



Supporting those affected by the bushfires

South Gippsland Shire Council appreciates the generous offers of support from many of its community members for those affected by the bushfires. At this stage the advice we have received from our neighbours, the State Government and other relief agencies is that donations of goods are not required.

The Victorian Government has launched a new fund dedicated to helping Victorians impacted by the fires. Established in partnership with the Bendigo Bank Community Enterprise Foundation and the Salvation Army, the new Victorian Bushfire Appeal will provide practical support as these Victorians begin to rebuild their lives.

The use of funds will help to meet the most urgent needs of local families – covering the cost of everything from a grocery shop to replacing school uniforms. The Appeal will also help address the most immediate priorities of communities, including the rescue and rehabilitation of local wildlife.

Gippslanders are also able to give to the Gippsland Emergency Relief Fund if they would prefer to give to a charity closer to home.

South Gippsland Shire Council's Chair Administrator, Julie Eisenbise wanted to take this opportunity to thank our residents for their generosity.

"It speaks volumes to the spirit of our community that so many people wanted to help without hesitation. With our neighbours in need our instinct to assist was immediate and genuine.

"At this stage I encourage everyone to heed the advice from all the agencies and give money if they can. If they can't give money then I suggest holding local fundraisers rather than sending more goods that will have to be stored.

"If people really want to give goods – particularly things such as tools and electrical equipment – can I please ask that you hold onto them at home until we get advice about where to send them. This advice will probably come over the next few weeks as assessors are able to access areas where the fire has been.

"We also need to be aware that giving goods does not provide the boost to affected businesses that monetary donations will. Particularly in areas that won't have a strong tourism season, those businesses will rely on local spending to stay afloat.

“A number of South Gippsland Shire Council personnel have been working in the Control Centres and Emergency Relief Centres across Gippsland over the past week. I am incredibly proud of the contribution they have made. I also understand that a great many of our local residents are volunteering for agencies that are active in the fire-affected areas. This is courageous, selfless, humble work. You should all be very proud of your efforts.

“I have written today to the six Mayors of the municipalities where the fires have been burning and offered South Gippsland Shire Council’s assistance. We stand ready to help in any way required,” said Ms Eisenbise.

To make a donation to the Victorian Bushfire Appeal visit vic.gov.au/bushfireappeal

To make a donation to the Gippsland Emergency Relief Fund visit www.gerf.org.au

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