

# Flood Advice Newsletter

Issue 4 - 07 February 2011

Web: [www.loddon.vic.gov.au](http://www.loddon.vic.gov.au) Email: [recovery@loddon.vic.gov.au](mailto:recovery@loddon.vic.gov.au)



## LODDON SHIRE COUNCIL RECOVERY CENTRES

Loddon Shire's Recovery Centres are now closed. Please see below flood recovery contacts.



**LODDON**  
SHIRE

## FLOOD RECOVERY INFORMATION

### LODDON SHIRE COUNCIL

This Recovery Centre ceased operating from  
3.00pm - Friday 4 February 2011

For any assistance with flood related matters please  
contact the Municipal Recovery Centre

**5494 1200**

[www.loddon.vic.gov.au](http://www.loddon.vic.gov.au)

### DEPARTMENT HUMAN SERVICES

Individuals and families who have been affected by the flood  
and who have not yet had a chance to apply for an emergency grant  
due to isolation, water inundation or other extenuating circumstances  
may still be able to apply for an emergency grant of up to \$1067.

Please contact a grants officer on

**1300 165 413**

[www.dhs.vic.gov.au](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au)

### CENTRELINK

Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment

Closing date for lodgment of claim – 19 July 2011

Enquiries can be made to:

**180 22 66**

[www.centrelink.gov.au](http://www.centrelink.gov.au)

Or visit your Centrelink agency located at  
Wedderburn, Boort, Pyramid Hill or Inglewood.

## WASTE MANAGEMENT FACILITY OPERATING HOURS

From Saturday 29 January waste management facility times returned to normal. Operating hours are as follows:

### **BOORT LANDFILL** Off Boort Quambatook Road

Tuesday 8am to 12pm

Sunday 1pm to 5pm

### **DINGEE TRANSFER STATION** Lawry's Road

1st April – 30th September

Third Sunday 10am – 12pm

1st October – 31st March

First Wednesday 8am – 12pm

Third Sunday 10am – 2pm

### **INGLEWOOD LANDFILL** Inglewood Salisbury Road

Wednesday 8am to 12pm

Saturday 8am to 12pm

### **NEWBRIDGE LANDFILL** Off Tarnagulla Back Road

Wednesday 1pm to 5pm

Sunday 1pm to 5pm

### **PYRAMID HILL LANDFILL** Cemetery Road

Tuesday 1pm to 5pm

Sunday 8am to 12pm

### **WEDDERBURN TRANSFER STATION** Godfrey Street

Thursday 8am to 12pm

Sunday 8am to 12pm

Any queries regarding these times can be directed to the Building & Contracts Officer, Loddon Shire Council on 5494 1209 during business hours.

## MISSING RUBBISH OR RECYCLE BINS

If your rubbish or recycling bins have gone missing during the floods, council will be replacing them at no charge. If your bin is missing, please contact the Loddon Shire. Please ensure that you provide your name, your address and your property number which is provided on your rates notice.

## VOLUNTEER SUPPORT AND REQUEST FOR HELP

If you wish to offer your support with the flood recovery efforts, please make your offer to the Municipal Recovery Centre on (03) 5494 1200. If you require assistance with the flood recovery, we advise you to call us as soon as possible.

## WASTE ON NATURE STRIPS

Loddon Shire is offering to collect any waste that is left on resident's nature strips. This collection may take a few days. If you are living on a rural property, please call Loddon Shire on (03) 5494 1200 to arrange for collection.

## LOOKING AFTER YOURSELF

At times of risk it is important that you look after yourself. Visit the Department of Human Services for information and resources to help you during times of crisis.

[http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/emergency/current-events/flood\\_recovery/health\\_matters](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/emergency/current-events/flood_recovery/health_matters)

## HEALTH AND WELLBEING

The damage caused by heavy rain and floods and the personal impact of these events can lead to stress. Local councils and State Government are working together to deliver a range of support services to each community.

We encourage people to use the counselling services available. People who readily use formal and informal support from family, friends or other support organisations are generally found to recover better from stressful situations.

There are agencies working with council to provide community and outreach support visiting people throughout the Shire.

You can also directly contact the services listed below:

- Lifeline **Phone: 131 114**  
A 24 hour telephone service that offers confidential support and advice to deal with stress and personal challenges.
- Mental Health Assistance Line **Phone: 1300 280 737**  
A 24 hour telephone service to provide expert advice, information and referral on any mental health issue.
- Beyondblue information line **Phone: 1300 224 636**  
An information line that offers expert information on depression, how to recognise it, how to get help, how to help someone else and how to stay well.
- Mensline **Phone: 1300 789 978**  
Telephone support, information and referral service, helping men to deal with relationship problems in a practical and effective way.

## MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID COURSE AVAILABLE

Do you want to help the Mental Health of your community?

Mental Health First Aid is a 12 hour course which teaches first aid skills for mental health crisis situations and the early stages of mental health problems.

**Where:** Boort Resource and Information Centre

**When:** 6:00pm, Wednesdays 14, 21 & 28 and 4 August 2010

**Cost:** \$55.00

**Contact Name:** Alister McDougal (or Greg Currie, NDCHS, 5451 0200)

**Number:** (03) 5455 2716

**Email:** [bric.boort@bigpond.com](mailto:bric.boort@bigpond.com)

**RSVP:** 9 July 2011

**For further information visit [www.mfha.com.au](http://www.mfha.com.au)**

## CARE FOR CHILDREN (Article by Department of Human Services)

If you are concerned about the welfare of children, please call the  
Municipal Recovery Centre on (03) 5494 1200

# Trauma and children

For children, as for adults, a distressing or frightening experience can challenge their sense of security and the predictability of their world. Such events can include life-threatening car accidents, bushfires, floods, sudden illness, traumatic death in the family, crime, abuse or violence.

Children's responses to these experiences depend on a wide range of factors. Some of these include their age and stage of development, and the impact on their parents or significant others including siblings or carers.

Usually very young children are unable to understand what has happened. They may be scared, especially if the reactions of their parents or caregivers seem confusing and strange.

### Children will 'fill in the blanks'

It's a natural reaction to want to shield children from harsh realities. However, keeping a child 'in the dark' doesn't protect them from the emotional impact of a distressing or frightening event. It may even make it worse for them as children are keen observers and will realise that something is wrong, even if no one in the family talks to them about it.

If a child hasn't been given the facts they need, they will fill in the blanks from previous knowledge or experience or from their imagination. Since children are naturally self-centred, they may assume the tragedy was somehow their fault; for example, a child may think that God sent a bushfire to punish them for disobedience. In some cases, the child's construction of the events may be far scarier than what actually happened.

### Common reactions in young children

Young children often react to distressing or frightening events in physical ways. Young children, including infants and toddlers, think and feel according to their developmental level but they haven't matured the skills to articulate their thoughts and feelings to those around them.

Every child reacts differently – they may not react the way their parents or carers expect. Sometimes, distress reactions surface weeks or even months after the event. Common reactions include:

- Sleep problems such as not wanting to go to bed at night or difficulties getting to sleep, staying asleep, staying in their own bed and with

nightmares

- Changes in toileting and eating habits
- Going back to 'babyish' habits
- Changes in behaviour, such as becoming more clingy, demanding or difficult, or having temper tantrums
- Fear at being separated from their parents or carers
- Changes in their relationships with siblings, such as becoming more competitive or aggressive
- Needing to relive the trauma; for example, they may draw pictures of it or act it out.

### Common reactions in older children

Older children may play or talk about their fears and concerns, but may also express their anxiety in physical ways. All children are different, but common reactions include:

- Sleeping problems, such as nightmares
- Mysterious physical ailments, such as headaches and stomach aches
- Not wanting to go to school
- Behavioural problems at school
- Drop in academic performance
- Becoming more 'babyish' and attention seeking
- Changes in the way they relate to parents or carers: for example, becoming clingy and demanding
- Withdrawal – for example, the child may not want to discuss their thoughts or feelings in case it upsets their parents or carers, or they may spend more time alone, perhaps in front of the TV or computer.

### Common reactions in teenagers

All teenagers are different, but common reactions include:

- Feelings of shock, denial, anger and confusion
- Anxiety, particularly about the future
- Physical problems like sleeping problems, recurring stomach aches or headaches
- Depression

- Withdrawal from family and friends
- 'Acting out' behaviours – disobedience, disregard for authority, drug use or misuse, or inappropriate sexual behaviours.

### What parents and carers can do

Children look to their parents and carers to gain understanding of a situation and find appropriate ways to deal with it. Suggestions include:

- Give your child the facts about what happened and why, using age-appropriate language.
- Assist your child to play or talk about their thoughts and feelings. This also helps you to gauge whether or not they understand what actually happened or whether they have another interpretation.
- Allow your child to express their feelings to the person of their choosing and in whichever way they need to. Demanding that they do what you want will lead to friction and misunderstandings.
- Reassure them that their feelings are normal. Tell them how you're feeling too.
- You may need to explain adult reactions to stress. For example, a young child may feel bewildered by a crying parent or carer unless they know that adults cry when upset.
- Keep up regular household routines, if possible.
- Make time for pleasurable family activities.
- Remember that your child's distress reactions are usually short-lived.

### When to seek professional help

It may help to seek professional advice if:

- The family as a unit is finding it difficult to cope with the impacts and demands of the events and the follow-on
- The child's reactions, changed patterns and behaviours are intense, do not settle in a week or two or become worse, or if new ones develop
- The child talks about harming themselves or tries to harm themselves
- You are worried about your child or their wellbeing
- You are finding it a struggle to manage your reactions to the situation in your child, your

family or yourself.

- If at any time you are worried about your mental health or the mental health of a loved one, call the Mental Health Advice Line on 1300 280 737 or Lifeline 13 11 14.

### Where to get help

- Your doctor
- Your local community health centre
- Counsellor
- Psychologist
- Mental Health Advice Line Tel. 1300 280 737
- Lifeline Tel. 13 11 14
- Parentline Tel. 13 22 89
- Kids Helpline Tel. 1800 55 1800
- Nurse-on-Call Tel. 1300 60 60 24 – for expert health information and advice (24 hours, 7 days)
- Australian Psychological Society Referral Service Tel. 1800 333 497

### Things to remember

- Children's responses to distressing events depend on a wide range of factors including their age and stage of development, previous experiences, the current situation and the impact of the crisis on their parents and significant others.
- Children will realise that something is wrong, even if no one in the family talks to them about it. If they aren't given the facts, they will fill in the blanks from their own knowledge, experiences and imaginings.
- Sometimes, distress reactions surface weeks or even months after the event.

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## FLOOD ADVICE FOR LODDON MALLEE RENTERS AND LANDLORDS

Renters and landlords in the Loddon Mallee Region affected by the recent floods should contact Consumer Affairs Victoria if they need tenancy advice. Tenants and landlords can get advice in person from Consumer Affairs Victoria's office in Mitchell Street, Bendigo or by phoning (03) 5444 2038. For further information about residential tenancy matters, view the Consumer Affairs website at [www.consumer.vic.gov.au](http://www.consumer.vic.gov.au), and visit the Disaster Frequently Asked Questions renting page, or call 1300 558 181.

## ASSISTANCE FOR FLOOD AFFECTED SMALL BUSINESS

SMALL BUSINESS VICTORIA

The Victorian Government is providing financial support and business assistance to flood affected small business owners to help them clean up, recover and rebuild. This assistance is available to businesses affected by the 2010 and the 2011 floods.

### Financial assistance includes:

- \$25,000 clean up and restoration grants** for eligible primary producers, small businesses and not for profit organizations; and
- low interest loans of up to \$200,000** through the Rural Finance Corporation.

To access this assistance contact the Rural Finance Corporation on **(03) 5448 2600** or go to [www.ruralfinance.com.au](http://www.ruralfinance.com.au)

### Business assistance

Small Business Victoria (SBV) is offering business assistance through a panel of business advisers, at no cost to businesses that have been impacted by the 2010 and 2011 floods.

### Business assistance may include:

- Working with business owners to assess the overall impact on business viability;
- Support business owners in dealing with insurance coverage issues;
- Investigating any government assistance that the business owner can access;
- Support in handling communication with employees, customers and suppliers;
- A review of the business's financial position; and
- Working with business owners to develop a plan to reopen their business or not.

### How can I get business assistance?

Call the **Victorian Business Line** on **132 215** and they will register your details and arrange for a business adviser to contact you.

**OR**

Go to [www.business.vic.gov.au/floods](http://www.business.vic.gov.au/floods) > Register for business assistance > Register online, then enter your contact details and press Submit. On receipt of your email a business adviser will then telephone you to discuss your situation and needs and arrange a meeting with you at your flood affected business, or the business adviser may be available at a central location so that a number of businesses in your area are also able to meet with the business adviser.

For more information and resources to assist your business go to: [www.business.vic.gov.au/floods](http://www.business.vic.gov.au/floods) or call the Victorian Business Line on 132 215.



# loddon campaspe community legal centre

## Legal Advice for people affected by floods

### Free Legal Support Services

1. Loddon Campaspe Community Legal Centre  
Mon-Fri 9am-5pm  
5444 4364 or 1800 639 121  
[www.communitylaw.org.au/loddoncampaspe](http://www.communitylaw.org.au/loddoncampaspe)
2. Victoria Legal Aid  
Mon-Fri 8.45am-5.15pm  
9269 0120 or 1800 677 402  
[www.legalaid.vic.gov.au](http://www.legalaid.vic.gov.au)
3. Insurance Law Service  
Mon-Fri 9.30am-4.30pm  
1300 663 464  
[www.insurancelaw.org.au](http://www.insurancelaw.org.au)

### Community Legal Education

Service providers who are assisting flood victims can contact our Community Legal Education Worker, Steve Womersley, on 5444 4364 if they would like to organise a lawyer to attend community meetings, information sessions etc.

### Key Legal Messages for Affected Residents

1. If you have an insurance contract that you believe covers you for flood damage, you should make a claim as soon as possible. Your insurance company must expedite your claim if you are in urgent financial need. Even if the claim is rejected, you may be reviewed at no cost by the Financial Ombudsman Service (FOS).
2. If your insurance policy excludes floods, you may still be able to claim for water related damage.

### Online Legal Resources

The Loddon Campaspe Community Legal Centre's website (URL above) has direct links to online legal resources for those affected.

## REPAIRING A BUILDING AFTER A FLOOD

(Information from the Building Commission) [www.buildingcommission.com.au](http://www.buildingcommission.com.au)

### Before starting

Most importantly, do not attempt to re-enter the house or undertake repairs until floodwaters have receded to a safe level and authorities permit access to the area.

Before entering any building, evaluation of safety aspects must be made by the relevant authorities. This includes:

- Structural integrity
- Electricity (remembering that even where power has been turned off by the authorities, solar power systems may still be active in individual homes)
- Gas safety
- Water
- Sewerage services.

### NOTE OF CAUTION:

If flood waters have reached the ceiling level of your house or the ceiling has become damp due to capillary action of absorption water from the plaster on the walls – **DO NOT ENTER THE HOUSE** as the ceiling may collapse.

## CAUTION UPON ENTERING FLOOD AFFECTED AREAS

- Wait until authorities have declared the area safe before entering a flood zone. Before entering your house, wait until water has fallen below floor level.
- Wear rubber boots (or at least rubber soled shoes) and rubber or leather gloves.
- If you are going into an insulated area notify the proper authorities.
- Check with electricity, gas and water authorities to determine whether supplies to your area have been interrupted and are safe to be turned on by you. If the water supply system has been flooded, you must assume it is contaminated.
- Indoors or out, under flooded or damaged conditions, treat every electrical item with the greatest respect. Every source of electricity can be extremely damaged under flood conditions.
- If travelling through a flood zone, observe overhead electrical lines for broken wires or evidence of arcing. Avoid power lines if possible.

## NEW FLOOD RECOVERY EMAIL ADDRESS

Please be advised of Loddon Shire's new Flood Recovery Email address:

[recovery@loddon.vic.gov.au](mailto:recovery@loddon.vic.gov.au)



# Flood Relief Contact Numbers

## LODDON SHIRE COUNCIL

**Loddon Shire Council Municipal Recovery Centre - 5494 1200** or [www.loddon.vic.gov.au](http://www.loddon.vic.gov.au)

**Loddon Shire Council - 5494 1200** *To arrange roadside rubbish collection and fire permits.*

**Loddon Shire Volunteer Line - 5494 1200 or 0407 337 251** *To register for assistance, to volunteer and notify of lost and found items*

## EMERGENCY GRANTS

**Department of Human Services - 5434 5555 or 1300 842 737** or [www.dhs.vic.gov.au/emergency](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/emergency)  
*For emergency grants. Please note that this number is very busy and may take you some time to speak to an operator.*

**Rural Finance - 5448 2600**  
*For grants of up to \$25,000 for clean up and restoration for small businesses, farms and not for profit organisations.*

**Centrelink - 180 22 66** *For grants and centrelink payment advice.*

## COUNCELLING / SUPPORT SERVICES

**Lifeline - 131 114** or [www.lifeline.org.au](http://www.lifeline.org.au)

**Parentline - 13 22 89** or [www.parentline.vic.gob.au](http://www.parentline.vic.gob.au)

**Kids Helpline - 1800 55 1800** or [www.kidshelp.com.au](http://www.kidshelp.com.au)

**Mental Health Assistance Line - 1300 280 737**

**BeyondBlue Information Line - 1300 224 636**

**Mensline - 1300 789 987**

**Rural Financial Counselling Services - Ted Gretgrix - 5442 2424 or 0408 506 406**

## OTHER SERVICES / ORGANISATIONS

**Telstra - 13 22 03** *To divert your landline to your mobile.*

**Inglewood and District Community Bank - 5438 3500**

**Department of Primary Industries - 136 186**

**Red Cross - 1800 173 349**

**Fodder Contact - 0428 351 413 - Loddon Mallee, Richard Leitch of Landmark**