



Community Information Newsletter Number 9 Latrobe Valley Open Cut Mine Fire

HAZELWOOD OPEN CUT MINE FIRE

Firefighters continue to work around the clock, supported by aircraft. Efforts will be focussed on continuing to reduce the fire and smoke within the coal mine in order to protect the community and infrastructure.

85% of the fire has been contained. The focus over the next few days will be continuing to consolidate the northern batters (wall) and the eastern end of the southern batter (wall), to ensure smoke reduction towards the Morwell area.

EMERGENCY RELIEF INFORMATION

COMMUNITY RESPITE CENTRE (pictured below)

**Moe Town Hall,
Albert Street, Moe**

Open hours 9:00am to 6:00pm every day

This centre is for you to use if you would like temporary relief from the smoky conditions. The centre is air conditioned and we encourage residents to use it.



COMMUNITY INFORMATION AND RECOVERY CENTRE:

A Community Information and Recovery Centre in Morwell has also been opened at 22 Hazelwood Road, Morwell.

Opening hours are 9am – 6pm daily.

HEALTH ASSESSMENT CENTRE

**Regional Office Ambulance Victoria Gippsland
2 Saskia Way, Morwell** (pictured top right)
(Next to the Mid-Valley Shopping Centre)

Opening hours 8.00am to 8.00pm every day

Visit this centre if you would like a free health assessment in relation to the effects of the mine fire and the smoky conditions.

The centre has increased its numbers of staff to accommodate the community needs. Qualified nurses and paramedics will offer primary health assessments, including basic respiratory, blood pressure, heart rate and temperature checks. Should anyone require medical care they will be referred to either their own Doctor or to Latrobe Regional Hospital.



RELOCATION ASSISTANCE

Relocation assistance is available for Morwell residents south of the railway line affected by the Hazelwood open cut mine fire.

The Department of Human Services will arrange suitable accommodation for those identified as 'at risk' who can't find their own accommodation. This will be found as close to Morwell as possible.

Contact the Department of Human Services hotline on **1800 006 468** for more information.

LATROBE CITY COUNCIL UPDATE

Latrobe City Council has been able to ramp up door to door visits to residents across Morwell, thanks to the aid of a small army of volunteers from other Victorian Councils, the Victorian Council of Churches and the Red Cross.

There are now 42 people working in pairs in an attempt to reach as many community members as possible. The purpose of the visit is to answer questions, understand community concerns and help connect residents with support that is available to them.

Many residents are completing a survey which Council is using to record resident issues and advocate for solutions what will assist them.

As of Tuesday evening, the door to door team has reached almost 2,000 houses and spoken with hundreds of residents, with work to continue in the coming days.

Council is working with local event organisers to create opportunities for residents to take a break from the smoky conditions. Upcoming events include the *Sale Music Festival on Sunday 9 March* and the *Fiddlehead Festival in Yinnar on Saturday 15 March*. Bus transportation will be offered. Further details can be found at: http://www.latrobe.vic.gov.au/Our_Community/Fire_Floods_and_Other_Emergencies/Fire/Take_a_break_from_the_smoke

Council is also working with the Victorian Government Contact Centre to provide a match making service for residents seeking respite and accommodation owners offering properties. Community members seeking or offering respite accommodation can phone **1300 366 356** to find out more about the program.

FREE VLINE TRANSPORT

Morwell residents are able to get free transport on 18 return train services between Morwell and Melbourne each weekday.

If you are interested in taking up the offer, you can get a free ticket from the VLine staff at the Morwell Station.

For further information, please contact **1800 800 007**.



FREE ENTRY OFFERS

Morwell residents seeking respite from the smoky conditions caused by the Hazelwood open-cut fire are being offered free entry into Museum Victoria venues including Melbourne Museum, Scienceworks and the Immigration Museum.

Morwell residents can obtain free entry to these venues by showing address identification at the ticket counters, initially for the month of March.

This offer complements the range of free arts experiences already on offer at Victorian arts agencies:

Arts Centre Melbourne (St Kilda Road): *Beatles in Australia Exhibition* (from 8 March): An exhibition charting the Beatles' famed 1964 tour of Australia. Features newsreel footage, television reports, magazine clippings and rarely seen objects for fans and collectors.

Australian Centre for the Moving Image (Federation Square): *Screenworlds*: an interactive exhibition which tells the story of the development of film, television and digital culture.

National Gallery of Victoria (St Kilda Road and The Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia at Federation Square): *Melbourne Now* the largest exhibition ever staged at NGV featuring work from the artists, designers, architects who have shaped Melbourne. Access to the stunning permanent collection is also free.

State Library of Victoria (Swanston St): See everything from rare books and manuscripts to a collection of treasures including New Kelly's armour. Also on show is *Rome: Piranesi's vision* an exhibition of exquisite rare artworks from 18th-century Italian master-printmaker Giovanni Battista Piranesi.

FREE P2 MASKS

Available at the following locations:

Morwell

St Vincent de Paul, Latrobe City Headquarters, Morwell Library, Morwell Leisure Centre, Morwell Neighbourhood House, Bendigo Bank, Morwell Bowling Club and other retail outlets.



Moe

Respite Centre at the Moe Town Hall
...and at *Community Information Points*.

For further information about face masks, visit www.health.vic.gov.au/hazelwood/index.htm

It's important to note that face masks only come in one size so be aware children may find them difficult to fit and wear properly. Please visit the website to get more information.

INFORMATION SESSIONS AT MORWELL NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE

Weekly information sessions regarding the fire situation and the health implications.

Dates:

Tuesday 11th March 10am – 11am

Tuesday 18th March 10am – 11am

Tuesday 25th March 10am – 11am



Tea, coffee and biscuits will be available.

For further information contact the Morwell Neighbourhood House on **5134 5488**

FREE ASTHMA MEDICATION

The Asthma Foundation of Victoria, in partnership with GSK, Bird Healthcare and The Pharmacy Guild, have arranged for free reliever medication, and where appropriate, a spacer to be made available to local residents from selected pharmacies in Morwell and Churchill.

For further information, please contact the Asthma Foundation on 1800 278 462 (1800ASTHMA)

VICTORIAN WORKCOVER AUTHORITY ADVISORY SERVICE

The Victorian Work Cover Authority is advising workplaces to stay up to date with public health information and air quality alerts issued by the Department of Health and the Environment Protection Authority (EPA).

The Department of Health and the EPA are providing advice for the entire community, so employers can keep abreast of any developments that might affect their staff.

For information on workplace safety, please phone the VWA Advisory Service on **1800 136 089**.

SMALL BUSINESS MENTORING

Latrobe City Council, together with Small Business Victoria, is offering local small to medium businesses the opportunity to sit down with an experienced business mentor to discuss their concerns.

Date: Tuesday 11th March

Location: Latrobe City Council's corporate headquarters, 141 Commercial Road, Morwell

To arrange a mentoring session call: **1300 367 700** (Latrobe City Council) or email: busdev@latrobe.vic.gov.au

Further mentoring sessions will be available and future dates will be advised.

ASSISTANCE FOR MORWELL SMALL BUSINESSES

Small Grants will be available for businesses with less than 20 employees.

For more information or to register your interest call the Business Victoria on **13 22 15** or visit www.business.vic.gov.au

EPA AIR QUALITY MONITORING UPDATE

Since the fire, EPA Victoria has doubled its air quality monitoring efforts, with 19 fixed and mobile air monitoring stations and devices to measure air quality now in place. The monitoring locations have been selected to ensure they are in the right places to capture overall air quality, to get the most accurate data possible.

This accurate, evidence-based data is provided by EPA scientists to the Department of Health, to assess potential health risks and impacts. This advice is then given to Latrobe Valley residents with any actions required.

Twice-daily air quality forecasts are available on the EPA website at www.epa.vic.gov.au/aq-latrobe-valley-mine-fire

IMPORTANT NUMBERS TO REMEMBER

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.

Department of Health 1300 761 874

Visit: www.health.vic.gov.au/hazelwood/index.htm

Department of Health have developed a dedicated webpage and a range of resources relating to smoke and health.

The Department of Human Services

A range of support services including personal, emotional, psychological and financial help.

Visit <http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au>

EPA Victoria 1300 372 842 (24 hours)

Visit: www.epa.vic.gov.au

Asthma Foundation 1800 278 462.

Visit: www.asthma.org.au

Latrobe City Council 1300 367 700

Visit: <http://www.latrobe.vic.gov.au/Home>

VicRoads 131170 or the VicRoads website:

<http://traffic.vicroads.vic.gov.au/>

STAY INFORMED

Victorian Bushfire Information Line (VBIL)

Freecall **1800 240 667**.

National relay Service on **1800 555 677**.

For the latest warnings and advice messages:

VicEmergency: www.emergency.vic.gov.au

Facebook: [facebook.com/cfavic](https://www.facebook.com/cfavic)

Twitter: [@CFA_Updates](https://twitter.com/CFA_Updates)

Local ABC radio **100.7 FM**