday and Sunday) • Fill in the form online: humanservices.gov.au/individuals/forms/em195
Disaster Relief Grant (individuals and families)	<p>The NSW Government is offering a Disaster Relief Grant if you are not insured and have limited income. Grants are available for eligible individuals and families whose homes and essential household contents have been damaged or destroyed by a natural disaster.</p> <p>To be eligible for this assistance you must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be a low income earner and meet an income assets test • Demonstrate that the affected home is your principal place of residence • Not be covered by insurance • Demonstrate that the damage was caused by the disaster • Lodge the application within four months of the disaster occurring. 	<p>Claim the Disaster Relief Grant Call the Bushfire Customer Care Service on 13 77 88</p>

<p>Australian Red Cross grants</p>	<p>Financial assistance is available for bushfire-affected individuals. Applications open for cash grants until 31 December:</p> <p>Emergency grant</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • starts at \$10,000 for people who have lost their primary place of residence and up to \$20,000 for those experiencing hardship • There is no requirement for residents to provide evidence of expenditure. <p>Primary residence repair grant</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$5,000 per household where the primary place of residence has not been destroyed but needs structural repairs (inc. walls, ceilings, windows, generators, water, septic or power infrastructure). • Up to \$40,000 re-establishment grant for owner-occupiers to assist with early stages of rebuilding where primary place of residence is destroyed. • Up to \$10,000 re-establishment grant for renters 	<p>Phone: 1800 RED CROSS (1800 733 276) or 1800 268 772</p> <p>Apply at https://www.redcross.org.au/grants</p> <p>COVID-19 If you are unable to get to a Recovery Centre or to your support group/s for help with applications or documents due to COVID-19 restrictions, please call Red Cross and they will guide you.</p>
<p>Salvation Army</p>	<p>Between \$1,000 and \$10,000 for eligible individuals and families.</p>	<p>Phone: 1300 662 217 or visit www.salvationarmy.org.au/need-help/disasters-and-emergencies</p>
<p>Volunteer Firefighters' Financial Support</p>	<p>Payments are available for eligible volunteer firefighters who are self-employed or employed by a small or medium business and have lost income.</p>	<p>Claim the Volunteer Firefighters' Financial Support Call the Bushfire Customer Care Service on 13 77 88</p>
<p>Architects Assist</p>	<p>Architects Assist provides free assistance in rebuild planning to those in genuine hardship. Depending on your circumstances, the extent of free assistance may vary, from advice through to full service.</p>	<p>Find out more about Architects Assist at http://architectsassist.com.au</p>

Stamp Duty Relief	The NSW Government is providing stamp duty relief of up to \$55,000 for people who lost their homes during bushfires and who choose to purchase a replacement home elsewhere rather than rebuild. If they do decide to buy a replacement home, they can do so without the added financial burden of paying stamp duty.	Call the Bushfire Customer Care Service on 13 77 88
Motor vehicle stamp duty relief	Financial assistance is available for eligible motorists whose cars have been written off as a result of a bush fire.	Contact the Office of State Revenue on 1300 139 814 .
Legal assistance	The Disaster Response Legal Service NSW (Legal Aid NSW) can provide free legal advice to people affected by bush fires on a range of issues, including insurance, housing, credit and debt, and replacement of documents (e.g. Certificate of Title).	Contact the Disaster Response Legal Service NSW on 1800 801 529 .
Aged care legal issues	The Seniors Rights Service provides services for emergency aged care where normal services may have been disrupted. They can also assist with any legal or civil matters.	Contact the Seniors Rights Service on 1800 424 079 .
Relief funds and services	There is a wide range of relief funds and services available to help you on the road to recovery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mayoral Relief Fund (Council) on 4780 5000. Assisting local Blue Mountains residents. • Thrive Services on 4782 1555 subsidised food parcels, donated fresh food, and assistance with utility bills. • Salvation Army emergency relief team on 1300 371 288 salvationarmy.org.au • St Vincent de Paul Society Bushfire Appeal on 13 18 12
Mortgage stress and support from bank	Financial institutions and banks can freeze mortgages in times of hardship. Many institutions are also providing a range of additional financial assistance to help customers who have been impacted by bush fire. Contact your financial institution to find out what is available.	<p>Contact your financial institution directly.</p> <p>Alternatively, a list of institutions' financial hardship contact details is available online: ausbanking.org.au/policy/customers/financial-hardship</p>

<p>Rates relief</p>	<p>People that have lost their home, and small businesses that are beyond repair, are entitled to 6 months of Council Rates relief. This will cover the full cost of rates for the 3rd and 4th quarter of this financial year.</p> <p>If rates have already been paid, you will be entitled to a refund.</p>	<p>You don't need to do anything, Council and Service NSW are working together to automatically apply the land rates rebate for eligible customers.</p>
<p>Rates assistance and other charges</p>	<p>Blue Mountains City Council is offering interest free and extended arrangements for anyone unable to pay their rates, due to hardship or other circumstances resulting from bush fire. Requests will be considered on case by case basis.</p> <p>Small business affected by bush fire who have also experienced hardship, may also be able to access arrangements to have payments for rates or Sundry Debtors extended.</p> <p>Requests for change of mailing address will be accepted over the phone for bush fire affected ratepayers.</p> <p>Council rates include a levy for Domestic Waste Management, if your home has been destroyed you can apply for a pro-rata adjustment to the levy. If your home has been destroyed or is not safe for you to live in, onsite sewer management charges may be reduced.</p>	<p>For more information, contact Council and ask for the Revenue team:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phone: 4780 5000 • Email: council@bmcc.nsw.gov.au
<p>Development application fees for rebuilding</p>	<p>Fee Waiver: Blue Mountains City Council will waive development application fees for those whose homes have been lost or rendered uninhabitable in the current bush fire emergency, until the 30 June, 2021. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pre-lodgement advice • development application fees • tree removal fees • Roads Act applications fees • pool inspection fees 	<p>For more information, contact Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phone: 4780 5000 • Email: council@bmcc.nsw.gov.au

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • relief on-site sewage systems and developer contributions 	
	<p>DA exemptions – NSW Gov: Changes have been made to the Exempt & Complying Development policies to ensure people can clean up, make safe and store their belongings while they rebuild.</p> <p>Effective from 4 February 2020, works that can be carried out without Council approval include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of temporary accommodation (like caravans) for up to 2 years • Demolition of bushfire affected buildings • Temporary repairs and non-structural permanent repairs • Temporary installation of shipping containers for storage purposes (for up to 2 years) <p>Demolition of heritage items and work in a heritage conservation area will still require DA to Council.</p>	<p>For more information, contact Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phone: 4780 5000 • Email: council@bmcc.nsw.gov.au
<p>Boundary fencing shared with Crown Land / National Parks</p>	<p>Private landholders impacted by the 2019/2020 fires may be eligible to receive a grant to assist in rebuilding boundary fencing.</p> <p>The grants are available to landholders who share their boundary with public land and recipients may receive up to \$5000 per kilometre of replacement fencing. Grants can also be issued retrospectively. Public land includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National parks • Forestry Corporation land • Traveling stock reserves • Crown reserves, tenured roads and leases • Roads managed by Roads and Maritime Services or Local Government. 	<p>The grant is provided by the NSW Government’s ‘Supporting our Neighbours’ project.</p> <p>To find out more call 1300 778 080 or visit https://www.lis.nsw.gov.au.</p>

Financial assistance - businesses

Disaster Recovery Grant (businesses)	The NSW Government is offering a Disaster Recovery Grant of up to \$15,000 to primary producers, small business and not-for-profit organisations affected by the NSW bush fires.	Apply for the Disaster Recovery Grant online: raa.nsw.gov.au/grants/disaster-recovery-grants/bushfires
Business Loans	Up to \$500,000 is available for eligible businesses.	For more information, call the Bushfire Customer Care Service on 13 77 88.
Small Business Grants	If your small business has experienced a significant decline in revenue as a result of the NSW 2019-2020 bushfires, you may be eligible for a Small Business Support grant. The application process for this grant has been simplified so eligible small businesses can access funds as quickly as possible.	Apply for the Small Business Grant: https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/transaction/apply-small-business-bushfire-support-grant
Bushfire Affected Small Business Rebuild package	The Federal Government is providing \$10,000 grants to assist significantly-impacted small businesses. To be eligible, businesses must have less than 20 full-time employees and have experienced a 40 per cent drop in revenue over a three-month period, compared to the previous year, as a result of the bushfires.	For more information visit https://www.smallbusiness.nsw.gov.au/get-help/small-business-bushfire-support
Planning Reform Fees	The NSW Government is waiving Planning Reform Fees, worth an average of \$320, and is issuing free BASIX certificates which usually cost \$50, for bushfire-affected residents who need to rebuild their properties.	For more information visit https://www.bushfirerecovery.gov.au/small-business
Primary Industries Grants Program	Grants of up to \$75,000, concessional loans and transport subsidies for eligible primary producers.	For more information, call the Bushfire Customer Care Service on 13 77 88

<p>Footpath Usage – Dining/ storage fees</p>	<p>Due to the downturn of the economy and tourist trade since the recent bush fires, Council will refund or waive 6 months' worth of fees for footpath dining and storage.</p> <p>This applies to existing <i>footpath usage – outdoor dining/storage</i> license holders and will be automatically applied. Refunds will be issued week commencing 17 February.</p>	<p>For more information, contact Council and ask for the Revenue team:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phone: 4780 5000 • Email: council@bmcc.nsw.gov.au
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Replacing and repairing property

Issue	Information	Where to get help
<p>Operating from portable offices</p>	<p>Small businesses in bush fire affected communities will be able to operate from portable offices without Council approval, under the latest bush fire recovery initiative from the NSW Government.</p>	
<p>Lost fencing</p>	<p>If your land is insured Contact your insurance company to confirm if you are covered and discuss the next steps to deal with your situation.</p> <p>If your land is under insured or not insured, the NSW Public Works Advisory can help you. If you're uninsured, you can also register with BlazeAid, who have volunteers to help repair fences.</p>	<p>Contact your insurance company directly.</p> <p>If you have any questions, complaints or concerns about insurance, contact the Insurance Council of Australia on 1800 734 621.</p> <p>Contact the NSW Public Works Advisory on 1800 885 539.</p> <p>Find out more about BlazeAid a blazeaid.com.au</p> <p>Legal Aid NSW can also provide free legal advice and assistance on a range of issues. Visit legalaid.nsw.gov.au or call 1800 801 529.</p>
<p>Boundary fencing shared with Crown Land / National Parks</p>	<p>NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) offers assistance under certain conditions to repair or replace fences bordering national parks in accordance with NPWS boundary fencing policy.</p>	<p>Crown Land on 1300 886 235. NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment – Crown Land</p> <p>Legal Aid NSW on 1800 801 529 (for fencing disputes)</p> <p>Community Justice on 1800 990 777 (for queries or problems with neighbouring properties)</p>

Loss of property machinery / equipment	If your property is insured, contact your insurance company.	Contact your insurance company directly. If you have any questions, complaints or concerns about insurance, contact the Insurance Council of Australia on 1800 734 621 .
Driveway damage from RFS trucks	If your driveway has sustained damage from RFS vehicles, you will need to contact the RFS and provide evidence of the damage.	Email the RFS at webmaster@rfs.nsw.gov.au
Electricity	If you need assistance with energy supply, please contact Endeavour Energy.	Contact Endeavour Energy on 133 718 (8am – 5pm, Monday to Friday)
Replacement bins	If your bins have been damaged or destroyed due to the bush fire, they can be replaced without the normally required Statutory Declaration.	For more information, contact Council : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phone: 4780 5000 • Email: council@bmcc.nsw.gov.au
Water	Emergency potable water supplies can be made available.	For more information, contact Council : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phone: 4780 5000 • Email: council@bmcc.nsw.gov.au
Cleaning rainwater tanks	Rainwater tanks require regular maintenance and may need cleaning after a bushfire to remove fire retardant, ash etc. Residents may be able to clean rainwater tanks themselves. Instructions are available from the Sydney Water website. Sydney Water also have trained technicians that can check systems are working correctly and give advice or quotes to fix any problems. Details of the tank are needed before contacting Sydney Water, residents can check the website for requirements.	Call 1800 807 475 weekdays from 7.30am - 6 pm or email your details and address to rainwatertanks@sydneywater.com.au . Further information available on the Sydney Water webpage at http://www.sydneywater.com.au/SW/your-home/saving-water-at-home/rainwater-tanks/index.htm

<p>Refilling water tanks, dams and bores</p>	<p>If the RFS has taken water out of residential potable water tanks for firefighting purposes, the water used will be replaced. You must be able to provide evidence that the RFS took water and it cannot have been used by residents fighting fires alongside RFS.</p> <p>Once your application is verified, water will be delivered through the NSW Public Works. Please note: dams are not included in this.</p> <p>If you have bore and dam water that needs to be replenished, you can contact Local Land Services for assistance.</p>	<p>Water tanks: Contact the RFS via the Disaster Welfare Assistance Line on 1800 018 444.</p> <p>Bore and dam water: Contact Local Land Services on 1800 814 647</p>
<p>Replacing personal identification documents</p>	<p>Service NSW can replace many of your personal documents free of charge if they were damaged or destroyed. This includes birth certificates, marriage certificates, licences and number plates.</p>	<p>Contact Service NSW:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phone: 13 77 88 • Visit a Service NSW centre

Reporting hazards

Issue	Information	Where to get help
<p>Road damage and trees on roads</p>	<p>Please contact Blue Mountains City Council in the first instance, so we can confirm who owns the road. Local roads are owned and managed by Council, while other roads are managed by Transport for NSW.</p>	<p>For more information, contact Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phone: 4780 5000 • Email: council@bmcc.nsw.gov.au <p>If it is a Transport for NSW road, you can log a request online: rms.nsw.gov.au/contact-us/feedback-form.html</p>
<p>Dangerous trees on private property</p>	<p>If you have bushfire affected trees around your buildings or driveway and you suspect they may be dangerous, contact Blue Mountains City Council, and log a request to have the burnt trees assessed by a council officer to determine if they are dangerous.</p>	<p>For more information, contact Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phone: 4780 5000 • Email: council@bmcc.nsw.gov.au

Trees down on fire trails	If you find a tree that is down on a fire trail, it will be the responsibility of the RFS or NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service.	Contacts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RFS on 4560 6400 • NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service on 1300 072 757
Reporting a bush fire hazard	If you are concerned about bush fire hazards on your property, or the property adjacent to you, the RFS NSW can provide advice regarding preparing your property against bush fires and what you have to do in the event of a bush fire.	Make a report to the RFS using their online form: rfs.nsw.gov.au/plan-and-prepare/know-your-risk/Bush-fire-hazards-and-your-property/reporting-a-bush-fire-hazard

Community clubs and organisations

Sporting clubs	The NSW Government is providing concessional loans for eligible sporting clubs.	Contact the NSW Rural Assistance Authority on 1800 678 593 .
Non-profit organisations and churches	The NSW Government is providing \$15,000 recovery grants and concessional loans for eligible non-profit organisations and churches.	Contact the NSW Rural Assistance Authority on 1800 678 593 .

Finding information

Issue	Information	Where to get help
Where to find accurate information and stay up to date	<p>There's a lot of information about the bush fire crisis, and recovery processes.</p> <p>We've compiled a list of official sources, to help guide you to accurate and up to date information.</p>	<p>Fire activity and information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major fire updates danger ratings: rfs.nsw.gov.au • Fires near me: firesnearme.com <p>Road closures and status:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Live Traffic NSW: livetraffic.com <p>NSW Government emergency information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency website: emergency.nsw.gov.au <p>Local information including community meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council website: bmcc.nsw.gov.au • Council Facebook: facebook.com/bluemountaincitycouncil



Contact

Katoomba Office

2 Civic Place
Katoomba NSW 2780

Springwood Office

104 Macquarie Road
Springwood NSW 2777

Telephone

For local call cost from:
Lower Mountains (02) 4723 5000
Upper Mountains (02) 4780 5000

Postal Address

Locked Bag 1005
Katoomba NSW 2780

Email

council@bmcc.nsw.gov.au

Council Website

bmcc.nsw.gov.au

Have Your Say Website

bluemountainshaveyoursay.com.au