

Unite & Recover

Mine fire recovery 2014

13

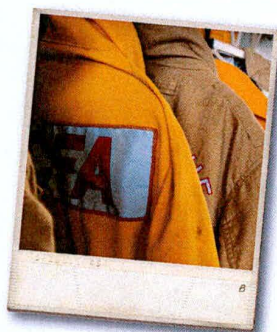
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For more information:
Community Information
and Recovery Centre
1800 017 777
Hazelwood Road, Morwell

recovery.vic.gov.au
latrobe.vic.gov.au
health.vic.gov.au
epa.vic.gov.au
worksafe.vic.gov.au
esv.vic.gov.au

The information contained within this document has been provided by the Department of Health, Department of Human Services, Environment Protection Authority, Victorian Work Cover Authority (WorkSafe), Energy Safe Victoria, Gippsland Water and Latrobe City Council. Information is correct as at March 2014



NEWSLETTER

Fire Update

On Tuesday 25 March, after a tremendous fire fighting effort, the CFA officially declared the mine fire 'safe' and handed management back to GDF Suez. This means that the CFA is confident the mine fire is no longer a threat to residents. CFA will continue to support GDF Suez with management support and advice. The local CFA will be liaising closely with the mine owners and be on hand to help if needed. A few minor hot spots are still burning within the mine and you may notice some patches of smoke as they are extinguished.

New Community Information and Recovery Centre

As the focus shifts from response to recovery, the Community Information and Recovery Centre is relocating to a larger building at 20 Hazelwood Road, Morwell. The new centre will be open from 9.00 am to 5.30 pm daily and gives residents a one-stop-shop for recovery cleaning assistance, information, counselling, insurance advice and other support from Latrobe City Council and DHS. You can contact the centre on 1800 017 777.

Community Advisory Group

During the emergency services response to the mine fire a Community Advisory Group was created and continues to meet twice weekly.

The group consists of representatives from the Morwell community and has provided a valuable source of advice, to the fire controllers in the response phase and now to Latrobe City Council and DHS in the recovery phase. Members of the group are also helping to pass on important information through their networks to help reach even more people within the community.

Mark Potter, Regional Director, CFA has chaired the group over the first four to five weeks and Argiri Alisandratos, Inner Gippsland Area Director, DHS, will become chair during the transition to recovery. Eventually the chairing role will be passed to a community representative from the group.

This is the first time a community representative group has been used in this way during the response phase of an incident. We thank the Community Advisory Group for their efforts and time over the past few weeks. For more information, please phone 1800 017 777.

Staying Informed

The Community Advisory Group is launching a new online Community Notice Board for the Morwell community. The notice board is designed to give residents a central place to go to find information about the mine fire and recovery effort. The address of the noticeboard will be: www.morwellfirenoticeboard.org

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NEWSLETTER

Recovery and Clean Up

The Victorian Government has provided a \$2 million community assistance package to help Morwell residents and businesses continue the clean-up. This fund is being administered by Latrobe City Council and Small Business Victoria, with support from DHS.

You can visit the Community Information and Recovery Centre on 20 Hazelwood Road or contact the Latrobe City Council on 1800 017 777 to receive a clean-up kit, request laundry and car wash vouchers and loan HEPA filter vacuum cleaners.

Eligible residents can access professional cleaning services to the interior and exterior of their house to be undertaken by local businesses. You are eligible for this service if you are a home and community care client, have received a relocation package or you are identified as 'high needs' (elderly, have a disability or a health condition).

A Business Recovery Committee is being established to support local business owners affected by the fire. If your small business has been affected by the mine fire you should register your details with the Victorian Employers Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VECCI) via Small Business Victoria on 13 22 15. VECCI will then contact you to assess your eligibility for financial assistance.

Improvements are already being seen in Morwell where Latrobe City Council has begun to clean the streets, parks, playgrounds and pre-schools.

EPA

Air quality in Morwell has improved significantly over the past few weeks and the EPA will continue to monitor the air quality to make sure that residents are well informed.

Latrobe Regional Gallery

Latrobe Regional Gallery is operating under its full opening hours again and is looking forward to welcoming the community to a full program over the coming months.

Latrobe City Council mayor, Councillor Sharon Gibson, said it was great to be in a position to welcome new exhibitions to the gallery.

"The community continued to visit the Gallery during its shorter opening hours with the Community Access Gallery well patronised and the school curriculum and education programs went ahead as normal. However, most importantly, none of the artworks was damaged. Taking the precaution to minimise hours certainly helped protect the pieces in the galleries.

"Now that normal hours have resumed we are looking forward to some exciting exhibitions and to a busy school holiday program over the Easter break. It's business as usual and that's great news," Cr Gibson said.