



Storm recovery newsletter

Recovering from an emergency or disaster is a gradual process and the impacts from the severe storms on 11 November 2016 are still being felt by many in our region. The Mildura Rural City Council is working with the community to get back to 'normal life' by connecting people with support services and resources as needed. This publication provides an information update for individuals, families, businesses and primary producers.

Grants for growers closing soon

Primary producers are reminded they could receive up to \$25,000 if eligible for a Recovery Grant. To date 78 applications have been approved to the value of \$1.95 million.

Applications must be lodged by 30 June 2017. In the absence of quotations or invoices applications can be submitted with estimates as works do not need to be completed for 12 months. Contact Rural Finance on 1800 260 425.

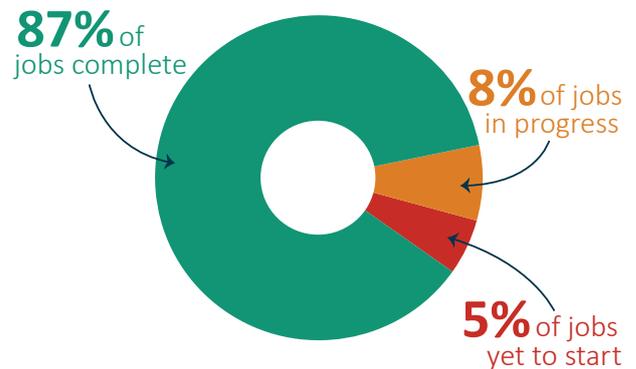
Experts cut through jargon to assist locals

Homeowners, businesses and primary producers were all beneficiaries at storm assistance events held on 15 May in both Merbein and Red Cliffs.

The Council identified a need for further assistance and support in the areas of insurance, finance, law and dispute resolution. The assistance events provided an opportunity for locals to not only hear professional advice but also have access to speak one-on-one with experts and receive tailored advice and support.

The most in demand of the professional speakers were Peter Fisher of the Financial Ombudsman Service Australia who assisted with unresolved insurance issues as well as Tom Cobban from Berril and Watson Lawyers who was able to identify legal concerns and break down technical jargon.

If you were unable to attend an event but would like assistance connecting with available services and advice, contact Kerryne McClelland, Community Recovery Executive Officer on **5018 8614**.

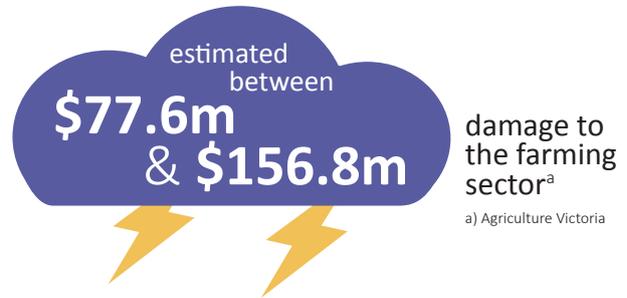


Council storm maintenance

Repairs update

Repairs to the Irymple Leisure Centre are underway with the squash facilities complete and pennant competition to start in July. The remaining works on the function areas and basketball courts are to be completed by 31 July. The Merbein Football Netball Club (MFNC) has been supplied with temporary change rooms and storage for the 2017 season. Regrettable insurance issues have delayed the commencement of any restoration and Council are assisting MFNC to negotiate with insurers to progress the site and achieve the best outcomes for the community.

Parks Victoria have completed restoration work on all river roads except Karadoc Sandbar, where work will commence from July in conjunction with Mallee Catchment Management Authority. Unfortunately recent rain combined with four wheel drive use has caused damage to river roads and impacted on the condition and accessibility of some tracks.



Help with your insurance

If you are not satisfied with the dealings you are having with your insurance company then it may be time to take a different form of action. If your situation doesn't feel right then it's best to get a second opinion for peace of mind and reassurance. You could:

- Raise your complaint directly with your insurers' internal complaints area.
- Raise your complaint with the Financial Ombudsman Service (FOS.)
- Request that another assessor inspects your property.
- Contact Mallee Family Care for free legal and financial counselling services.

Internal complaints

Although you may have complained to your insurer you may not have made a formal complaint. Most businesses have a complaints area that you can email, phone or send a letter to. Raising your dispute directly with the complaints area will escalate your concerns and your insurer will have 45 days to resolve the dispute with you.

Financial Ombudsman Service

If you have an unresolved dispute with your insurer you can seek help from The Financial Ombudsman Service (FOS). FOS offers independent dispute resolution for individuals or small businesses who are unable to resolve complaints directly. Lodging a dispute can be done either online at www.fos.org.au, by email info@fos.org.au or by phone **1800 367 287**.

Local advice

You can speak to someone locally about any legal or financial issues at Mallee Family Care. They offer free and confidential services, phone **5023 5966** or visit their website www.malleefamilycare.com.au.

Your health and well-being

The physical impacts of the storms can be clearly seen but it is equally important that you pay attention to your own health and wellbeing. Disruption to routines and daily life can cause fluctuation in your mood and energy levels. If you are feeling overwhelmed some steps you can take are:

- Talk to your doctor, a counsellor or trusted friend.
- Stay connected with family, friends and the community.
- Make time for being healthy and active.
- Connect with one of the many support services available.

If you are feeling emotions of stress, anxiety or depression there are numerous free support services available however it can be overwhelming to know where to turn and what steps to take. You can contact community support at Mallee Family Care on **5021 2885** who can connect you with the most suitable support for your needs.

Contact Council

If you have any inquiries or input regarding storm recovery please contact:

Kerryne McClelland

Community Recovery Executive Officer

Phone 5018 8614 or email

Kerryne.McClelland@mildura.vic.gov.au

Caitlin Tuohy

Recovery Communication & Engagement Officer

Phone **5018 8474** or email

Caitlin.Tuohy@mildura.vic.gov.au