



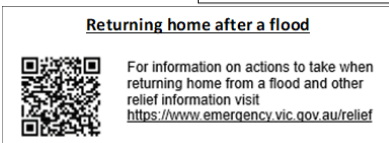
## Swan Hill Rural City Council Community newsletter – Thursday 24 November 2022

This newsletter is for communities in Victoria.

For information & warnings relevant to NSW, please check [www.ses.nsw.gov.au](http://www.ses.nsw.gov.au)

Catchments are saturated following recent rainfall, with flooding and elevated river levels continuing in many locations. Storages are full and releasing water, making rivers more likely to respond quickly to further rainfall. For update weather forecasts check [www.bom.gov.au](http://www.bom.gov.au)

Please refer to the following websites or scan the QR Code for updated information.



### Online interactive map

View the map at [www.swanhill.vic.gov.au/flood-maps](http://www.swanhill.vic.gov.au/flood-maps) to check if you are in an at-risk area and see where levees are located. People north of Piangil to Boundary Bend should use the *Mid Murray 1% AEP Flood* layer for an indication of where floodwaters may reach, and those around Robinvale and Wemen should use the *Mid Murray 2% AEP depths (m)* layer.

Actual flooding observed will differ from that shown. We encourage all people in at-risk areas to develop a flood plan in response to this event.

**Wildlife** - if you see animals that appear injured or caught in flood water call **136 186** or download the **Wildlife Emergency App**.

### Levee safety

Be careful around levees. Prolonged water pressure on levees, like we are experiencing, can cause sections to collapse without warning. Please report issues with levees directly to VICSES or Swan Hill Rural City Council.

- Call VICSES on **132 500** to report emergency levee overtopping and breaches.
- Call Council to report other concerns with levees, such as low points or seepage.

### Sandbag distribution points

People in at-risk areas should call **132 500** to request sandbags if your property is at risk of flooding or you require any other support.

### Financial assistance

- Rural Financial Counselling Service provides agricultural industries and small rural businesses with free, confidential and independent planning and support services. Call **1300 045 747** for assistance.
- To apply for a Victorian Emergency Relief Assistance Payment and understand eligibility criteria, [complete the online application form](https://emergencypayments.dffh.vic.gov.au) at <https://emergencypayments.dffh.vic.gov.au>. To understand if you are eligible for Emergency Re-establishment payments call Flood Recovery Hotline **1800 560 760**.
- If you require assistance relating to insurance, please call the Insurance Council Australia's Disaster Hotline on **1800 734 621**.

### Relief and recovery

- An Emergency Relief Centre (ERC) is established at the Swan Hill Basketball Stadium and is available 24 hours, 7 days. Phone: **0447 094 347**.
- People wanting a structural assessment of their property can register at [www.vic.gov.au/register-structural-assessment-october-2022-floods](http://www.vic.gov.au/register-structural-assessment-october-2022-floods)

**Rural Aid** provides farmers with support, including confidential counselling, fodder, domestic water, financial assistance and by providing access to volunteers through Farm Army – register [online](https://www.ruralaid.org.au) at or call **1300 327 624**.



## Health and safety

### Drinking water

Lower Murray Water advise that people may notice discolouration in their water due to blackwater within the Murray River. Please be assured that your urban water remains safe to drink and is tested to comply with Australian Drinking Water standards.

However, due to poor raw river water quality, treatment plants are taking longer to bring water to standards, so **please conserve water** where possible due to the current treatment challenges.

### Wellbeing, recovery and support

It is normal to have strong emotional and physical reactions following a distressing event. Support is available to help you recover.

**Flood Recovery Hotline** to access a range of services including mental health and wellbeing support. . Call **1800 560 760** and press 9 if you require an interpreter. 7:30am – 7:30pm

Remember, there is always help available via:

- Your GP or local mental health professionals
- Lifeline 131 114
- Beyond Blue 1300 224 636
- MensLine 1300 789 978
- Kid's Help Line 1800 55 1800
- Parent Line 13 22 89

### Road closures and travelling in the area

Numerous roads have been impacted and are closed.

Updated information is available via **13 11 70** or <http://traffic.vicroads.vic.gov.au>

### Murray River closure

The Murray River is closed downstream of Hume Dam to Nurtram Billabong (Hattah). This applies to all river users. No boats can enter the river and people cannot enter for recreational purposes such as fishing or swimming.

### Mosquito-borne disease

Mosquito-borne diseases in Victoria include the Ross River Virus, Barmah Forest Virus, Murray Valley Encephalitis (MVE) and Japanese Encephalitis Virus (JEV). MVE AND JEV can cause severe illness and death in some people. Your only protection against mosquitoes and the diseases they carry is to avoid mozzies bites:

- Cover up as much as possible - wear long, loose-fitting clothes.
- Use an effective mosquito repellent containing DEET or picaridin on all exposed skin.
- Prevent mosquitoes from getting inside by using fly screens on windows and doors.
- Use mosquito coils or insecticide candles in small, outdoor areas.
- Floodwater is toxic - **never play or swim in floodwater**. Wear protective clothing when cleaning up. Infectious diseases including gastrointestinal infections and Hepatitis A can spread from contact with contaminated floodwater. A small cut can easily get infected and make you very sick.

- Be aware of **hazardous trees** in the area resulting from soft ground, erosion of roots on levee banks and high winds.
- **Snakes** look for shelter and food in flooded areas. Be careful around houses and sheds near floodwater. Call DELWP on 136 186 for advice on snake controllers in your area. If someone is bitten, call Triple Zero (000) immediately.
- **Mould** poses a risk to health, growing in damp and poorly ventilated areas. The risk of mould being present in your home after flooding is high.

**Asbestos** can be found in fibre cement sheeting and pipes, vinyl floor tiles, electrical parts and roof materials. It is not always possible to tell if a material contains asbestos by looking at it. If you are disposing of flood-related waste and are in any doubt whether it might contain asbestos:

- Do not disturb the material
- Prevent others from disturbing the material.

We recommend you use a licensed asbestos removalist to clean-up. They know how to remove and dispose of asbestos safely, without risk to you and your neighbours. If you are using a contractor to remove asbestos, they must be licensed by WorkSafe Victoria.

If you're considering doing the clean-up yourself, follow advice available for homeowners at [Asbestos Victoria](#), including the asbestos identification tool: <http://ow.ly/imOt50LiLQY>.

### Used sandbag disposal

- Clean sandbags: Residents can keep clean and dry sand for reuse at their residence.
- Smelly or visually contaminated sandbags can be disposed of at the Swan Hill Landfill free of charge.
- Always wear gloves when handling used sandbags and other flood-related waste. Go to [www.epa.vic.gov.au](http://www.epa.vic.gov.au) for more information.