

RETURNING HOME SAFELY

When returning to your home after a flood, it is important to protect yourself and your family from possible injury, illness or diseases.

Below are tips which can help you as you return to your home:

- Protect your health and assume all floodwaters are contaminated. Avoid cuts from broken glass and debris by **wearing sturdy waterproof boots**, a mask and gloves to protect your skin. Cover any exposed cuts and scratches with waterproof bandages.
- Always **wash your hands thoroughly** after participating in flood clean-up activities. Any clothes that are contaminated with floodwater must be washed in hot water and detergent before reuse.
- **Gas or electricity** supplies on your property may be damaged. If water has entered your property, **do not put the electricity or gas back on** until the property wiring has been tested by a licensed electrician and your gas installation has been checked by a licensed gasfitter
- The **structural integrity of your home** and structures may be affected. Structural assessors are available for properties that have been damaged or destroyed beyond repair. To register, phone the Flood Recovery Hotline on 1800 560 760.
- Buildings **may have asbestos-containing material and debris and it can be hard to identify**. If in doubt, try not to disturb the material and prevent others from doing so. It is recommended to use a licensed asbestos worker to perform clean up and repair works. Go to asbestos.vic.gov.au for guidelines.
- **Mosquitoes** can breed rapidly and become a nuisance. Mosquitoes also transmit mosquito-borne diseases – cover your skin with light coloured clothing with long sleeves and pants. Use insect repellent containing DEET or picaridin on all exposed skin.
- Be careful of wild animals including **rodents, snakes or spiders** which may be trapped in and around your home.
- Flooding can cause **mould growth**, which must be cleaned up before moving back into your home.
- Flooding may cause **sewage to overflow** inside your home. Contaminated areas must be cleaned and disinfected.
- **Your septic tank** (onsite wastewater system) may also be damaged. A licensed plumber or service technician should assess your septic system for safety and function.

- **Drinking water may be contaminated.** Do not drink any water unless you know it is safe.
- **Food may be contaminated** by floodwater or spoiled due to a power failure.

CLEANING UP SAFELY

Waste and debris

Council has developed a free skip bin collection service for rural residents whose primary place of residence was inundated or impacted by the floods.

Available to landowners/tenants who are uninsured for such a clean-up, registration is by phoning Council on (03) 5450 933 or by calling into Council's Customer Service Centres, located at (open 10am-4pm weekdays) and Kerang (open 8.30am-5pm weekdays).

Residents who are eligible for this service can only use the skip bins to dispose of flood waste. This includes carpets, white goods, furniture and plasterboard. Items that **cannot** be placed in the skip include tyres and machinery, food waste, asbestos, hazardous waste, materials that can be recycled and contaminated fodder.

One skip bin between 12-18m³ will be delivered to the affected dwelling and available for use for a seven-day period. This includes one pick-up and collection service. Should the resident require additional pick-ups during the seven days, it will be at the cost of the resident.

Please note: Priority will be given to those who have already requested this assistance, however requests are still being accepted with these properties to be added to a waiting list due to the limited number of skip bins available.

Sandbags

Sandbags that have been in contact with floodwater can take them to Council's transfer stations at Cohuna, Kerang, Lalbert and Quambatook. For locations and operating hours, please visit www.gsc.vic.gov.au/waste

Arrangements for sandbag disposal sites at Koondrook and Murrabit are still being arranged, and will be promoted via the Sandbag disposal heading at www.gsc.vic.gov.au/floods and Council's Facebook page when confirmed.

Farm green waste and waste crops

If you are unable to manage waste on-farm, please phone Council on (03) 5450 9333 for information regarding options available.