

THE GRANITE NEWS



The Granite News - serving the communities of Caveat, Highlands, Hughes Creek, Ruffy, Tarcombe, Terip Terip & Whiteheads Creek.



27th June 2026 | Volume 20 Issue 43

Welcome, Wumindjika & G'day

STOP PRESS!

You know how sometimes the best laid plans of mice and men just don't happen - **WELCOME** to an extra, extenuating circumstances issue of The Granite News coming to you on a Saturday no less due to, amongst other things, a very important event happening at Creighton's Creek tomorrow.

So sit back, relax, grab a bevy of choice and enjoy the unexpected read.

If you know of someone who needs to be kept in the loop but isn't a TGN reader please tell them to sign up at pdphroberts@gmail.com
The editor@tgn.org.au email is still dysfunctional.

Kia kara,
Pauline.



Taking time to reflect - 6 Months On

Join Creightons Creek Recovery Group's community morning tea on
Sunday 28th June
to reflect upon 6 Months On after the January bushfires.

Enjoy a cuppa together from 10am as we connect with one another and hear from Anne Leadbeater, who will share insights on community recovery, remembrance, and rebuilding.

This will be a relaxed and supportive space to:

Reflect on the past six months

Connect with others in the community

Hear from an experienced recovery practitioner

Look ahead to the next phase together

Anne is a nationally recognised leader in disaster recovery and community resilience. She is known for her work following Victoria's 2009 Black Saturday bushfires, where she helped coordinate recovery for the Kinglake Ranges communities.

Her work was later recognised as best practice in the Victorian Bushfires Royal Commission. In 2014 Anne was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for her service to disaster affected communities.

She currently supports Strathbogie Shire & Murrindindi Shire recovery teams.

Enquiries: recovery@strathbogie.vic.gov.au

Feedback?

pdphroberts@gmail.com or to
subscribe on-line go to
www.hccclandcare.net.au

The Granite News is an open but moderated community forum. Readers are encouraged to contribute articles and we also encourage you to air your views on things that interest or concern you within our community. We certainly welcome feedback from you, positive or otherwise on anything that is published in The Granite News

"Experience is simply the name we give our mistakes."

Oscar Wilde (1854 - 1900)

Irish writer and playwright



Final reminder....

Did you know that you may be eligible for a **20% discount** on your car registration.

It needs to be a light vehicle and privately owned.

Go to Service Victoria website or app.

<https://service.vic.gov.au/services/registrations-rebate>

I've got mine \$\$\$ - Ed.

		What's On - June & July 2026
Details? See p.1	Sunday 28 th June @ 10am	CREIGHTON'S CREEK COMMUNITY - TAKING TIME TO REFLECT - 6 MONTHS ON
	Sunday 28 th June @ 10am	HIGHLANDS RAMBLERS meeting @ Highlands Hall/Hub Everyone is welcome to come and explore our still stunning local area. Supported by HCCC. Enquiries? Andrew 0437 249039 or Robyn 0409 528235
	Monday 29 th June @ 1pm	RUFFY VEGE GROWERS' MEETING @ 190 Red Gate Lane Orchard removal @190. New members welcome. Enquiries? Cheryl 0409019763
Details? See p.12	Every Saturday in July @ 6.30	EUCHRE CARD NIGHTS ARE BACK AGAIN!! @ Terip Rec Reserve
Details? See p.12	Thursday 2nd July @ 6pm	TERIP COMMUNITY POT LUCK DINNER @ Terip Rec Reserve
Details? See p.9	Saturday 4 th July @ 11.30am	HEARTY SOUP & FRIENDLY GAMES @ Highlands Hub/Hall
Details? See p.10	Sundays 5 th & 12 th July	COMEDY & CONVERSATIONS @ BOTH Yarck 5/7 & Ruffy 12/7
	Monday 6 th July @ 1pm	CRAFTERNOON is back to stay! @ the MASH tent, Ruffy Hall
Details? See p.11	Saturday 11 th July 1 - 3.30pm	PAINT by WONDERS @ Highlands Hub/Hall
	Monday 13 th July @ 11am	HIGHLANDS-CAVEAT SPINNING CLUB @ 450 Caveat Dropmore Rd Tea, coffee, hugs and friendship still available to all. Jan & Ruby 5790 4361
	Thursday 30 th July @ 5.30	SECRET MENS' BUSINESS @ Michael K's 890 Caveat-Dropmore Rd All people in the district are welcome, pink note (\$5) donation towards BBQ. BYO & chat.
	Tuesdays @ 5.30pm	MAT PILATES with Anastasia @ Highlands Hall Bring your own mat/towel and water bottle. Cost \$15 Enquiries? Anastasia 0436 428065
	Sundays @ 11am	CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY GATHERING @ 44 Yorston Rd, Highlands This is a non-denominational meeting, Everyone is welcome to this calm, compassionate and open environment. Tea, coffee & lunch provided. Enquires? John - 0425 840999
	Every Second Wednesday 10-30-12.30	MURRINDINDI MOBILE LIBRARY SERVICE @ Highlands Community Hall The Mobile Library visits the TGN area, based at the Highlands Hall every fortnight. Why not pop in? Forthcoming dates 8 th & 22nd July and 5 th & 19 th August



**** HIGHLANDS ****

The Hub @ the Highlands Hall is open
Wednesday 10am to 2pm & Saturday 9am to noon
1603 Ghin Ghin Road, HIGHLANDS VIC 3660
Email: thehighlandshub2026@gmail.com



The Hub has a NEW phone number - 0491 941005 - new messages will come from this number

Please note NEW opening times for the Hub

NEW TIMES Wednesday 10-2 and Saturday 9-12 NEW TIMES

What's On... July 1st – July 11th

Wednesday, July 1st

- **10am – 2pm – Community Support & Recovery Drop-In**
 - **GV Family Care:** Drop in for a calm space to set goals and get connected with case management, disaster legal help, insurance advocacy, financial counselling, and grant registrations.
 - **PCC Emergency Recovery Team:** On hand to handle the heavy lifting of paperwork, simplify grant applications, and navigate hardship options.

Saturday July 4th

- **HIGHLIGHT EVENT 11:30am– New Monthly Winter Warmer Lunch!**
- **Where:** At the Hall.
- **Details:** To help shake off the winter chill, we are officially kicking off our monthly community lunch! Come join us for a hot, hearty bowl of soup, a warm drink, and a relaxed catch-up. We will also have cards and board games on hand if you fancy a friendly game. It's the perfect excuse to get out of the house, stay cozy, and catch up with neighbours. Please spread the word!

Tuesday, July 7th

- **5:30pm – Weekly Mat Pilates with Anastasia**
- **Where:** Highlands Hall
- **Details:** Bring along your own mat or towel and a water bottle. Cost is \$15 per session. Enquiries: Call Anastasia on 0436 428 065.

Wednesday, July 8th

- **10am – 2pm – Community Support & Recovery Drop-In**
GV Family Care & PCC Emergency Recovery Team: On site at the Hall to handle paperwork, simplify grant applications, and provide financial or legal hub connections.
- **10:30am – 12:30pm – Murrindindi Mobile Library**
- **Details:** Restock your bedside table or grab some fresh reads for the kids while the mobile library is parked right at the Hub.

Saturday, July 11th

- **1pm – 3:30pm – Paint by Wonders Workshop**
- **Details:** Come as you are - no skills required! Chat and enjoy the wonder of immersing yourself in colour and shape. **FREE workshop, all materials provided PLUS a yummy afternoon tea!**
- **Facilitator & Funding:** Mary White (Art & Family Therapist); generously funded by Sisters of Mercy Parramatta.
- **Bookings: Essential (Max 20).** To register, call or text **Andrea Bauer on 0417 369 225**

***** Printed copies of TGN are now available from the box beside the notice board outside the hub *****
Contact: Andrea Bauer 0417 369 225



Highlands and District Community Recovery Association Inc.

Your Community. Your Voice. Your Recovery.



The Highlands Relief Hub Inc. has transitioned to the Highlands and District Community Recovery Association Inc. — a community-led organisation working to support recovery, resilience, wellbeing, and connection across our district.

Why Join? NO MEMBERSHIP FEE

As a member, you can:

- ✓ Have a voice in shaping our community's future
- ✓ Support local recovery and resilience initiatives
- ✓ Stay informed about projects, workshops, and opportunities
- ✓ Connect with others who care about our community
- ✓ Participate in events, activities, and working groups

Recovery Work Already Underway - Everyone is welcome to get involved.

Our community working groups are currently focusing on:

- 🏠 Temporary Housing
- 🌳 Dangerous Trees & Property Safety
- 🗣️ Community Communications
- 👥 Community Events & Wellbeing

Your Membership Matters

A strong membership base helps us:

- Represent the community effectively
- Advocate for local needs and priorities
- Strengthen funding applications
- Build partnerships with government and service providers

The more members we have, the stronger our community voice becomes.

How to Join

Membership forms are available:

- At The Hub
- At community events
- Online via Facebook, email, SMS and the Highlands Hub website

OR Click on either one of these links....

<https://tinyurl.com/2zp54vnn>

<https://tinyurl.com/mr3wu33w>

NB: As the membership form needs to be personally signed (not electronically) you will need to print it off, fill it in and sign to complete.

Annual General Meeting

📅 Thursday 27 August ⌚ 7:00 pm 📍 Highlands Hall

Members will elect the Association's Committee and help guide future priorities.

Together We Can Build Back Stronger

Join us in creating a stronger, more connected, and more resilient Highlands community.

Highlands and District Community Recovery Association Inc. ✉ thehighlandshub2026@gmail.com

☎ 0491 941 005 🌐 www.highlands-hub.org.au



HIGHLANDS FIREWOOD UPDATE: 3 WAYS TO SECURE WOOD

As the cold sets in, the Hub team has been working hard behind the scenes to secure firewood for fire-impacted residents in our community. We now have three distinct options and updates on how you can access wood or get involved:

Planning for Larger Loads (Survey): The Hub team is currently in discussions with community organisations to secure large loads of dry firewood. To help us map out who needs wood, who can collect it, and who might need delivery assistance, please take two minutes to fill out our quick, confidential survey: <https://forms.gle/fnJPyj3NGyJKShnG8>

Saturday Working Bees in Tallarook (Ready-to-Burn Wood): Want to get involved or get dry wood sooner? A supply of ready-to-burn firewood has been sourced for fire-impacted residents, but we need some muscle to get it ready! Come along, bring your mates, and help cut wood to be delivered to Highlands residents in need—and take some home for yourself, too. **Contact Sam at 0439 695 632.**

Open Community Collection Days at the Highlands Woodlot: Firewood from Mitchell Shire's roadside recovery operations (following the January 2026 Longwood Fires) is available for pickup directly from Highlands Rd (not at the Hub).

Please note: This wood may be green and require time to season before burning.

Guidelines: Available to local fire-affected residents within the Highlands (3660) area on the dates listed in the schedule below. No bookings required. Please bring photo ID/proof of residency and your own vehicles/trailers to load your own wood.

For questions, call Council's Fire Recovery Team on 5734 6200 or see <https://createsend.com/t/i-22CE6B7823A178672540EF23F30FEDED>



Firewood Collection Dates and Details

Friday, July 3rd

9am - 2pm - Highlands Woodlot Open Collection Day **Where:** Highlands Rd site
(See guidelines in the update above).

Saturday, July 4th

9am - 2pm - Highlands Woodlot Open Collection Day **Where:** Highlands Rd site.

Saturdays (Contact for Time) – Tallarook Firewood Working Bee
Details: Help cut ready-to-burn wood. **Contact Sam (0439 695 632).**

Friday, July 10th

9am – 2pm – Highlands Woodlot Open Collection Day **Where:** Highlands Rd site.

Saturday, July 11th

9am – 2pm – Highlands Woodlot Open Collection Day **Where:** Highlands Rd site.

Saturdays (Contact for Time) – Tallarook Firewood Working Bee
Details: Help cut ready-to-burn wood. **Contact Sam (0439 695 632).**

Women's Health Mobile Clinic now in your community

Free and confidential, 45-minute women's health consultations with a Nurse Practitioner

This service is available to women of all ages and teenagers

- Cervical and bowel screening
- Contraception (IUDs & Implants)
- STI testing and treatment
- Pregnancy options
- Menopause and bladder health
- Pelvic pain and irregular bleeding
- Any other women's health concerns

Location and dates

From 1 - 24 July

Alexandra
Alexandra District
Health



Yea
Yea & District
Memorial Hospital



Outreach clinics will also be held in:

• Marysville • Flowerdale • Kinglake • Eildon • Yarck • Toolangi • Highlands



To book scan the QR code
or call **03 9675 0050**
or visit breastscreen.org.au/whmc

Hearing or speech difficulties TTY 13 36 77
Interpreter support 13 14 50



⚠ URGENT CLOSING SOON: JUNE 30th DEADLINES ⚠

A reminder for our community that several important financial grants and emergency recovery services are coming to an end at the end of the month. Please check these dates to ensure you don't miss out:

Drought Infrastructure Support Grant (Rural Finance): Applications close June 30th.

Find guidelines and apply here:

<https://www.ruralfinance.com.au/grants/>

\$1,000 VERRF Payment: The Victorian Emergency Relief and Recovery Foundation support closes on June 30th.

Check your eligibility and apply:

<https://www.vic.gov.au/apply-victorian-emergency-relief-and-recovery-foundation-support>

Free Bushfire Waste Disposal: Free disposal at Council Resource Recovery Centres is scheduled to finish on June 30th.

While Council is actively calling for another extension, make sure to utilise this service before the deadline just in case. More details:

<https://www.murrindindi.vic.gov.au/Community/Safety-and-Emergencies/January-2026-Fire-Longwood/Support-for-residents/Bushfire-waste-disposal-in-Murrindindi>

Women's Health Mobile Clinic now in your community

Womens Mobile Health Clinic Schedule

		1st July YDMH	2nd July Yea	
6th July ADH	7th July Alexandra	8th July Alexandra	9th July Marysville	10th July Marysville
13th July Eildon	14th July Eildon	15th July Highlands	16th July Flowerdale	17th July Yea
20th July Yarck	21st July Alexandra	22nd July Kinglake and Toolangi	23rd July Yea	24th July Yea

Murrindindi Mobile Health Van

Hospital, either ADH or YDMH
Suitable for people requiring disability access



To book scan the QR code or call **03 9675 0050**
or visit breastscreen.org.au/whmc

Hearing or speech difficulties TTY 13 36 77
Interpreter support 13 14 50



📝 Ongoing – Regional Recovery Survey 📝

Our neighbours at the Tablelands Fire Recovery Hub need our input on the Clean-Up Program, recovery progress, and temporary housing.

Your responses help our Hubs collectively advocate to local councils for the resources our regions actually need.

👉 Share your thoughts here:

<https://forms.office.com/r/67tpSzmV9S>



**** RUFFY & TERIP ****



TABLELANDS FIRE RECOVERY HUB KEY DATES

Upcoming dates

Please note - Tablelands Fire Recovery Hub current days of operation

Every Tuesday - Open and volunteers in attendance 10am - 3pm

Visiting services include:

- Primary Care Connect,
- Family Care,
- Mental Health Wellbeing Local (Josh)
- Strathbogie Shire (every second Tuesday)

(Other services also attend and Visiting Services attendance can be subject to change)

**Cuppa and Chat every Tuesday at the Tablelands
Fire Recovery Hub 10.30am all welcome!**



Friday Night Community Dinners

The fire recovery, cleanup and temporary homes survey has been extended.

Link: <https://forms.office.com/r/67tpSzmV9S>



Sunday July 12th - Be there!!

Comedy and connection with Warren Davis, Des Dowling AND Dave O'Neill - **See p.10 for details**

The famous Terip Trivia Night is back!



Date: Saturday 1st August

Location: Terip Recreation Reserve

Cost: \$15 per person

Supper: Included

Alcohol: BYO



Whether you bring a full table or come along on your own, we'd love to see you there. Individuals are welcome and can join a team on the night.

Bookings: Email: teripterip3719@gmail.com OR Text Frances: 0427 904 262

RSVP Deadline: Sunday 26th July

There will also be the opportunity to purchase an answer during each round for \$5 per answer.

Please keep an eye on the Terip Facebook page for updates and event information.
We look forward to seeing you for another fantastic night of trivia, fun and community spirit.

Letter to the Editor

From Tasmania's Walls of Jerusalem to Victoria's Yarra Ranges, from the Blue Mountains to the Adelaide Hills and even the outskirts of Perth – **FERAL DEER** are reshaping Australia's landscapes at an alarming rate.

I'll be chairing the session, where I'll provide an update on our advocacy in the ACT and New South Wales – including our efforts to increase funding statewide and stop deer from pushing into the Blue Mountains World Heritage Area. You'll also hear from Invasive Species Council staff across the country:

Dr Tiana Pirtle (Tasmania) – on the launch of a major new economic report revealing that feral deer could cost Tasmania up to \$1.4 billion over the next 30 years, with current annual costs already exceeding \$53 million in the Midlands and eastern regions alone. Tiana will walk through what these figures mean for farmers, road users and native wildlife.

John Kelly (Victoria) – on building a powerful alliance with farmers and conservationists, keeping deer on the agenda for the upcoming state election, and what it will take to remove deer from the Wildlife Act.

James Johnston (South Australia) – on SA's world-leading eradication program, the funding cliff, and how close SA is to finishing the job.

Reece Pianta (Queensland and Western Australia) – on the growing threat in Queensland and the rare chance to stop deer in WA before the west coast faces the same crisis as the east.

Even if you can't attend live, register anyway – we'll send a recording to everyone who signs up.

Thank you for standing with us,

Jack Gough — CEO

Invasive Species Council

Double click on this link >>



** Chemical Users' Course **

The Centre in Seymour is currently taking enrolments for a Chemical Users Course, which is well suited to those working in—or looking to enter—the agricultural or horticultural sectors.

Course Details:

Dates: 4th & 5th August 2026

Location: Seymour Cricket Club – Ken Hall Pavilion Kings Park, Tallarook Street, Seymour

Time: 9am – 4pm



Why complete this training?

- ✓ Meet mandatory compliance requirements for agricultural chemical use
 - ✓ Build confidence in safe handling, storage, and application
 - ✓ Obtain or renew an AgVet Chemical Users Permit (ACUP)
- ✓ Eligible participants pay just \$60 thanks to government funding

This course offers a practical and cost-effective way to remain compliant and confident when using agricultural chemicals.

If you would benefit from this opportunity, I'd be more than happy to provide further information.

Please feel free to contact Nanette on 5721 0200 or email - nanette.collins@thecentre.vic.edu.au



WINTER WARMER COMMUNITY LUNCH



FREE COMMUNITY EVENT!



WHEN: Saturday, July 4th
Starting at 11:30 AM



WHERE: Highlands Hall
(1603 Ghin Ghin Road, Highlands)

No bookings required - just show up!

Hearty Soup & Friendly Games



COMEDY & CONVERSATIONS

Laugh. Listen. Connect.

An afternoon of laughter, storytelling
and meaningful conversation to
strengthen our rural communities
and support mental health.

*Dave O'Neil
Comedian*

*Des Dowling
Comedian*

*Warren Davies
The Unbreakable Farmer*

📍 **YARCK**



Sunday 5 July

📍 **RUFFY**



Sunday 12 July



12:00PM – 3:00PM



**DOORS OPEN
11:30AM**



**MURRINDINDI
MOBILE HEALTH VAN
ON SITE FROM 11:00AM**



**A LIGHT
MEAL WILL BE
SUPPLIED**

Whether you're doing it tough, supporting someone who is, or simply
looking to reconnect with your community, this event offers a welcoming
space to laugh, share stories, and strengthen connections.

Bring your mates. Bring your family.
LET'S RECONNECT, LAUGH AND HEAL TOGETHER.



More dates to be announced


Alexandra
Events Corporation Ltd



PAINT BY *Wonders*

FREE WORKSHOP

Saturday 11th July, 2026
1pm to 3.30pm

Come as you are, no skills required,
Chat and enjoy the wonder of immersing yourself in colour and shape.

All materials provided PLUS Yummy afternoon tea!

EVENT FUNDED BY SISTERS OF MERCY PARRAMATTA
FACILITATED BY MARY WHITE ART AND FAMILY THERAPIST

Numbers are limited to 20 maximum.

Bookings Essential:

TO REGISTER CALL or TEXT ANDREA BAUER on 0417369225

Where: Highlands Hub
1603 Ghin Ghin Road, Highlands VIC



CELEBRATING 50 NAIDOC WEEK

NAIDOC WEEK 50 YEARS DEADLY

5-12 JULY 2026

Yea Wetlands Discovery Centre

SUNDAY 5 JULY

10am: Welcome and Smoking Ceremony

with Aunty Angela ten Buuren

- Followed by an immersive sculptural walk in the wetlands
- Light lunch to complete the morning

A free event but bookings necessary for catering

FRIDAY 10 JULY

10am: Children's Craft Activity

Bush toy weaving for primary school aged children with artist Cassie Fisher Patterson from Wild Blak Arts/Yanggurdi \$10

1pm: Adult Art Activity

Plant ink painting with artist Cassie Fisher Patterson from Wild Blak Arts/Yanggurdi \$25 (\$20 concession)

BOOKINGS & EVENT DETAILS

Scan to book all NAIDOC Week activities or visit yeawetlands.com.au/NAIDOC2026

RSVP by 1 July - Welcome & Smoking Ceremony

RSVP by 6 July - Art Activities

Yea Wetlands Discovery Centre
Taungurung Country
2 Hood Street, Yea
03 5797 2863

YEAWETLANDS DISCOVERY CENTRE

Murrindindi Shire Council

Planting days in Gobur, Vic.

BirdLife Australia's **Birds on Farms (Yarra to Yea)** project are seeking volunteers for two planting days in Gobur, just north of Yea. Both properties were affected by the January 2026 bushfires and are looking to rehabilitate, whilst creating habitat for birds and other wildlife.

Both properties have approx. 300 plants to get in the ground and they would love some assistance! The planting days will be held over the weekend of July 11 & 12. Volunteers are welcome to come for one day, but can also come to both if keen (maybe make a weekend of it in lovely Yea!). Details below.

Planting day 1
When: Saturday 11th July 2026, 9am to 2pm.
Lunch provided!
Where: 160 Frees Rd, Gobur

Planting day 2
When: Sunday 12th July 2026, 9am to 2pm.
Lunch provided!
Where: 461 Frees Rd, Gobur

What to bring: Sturdy footwear, gardening gloves, water bottle, snacks, warm and wet weather clothes, and binoculars for a spot of birdwatching if you like.

RSVP for both events caroline.wilson@birdlife.org.au

This project is made possible through Equity Trustees and other philanthropic contributions. This project is also supported by the Upper Goulburn Landcare Network.

uppergoulburn landcare network

birdlife AUSTRALIA

Save Birds. Save Life.

birdlife.org.au

Some Things to Consider...

H5 Bird Flu - Situation Update - Friday 25th June 2026

Victorians are being urged to stay alert following confirmation of H5N1 high pathogenicity avian influenza (H5 bird flu) in wild birds in Western Australia and South Australia. At this stage, there is no evidence that the virus has spread beyond migratory birds, and it is too early to say whether H5 bird flu is established in Australian wildlife.

This is a significant development as it is the first time this strain of bird flu has been detected in Australia. It is a highly contagious strain that can cause serious disease in birds and some other wild animals.

There are currently no detections in Victoria and no evidence of any mass mortality in wildlife or spread to other animals in Western Australia. There has been no detection in poultry.

The current risk of bird flu to people in Australia is low. Bird flu is not a food safety risk for chicken meat and eggs if they are handled and cooked correctly.

As we have seen the global spread of the H5 bird flu virus, Victoria has been focusing on preparedness and is well-advanced in support of early detection, assessment and response. If you see something unusual, don't ignore it.

What you can do

For poultry:

If you suspect avian influenza in poultry, call the Emergency Animal Disease hotline on **1800 675 888**.

For birds and wildlife:

- AVOID contact with sick or dead wild birds or wildlife and their environment
- RECORD what you see
- REPORT wildlife sickness or deaths to DEECA using this form, scan QR code or call the Emergency Animal Disease Hotline on **1800 675 888** in line with the guidance below.

What to report:

Report clusters of 5 or more sick or dead wild birds of any species, anywhere in Victoria.

Report even one:

- wild seabird, waterbird, shorebird or bird of prey.
- marine mammal (e.g. seal, sea lion, dolphin).

Following a report, DEECA will assess each report and decide if testing is needed. We understand this may be distressing, but every report is useful.



Further resources

Agriculture Victoria – Information about bird flu in Victoria:

agriculture.vic.gov.au/biosecurity/animal-diseases/poultry-diseases/avian-influenza-bird-flu

Agriculture Victoria – H5 bird flu factsheet:

agriculture.vic.gov.au/biosecurity/animal-diseases/poultry-diseases/avian-influenza-bird-flu/avian-influenza-factsheet

Victorian Department of Health – Avian influenza:

health.vic.gov.au/infectious-diseases/avian-influenza-bird-flu

DEECA – H5 bird flu:

wildlife.vic.gov.au/sick-injured-or-orphaned-wildlife/high-pathogenic-avian-influenza

Australian Government:

birdflu.gov.au

Wildlife Health Australia – Avian influenza:

wildlifehealthaustralia.com.au/Incidents/Incident-Information/Alert-H5N1-H5-bird-flu-global-outbreak

NB: Although there hasn't been any H5 detection in Victoria we have lost too much beautiful wildlife from the HCCC area since January so please be alert, not alarmed, to this situation. Ed.

Call to extend free bushfire waste disposal until June 2027

Murrindindi Shire Council is urging the Victorian Government to extend free bushfire waste disposal at Council sites until **30th June 2027**.

Council says ending the current support on 30th June 2026 would prematurely withdraw recovery assistance and shift the financial burden directly onto fire-affected residents, many of whom are still cleaning up from the January bushfires.



By the end of June 2026, Council expects to have received about 14,000 tonnes of bushfire debris at its landfill - equivalent to around seven years' worth of landfill in just a few months, placing significant and unplanned pressure on local infrastructure and resources.

Mayor Cr Damien Gallagher said the extension is needed to avoid shifting recovery costs onto residents who had already been through enough.

"Recovery does not happen to a government deadline," Cr Gallagher said.

"Many people are still working through insurance, demolition, safety issues, contractor availability and the emotional toll of what has happened. It would be deeply unfair to make them pay full disposal costs from 1st July simply because their clean-up is taking longer."

Without an extension, Council would need to charge the full gate fee from 1st July 2026. For construction and demolition waste, that would rise to \$362.59 per tonne in 2026/27. These fees include the cost to Council to operate the landfill, GST and the State Government EPA levy of \$155.95 per tonne. This effectively transfers state-imposed costs onto disaster-affected communities unless intervention occurs.

Cr Gallagher said Council's request was practical, fair and time-limited.

"This is not an open-ended subsidy. It is a targeted extension to help people finish the job safely, legally and without being hit with costs they cannot avoid," Cr Gallagher said.

"Behind every load of fire-damaged waste is a household trying to rebuild, a family trying to move forward, or a property owner trying to make their land safe again."

The State Government, through Forge Solutions contractors, continues to work through the devastating impact on the community. However, many properties have been deemed ineligible for State-supported clean-up, leaving owners to manage the work and costs themselves.

Emergency Management Victoria figures from 16th June show 291 properties in Murrindindi have registered for clean-up, with 125 eligible for State Government assistance. Of those eligible properties, 78 are either underway or complete.

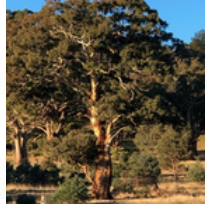
Council says many other properties, including sheds and outbuildings, are not eligible for State support but still need to be made safe and cleaned up.

Council says removing support too soon could delay clean-up, increase risks of illegal dumping and place more pressure on residents already dealing with the long road to recovery.

Council is calling on the State Government to fully fund the disposal of debris from the clean-up, including reimbursing Council landfill operating costs and waiving the EPA levy, to ensure disposal remains free for residents and does not create a secondary financial impact from the disaster. This is consistent with the arrangements for previous disasters in Victoria.

Cr Gallagher said the extension would give residents certainty and help the clean-up continue safely and responsibly.

"Our community has carried enough. Extending free waste disposal until June 2027 is a simple, fair step that would make a real difference," Cr Gallagher said.

HABBIES HOWE BEEF Mature, Well Hung and Available from: Victory Meats, Seymour Victory Meats, Broadford Scotch and Fillet, St Helena Scotch and Fillet, Mentone	 Donated by supporters of the magnificent King Parrots.	DE MARIA & ASSOCIATES Barristers & Solicitors Family Law Conveyancing Power of Attorney & Wills Estate Disputes Deceased Estates ☎ 03 9717 5277 Level 1, Suite 111 95 Hazel Glen Drive, Doreen Vic 3754 Justice@demariaandassociates.com.au	 Donated by Friends of Yellow Box (Eucalyptus Meliodora)
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We thank the Taungurung ancestors and elders who, for millennia, have cared for this country on which we now live, work & play. May the current generations of Taungurung, HCCC residents & landowners continue this important custodianship into the future.