

Community Newsletter

Tuesday 1st November 2022

Information about the flood emergency

Echuca-

- The Murray River Echuca Wharf is 94.83m. The levels at Echuca are slowly falling. River levels in the Murray in the Echuca to Barham section is likely to stay high for one to two weeks.

Rochester

- River levels have receded. Work continues on the set up of the temporary village at the Elmore Event Centre to ensure locals have safe and secure housing close to home.

Torrumbarry

- The level at Torrumbarry will remain around 7.85m for the next week. Works have been completed to reinforce the levee and these will continue to be closely monitored.

Government services are available at the relief centre in Echuca and at the Rochester Resource Centre. There is also a food bank available at the Presbyterian Church in Rochester also. Recovery works have commenced across the region.



Echuca and Rochester

The drinking water in Echuca and Rochester is currently safe to consume.

- With ongoing wet conditions and flooding, it's recommended you set aside 20-40 litres of drinking water in suitable containers to meet the drinking water needs for your household.
- To prevent the sewer network being overwhelmed, Coliban Water are asking all Echuca residents to minimise their use of anything that produces wastewater, including toilets, showers, baths, dishwashers & washing machines.
- The Rochester sewer network is now partially operational. While the network has been partially restored, the service is likely to be unreliable and you may experience outages.

Cohuna, Gunbower and Leitchville

The drinking water in Cohuna, Gunbower and Leitchville is safe to consume.

- Coliban Water have undertaken precautionary measures to protect critical community water and sewer assets. Much of this infrastructure in Cohuna, Gunbower and Leitchville is underground and can be impacted by floodwater.

Boort and Pyramid Hill

The drinking water is safe to consume.

- Coliban Water completed precautionary actions to protect some of their assets in Pyramid Hill. This included sand bagging around sewer pump stations
- Latest updates, town-by-town, on the Coliban water website at 10am and 4pm each day at www.coliban.com.au/latest-updates.

Relief / Information / Resource Centres

- **Echuca Relief Centre**
Stadium 244 High Street Echuca
Phone:0400215375
- **Swan Hill Relief Centre**
15 Gray Street Swan Hill
Phone: 0447094347
- **Rochester Resource Centre**
Racecourse Recreation Reserve
Northern Highway, Rochester
- **Foodshare**
Rochester Presbyterian Church
2 Victoria Street, Rochester

Infectious Diseases

Floodwater can contain poo and other waste which can cause infections or diseases. To reduce your risk of illness:

- Never use floodwater or water that may not be safe to wash dishes, brush your teeth, wash your hands, wash and prepare food, make ice or make baby formula
- Always wash your hands with soap and safe water when preparing and eating food, after clean-up activities and after touching items wet or damaged by floodwater or sewage.
- If you have an open cut or sore, keep it clean with soap and cover with waterproof dressings. Speak to a doctor for advice if it has been exposed to floodwater or mud.
- Seek medical attention if you have any symptoms of gastro, flu-like symptoms, or if any wounds become red and infected.

Find out more:

www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/emergencies-floods

Wildlife

You may see animals attempting to move to higher ground, including snakes. Leave all uninjured wildlife alone as they are likely to be fatigued and stressed. If you see animals that appear injured or caught in flood water, call 136 186 or via the Wildlife Emergency App.

Flood Recovery Hotline

The Flood Recovery Hotline is a single state-wide number for Victorians affected by the October 2022 floods. It can help with:

- navigating available support
- clean-up
- temporary accommodation
- mental health and wellbeing support

Call 1800 560 760

The Flood Recovery Hotline is open from 7.30am to 7.30pm every day.

Emergency relief payments

<https://services.dffh.vic.gov.au/personal-hardship-assistance-program>



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Mosquito-Borne Disease

Reduce your risk of getting a disease from mosquitoes:

- Wear loose, light-coloured clothes and covered shoes when you are outside.
- Apply insect repellent containing DEET or Picaridin on any skin that's not covered.
- Reapply insect repellent often, especially if you have been sweating or have got wet.
- Use insecticide sprays indoors and mosquito coils outdoors.



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Find out more:

www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/mosquitoes-can-carry-diseases

[maybe add links to bgo health](#)

Japanese Encephalitis Virus (JEV)

- There is currently no evidence of JEV in mosquitos in flood-affected areas.
- The Department of Health continues to undertake JEV surveillance activities in partnership with local governments.
- The Loddon-Mallee Public Health Unit (LMPHU) is working with the Department of Health to increase accessibility of JEV vaccination for eligible staff and volunteers working in flood affected areas.
- Should JEV be detected, LMPHU will provide further advice.
- Keep informed by signing up to Department of Health Chief Health Officer alerts
<https://www.health.vic.gov.au/subscribe>



Flood Safety Advice



SES advises that all community members should:
Never walk, ride or drive through floodwater.
Never allow children to play in floodwater, stay away from waterways and stormwater drains during and after heavy rain.

Keep well clear of fallen power lines.
Current Emergency Information is available at <http://emergency.vic.gov.au>

For emergency assistance contact the SES on 132 500.

For Commercial and Recreational Users of the Murray River:

The NSW State Emergency Service have declared an emergency area on the Murray River for areas downstream of Tocumwal Road Bridge to Barham Bridge under the state Emergency Services Act 1989 (NSW) (SES Act).

Do not enter the emergency area. This applies to all commercial and recreational users.

Visit the NSW SES website for information:
<https://www.ses.nsw.gov.au/news/all-news/2022/emergency-area-declared-murray-river/>

Mould and Your Health

Flooding, excess moisture and pooled water can cause mould growth in your home. This may be a health risk for you and your family. When returning to your home after a flood, be aware of any visible mould or a musty smell. High mould levels are likely if the house has been flooded for more than two days. Seek advice from your insurance company before you start to clean-up, including the disposal of water or mould-damaged items.

What should I wear to protect myself from mould in a flooded home?

If you are visiting your house to collect belongings, inspect for damage or to do basic clean-up over short periods:

- wear sturdy waterproof footwear with rubber soles and rubber or leather gloves
- If you are particularly sensitive to mould exposure, wear a respirator.

Cleaning Up Mould:

If you decide to remove the mould yourself, make sure there is good ventilation and wear protective clothing such as a shower cap, rubber gloves, eye protection, overalls, suitable footwear and a P1 or P2 face mask (available from your hardware store). For information on how to clean up and remove mould go to Mould removal at home at visit the below link

<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/mould-removal-at-home>

Agriculture Victoria

Agriculture Victoria is assisting rural landholders with agricultural relief needs – with a priority on addressing urgent animal welfare issues.

Contact the Vic Emergency Hotline 1800 226 226

Financial support for flood-affected farmers A support package is available for flood-affected farmers:

<https://agriculture.vic.gov.au/farm-management/emergency-management/floods/flood-advice-and-support>



When Returning to your Home

- Teams will be assessing damage and working with service providers to restore major services as quickly as possible
- **Electricity: Only turn on power at the mains if water has not entered your property.** Have wiring and appliances tested and tagged before use.
- **Gas: If your home has been impacted by floodwater, do not attempt to turn the gas supply back on.** Gas lines may contain water and must be checked by the distribution company. Contact details can be found on the top right of your gas bill.
- ADF personnel are on the ground supporting SES and CFA with the clean up tasks in the Echuca community.
- If you have lost power for a prolonged time due to flooding, you should not consume food from your fridge or freezer. Throw out food that has touched floodwater or has an unusual smell, colour or texture, do not taste or cook it.



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COVID 19

COVID-19 is still active in our communities. Remember to maintain hygiene, hand washing and wear masks when feeling unwell or when you can't social distance.

Useful information

Know Your Local Council

Find your council using the link below for the latest information

<https://knowyourcouncil.vic.gov.au/>

Emergency relief payments

<https://services.dffh.vic.gov.au/personal-hardship-assistance-program>

Service Aust payments

Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment and Disaster Recovery
[Victorian Floods, October 2022 - Natural disaster - Services Australia](#)

Nurse-on-call

Nurse-on-Call on 1300 60 60 24 (this is a phone service that allows you to discuss any health-related issue with a registered nurse, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for the cost of a local call from anywhere in Victoria).

Stay informed of conditions and be prepared to act if your situation changes.

- www.emergency.vic.gov.au
- VicEmergency Hotline – free call 1800 226 226
- VicEmergency app
- Facebook or Twitter (#vicHAZARD)

To access this information in other languages call the Translating and Interpreting Service on 131 450 (free call) and ask them to call VicEmergency Hotline.

If you are deaf, hard of hearing, or have a speech/communication impairment contact National Relay Service on 1800 555 677 and ask them to call the VicEmergency Hotline

Mental health

It is normal to have strong emotional or physical reactions following a distressing event. There is always help available through your local doctor and local mental health professionals.

Mental Health Support

[Lifeline](#) - 131 114

[Beyond Blue](#) - 1300 224 636

[MensLine](#) - 1300 789 978

[Kid's Help Line](#) - 1800 55 1800

[Parent Line](#) - 13 22 89

Australian Red Cross

<https://www.redcross.org.au/help/>

Family violence

There is an increased risk of family violence after an emergency. Help is available. Visit www.vic.gov.au/familyviolence or call 1800 737 732 (1800RESPECT).

Power outages www.powercor.com.au/power-outages-and-faults/live-outage-map/

Telstra has activated disaster assistance packages for customers in the impacted areas. See links for updated information Telstra Disaster Assistance -

<https://exchange.telstra.com.au/victoria-tasmania-flooding-disaster-assistance-2022/>

Road closures www.traffic.vicroads.vic.gov.au

SES www.ses.vic.gov.au

Coliban Water <https://coliban.com.au/latest-updates>

Latest River Heights for the Campaspe, Loddon, Avoca, Murray - Riverina

http://www.bom.gov.au/cgi-bin/wrap_fwo.pl?IDV60149.html



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School closures

Information on updated school closures is available via the Dept of Education website:

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/health/Pages/closures.aspx>

Flood event: Support for children, students and families

Supports and resources are available to government school students and families affected by the 2022 Victorian flood event.

<https://www.vic.gov.au/flood-event-support-children-students-and-families>



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