

Update from the Community Recovery Officer

How are you holding up in the midst of all the swirl?

The year has been challenging to say the least and 2020 put many to the test. On the other side many have grown and realised how resilient they are.

However this time looks for you, and what memories the dates on the calendar represent, I hope you are coming out the other side wiser, impressed by your strengths, feeling more confident that you can handle whatever comes, and aware that the journey doesn't mean going it alone.

2021 will be a year of partnership, collaboration, and advancement for you. If there is any way that I can be a resource to you, please know you are welcome to reach out.

I'm always happy to hear from you.

Rachel Nicoll - Community Recovery Officer (02 6354 9960).



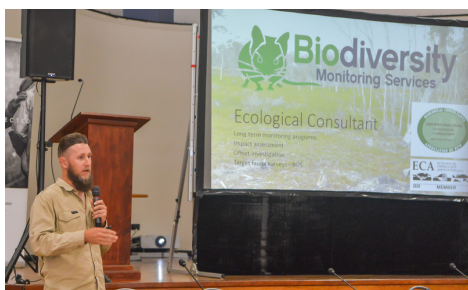
Lithgow Bushfire Recovery & Community Day

On 5-6 December, Lithgow Council held the inaugural Bushfire Recovery and Community Day.

The event attracted 325 across the weekend and 35 services and agencies involved in the immediate or longer-term bushfire response effort in attendance. A BIG shout out and thank you to everyone who participated and contributed over the weekend.

If you missed the event, you can view photos, hear from Resilience NSW Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons and listen to the ABC Radio Podcast on Council's website at <https://council.lithgow.com/bushfire-event/>

Highlights and recordings of the sessions will be available shortly. If anyone would like information or slides from our speakers please contact Recovery@Lithgow.nsw.gov.au



GRANTS

Bushfire Legal Aid Scheme



The Commonwealth Government is providing funding for legal assistance to NSW primary producers and small businesses dealing with legal issues relating to the 2019/2020 bushfires.

Eligible small businesses and farmers can apply through their lawyer for a grant to assist with their legal costs. A grant of \$2000 per legal matter is available for legal services and an additional \$5000 is available for disbursements.

Funding extensions are available in reasonable circumstances. An eligible business or primary producer with more than one bushfire related legal matter may receive more than one grant for legal services and related expenses.

For more information on the scheme including eligibility requirements and how to apply, please refer to the [fact sheet](#) or visit disasterhelp.legalaid.nsw.gov.au.



NAB announces further funding for communities impacted by bushfires

The National Australia Bank has announced new support initiatives for its customers affected by natural disaster.

A new \$1.2 million NAB Foundation Community Grants program is now available to help customers both prepare for and recover from natural disasters, including fire, floods and cyclones, as well as support long-term recovery efforts and build resilience against future disasters.

It follows survey results from NAB which found 1 in 2 businesses are still feeling the impacts of last summer's bushfires.

For more information visit:
<https://www.nab.com.au/about-us/social-impact/community/nab-foundation-and-grants>

Nepean Blue Mountains PHN (NBMPHN) Community Wellbeing Grants

NBMPHN Community Wellbeing Grants will allow communities to choose their own way to respond to the losses, anxiety and distress they have experienced, as well as actively participate in their recovery.

Individuals (not organisations or businesses) directly impacted by the 2019/20 bushfires within the Blue Mountains, Hawkesbury and Lithgow areas can apply for up to \$1000 to conduct an activity in their area that meets the Grant Objectives.

Grant Applicants are responsible for carrying out the activities described in the application form and identifying an appropriate non profit organisation that can auspice the application.

The Application form and guidelines are available at: nbmphn.com.au/communitygrants

COMMUNITY WELLBEING GRANTS

for community-led activities that help support mental health, wellbeing, resilience and recovery for communities affected by the 2019/20 bushfires in the Blue Mountains, Hawkesbury and Lithgow areas.

Reconnect with your community

Apply for: BBQs | Art Classes | Music Lessons | Yoga | Social Events | DIY Classes | Playgroup | Gardening | Working Bees | Nature Walks and more!

Small Grants of up to \$1,000 available
www.nbmphn.com.au/CommunityGrants

phn NEPEAN BLUE MOUNTAINS PHN
Wentworth Healthcare
Blue Mountains | Hawkesbury | Lithgow | Penrith

The Community Wellbeing Grants are supported by funding from the Australian Government's Mental Health Supports for bushfire affected Australians.

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RESOURCES

Step by Step services over the Christmas holiday break

Step by Step will operate an on-call service over the public holidays (i.e. Christmas day, boxing day, New Year's day) and will continue to operate outreach services over the school holidays with slightly reduced staff levels.

Step by Step will continue with the regular newsletter and email updates to residents in Greater Sydney.

To access Step by Step Recovery Support Service:

-  Phone: 0417 298 832
-  Email stepbystep@gatewayfamilyservices.org.au
-  Facebook:
-  Step by Step - [Disaster Recovery Support Service](#)


Life After Bushfires

Life After Bushfires is a resource developed by SANE AUSTRALA that provides tools and support including factsheets and blogs on bushfire recovery. There's tips on making community connections, accessing services and support, and self care.

Visit <https://www.sane.org/lifeafterbushfires>




In their words

Bushfire survivors from the NSW South Coast share their stories of the bushfire's impact on their mental health. Check out the videos below 




Support

Talk anonymously to our trained counsellors for free, via phone or online support 




Bushfire Forums

24-7 connection with peers who understand what you're going through, via online, moderated anonymous forums 



Information and guidance

Information, guidance and suggestions for trauma recovery, services and support 

Endeavour Energy - Bushfire and Storm Safety Campaign

Endeavour Energy has launched its bushfire and storm safety campaign, called **Simple Steps for a Safer Summer** in keeping customers and communities safe and well informed.

The campaign provides a number of tips and advice for a safer bushfire and storm season, particularly regarding your electricity supply.

More information from Endeavour Energy visit: [Simple Steps for a Safer Summer](#)

Simple steps for a safer summer



STORM CHECKLIST

- Secure loose items that could become airborne.
- Keep trees and shrubs pruned and away from powerlines.
- Clean your gutters and check for broken tiles and leaks.
- Buy a portable mobile phone charger.
- Keep a battery-operated torch and radio handy.
- Turn off outdoor electrical appliances at the power point.
- Know the location of your fuse box.



BUSHFIRE CHECKLIST

- Clean gutters of flammable material.
- Clear flammable vegetation and items from around your house.
- Keep trees and shrubs pruned and away from powerlines.
- Buy a portable mobile phone charger.
- Keep a battery-operated torch and radio handy.
- Close-off wind drafts under the house and enclose eaves.

Emergency and customer support numbers

For an emergency: Triple Zero (000)
 SES emergency help in storms and floods: 132 500
 RFS bushfire information line: 1800 679 737
 Endeavour Energy emergency line: 131 003

SURVEYS

NSW Business Survey for Bushfire Impacted Areas

Resilience NSW and Service NSW are surveying businesses in communities impacted by the 2019/20 bushfires to understand how businesses are recovering, what support is being accessed and what is still needed.

The results will help identify future responses for supporting businesses during a disaster and value your feedback.

The survey will take approximately 6 minutes to complete. To complete the survey, please click on the link below:
[NSW Business Survey for Bushfire Impacted Areas](#)

To view the range of assistance currently available to bushfire-affected businesses, please visit the Service NSW bushfire support hub at: <https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/campaign/business-support-bushfire-impacted-communities>.

You can also call 13 77 88 to speak to a Service NSW Business Concierge or visit <https://mybusiness.service.nsw.gov.au/concierge> to register for a call back at a time that suits you.

Landholder Survey in the Central Tablelands Local Land Service Region 2020-21

Central Tablelands Local Land Services would like to invite landholders to participate in its Landholder survey.

Central Tablelands landholders or land managers, have the opportunity to put forward the most important issues facing your land and/or community.

The information and insights you give about the opportunities and issues facing your land, farming business and lifestyle are incredibly valuable. Central Tablelands Local Land Services want to better understand what's important to you, how you operate your farm and live on your land, as well as what's changing on your land or with your farm business.

Your feedback will help to determine focus areas for program and services planning for the next three to five years and inform the new Local Strategic Plan.

Complete the survey online:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WF2ZRMG>

Or by requesting a printed copy from your local Central Tablelands Local Land Service office.

The survey closes 1 March 2021



Fake tradies

Fake tradies (also known as ‘travelling con men’) are unscrupulous tradespeople who offer to do repairs on your property but take your money and leave you with unfinished or poor-quality work.

Fake tradies often appear after disasters such as bushfires, floods and storms. They may try to take advantage of you if you are cleaning up or repairing your property, and offer to do jobs like driveway resurfacing, branch removal or roof repairs at cheap rates.

What to look out for

You should be suspicious of anyone who:

- Asks for cash up front
- Only provides their first name and mobile number
- Offers to do the work cheaply, as they have materials left over from another job
- Offers to do the work immediately as another job has just cancelled
- Knocks on your door or talks to you while you’re in your garden, offering to do the work ‘on the spot’
- Offers to drive you to the bank to get money to pay for the job
- Pressures you to accept their offer.

Fake tradies often use sophisticated tricks to scam you. Some of these tricks include:

- Flyers and business cards with fake Australian Business Numbers and business/licence registration numbers
- Fake websites.

How to protect yourself from a fake tradie

There are a number of ways you can protect yourself:

- Check their business registration/trade licence online at fairtrading.nsw.gov.au/help-centre/online-tools/home-building-licence-check or by calling **13 32 20**
- Ask for the tradesperson’s business contact number, so you can call to confirm that the tradesperson is an employee
- Ask a suspected fake tradie to leave. If they refuse, they are breaking the law and you can call the police.

Finding a reputable tradesperson

When searching for a reputable tradesperson, you should:

- Get at least three quotes from three different businesses
- Use established tradespeople who provide written quotes
- Ask your friends and neighbours for recommendations
- Avoid signing any agreement until you are ready.

Be wary of anyone offering you a ‘today only’ deal to carry out repairs for cash, particularly after disasters.



To find out more or report a fake tradie:

Stop travelling con men is a campaign to help identify travelling con men or fake tradies and protect the Australian community from misleading and deceptive conduct. All Australian state and territory consumer protection agencies are involved.

Visit the [Stop Travelling con men Facebook page](#) for more information.

If you are approached by someone you suspect to be a con man, call the national hotline on

1300 133 408

(8:30 am to 5:00 pm,
Monday – Friday)

or visit scamwatch.gov.au/report-a-scam