

Bushfire Information
HOTLINE:

1800 362 361

(TTY 133 677)

Your guide to help after a fire.



Government
of South Australia



Knowing what to do and where to go for assistance after a fire has affected your property can seem like an overwhelming task. This brochure provides simple, easy advice with key contact numbers to help you get back on track.

Is it safe to stay at home?

After a fire or other emergency it may not be safe for you to stay in your home. The Police or Emergency Services Officer in charge will advise you if it is safe to stay or not. In some situations, the Officer may need to call the local council building inspector to assess the safety of the building.

What to do with Gas, Electricity, Water and Telephone.

Gas, electricity, water supply, internet access or telephone lines may have been damaged or destroyed by the fire. The fire service or service provider may also have disconnected the services for safety purposes.

It is the property owner's responsibility to have the services inspected and repaired by a qualified tradesperson and reconnected by the provider. Check the services directory listing in this brochure for all gas, electricity and water provider contacts.

Securing your property.

After the emergency services have finished their work, the property will be returned to you. You are then responsible for the security of the property.

Your property may need protection from further damage by weather, theft and vandalism. You may need to engage a provider of shutters and/or temporary fencing to secure your home. Your insurance company may be able to help with securing your property.

If you rent your home, you must inform the real estate agent or owner/landlord to secure the home as soon as possible.

You may be refused compensation by your insurance company for any damage occurring after an emergency, if the property is not secure.

ESSENTIAL CONTACTS

RECOVERY INFORMATION:

Disaster Recovery Hotline _____ **1800 302 787**
www.sa.gov.au/recovery
www.facebook.com/sarecoveryinfo/

EMERGENCY:

Police, Fire or Ambulance _____ **000 (TTY 106)**

HEALTH AND SAFETY:

Police Assistance _____ **131 444**
SES Emergency Contact _____ **132 500**
Bushfire Information Hotline (TTY 133 677) **1800 362 361**
Mental Health Triage Service _____ **131 465**
Non-Emergency Health Advice _____ **1800 022 222**
Child Protection Report Line _____ **131 478**
Domestic Violence Crisis Line _____ **1800 800 098**
Community Health Services -
Country Health Connect _____ **1800 944 912**

GAS, POWER, WATER:

Australian Gas Networks _____ **1800 427 532**
SA Power Networks (Electricity) _____ **13 13 66**
SA Water (Service problems & faults) _____ **1300 72 92837**

ACCOMMODATION:

Disaster Recovery Hotline _____ **1800 302 787**
www.sa.gov.au/recovery
www.facebook.com/sarecoveryinfo/

CONTACT DETAILS

INSURANCE:

Insurance Council of Australia _____ **1300 728 228**

RURAL SUPPORT:

Agricultural & Land Management Services PIRSA

24 hr hotline _____ **1800 255 556**

www.pir.sa.gov.au

www.pir.sa.gov.au/emergency_management/bushfires

Rural Financial Counselling Service _____ **1800 836 211**

Regional Access -

Rural health & emotional support _____ **1300 032 186**

COUNSELLING:

Lifeline _____ **13 11 14**

www.lifeline.org.au

Beyond Blue _____ **1300 224 636**

HEARING OR SPEECH IMPAIRED:

National Relay Service __ (TTY 1800 555 630) **1800 555 660**

www.relayservice.gov.au

LEGAL ADVICE:

Law Society _____ **8229 0200**

Legal Services Commission _____ **1300 366 424**

RSPCA:

Regarding pets & animals _____ **1300 477 722**

How to collect personal items from your damaged property?

Find out who is in charge of site safety and check that it is safe to enter the property and buildings. Get someone to help you to collect any personal items you will need.

If it is safe, take the following items:

- ☐ Identification – driver's licence, Medicare card, passport.
- ☐ Insurance contact details and policies.
- ☐ Credit cards, cheque books.
- ☐ Medicines and prescriptions (medication exposed to heat and smoke should be disposed of).
- ☐ Personal aids – mobility aids, glasses and hearing aids.
- ☐ Valuables – personal items such as jewellery, photographs, cash and laptops.
- ☐ Legal documentation.
- ☐ Car keys and house keys.
- ☐ Mobile phone and charger.

Where to stay?

If you cannot remain in your property, the best option is to stay with family, friends or neighbours until permanent arrangements are organised. Your insurance company may be able to cover the cost of accommodation.

If you have to leave your home.

A few useful tips to consider if you cannot stay:

- ☐ Contact your Insurance Company.
- ☐ Organise somewhere to stay.
- ☐ Take any personal items you will need.
- ☐ Contact gas, electricity, water, internet and telephone providers to cancel services.
- ☐ Cancel all delivery services (e.g. Australia Post for redirect of mail, newspapers).
- ☐ Notify important contacts about your change of address such as your employer, children's schools, insurance company and neighbours.
- ☐ Contact local police. Inform them that your property has been involved in a fire and is vacant.

Sorting out your Insurance.

If you are insured it is essential you contact your insurer as soon as possible after the fire.

Here are some simple things you need to do:

- Ask your insurer for advice on what to do.
- Do not throw away damaged items without first checking with your insurance company.
- Make a list of damaged items and take photographs.
- Keep receipts for any emergency repair work.
- Check with your insurance company to see if your policy covers emergency accommodation.

Coping emotionally.

The stress caused by fires can often trigger existing illnesses and conditions. Adults and children may begin to feel anxious or depressed. If you feel that you or any of your family are having difficulty in coping, your doctor will be able to help. They can also refer you to other service providers who may be able to help. Lifeline (**13 11 14**) provides confidential 24-hour counselling, support and referrals. If you do not have family, friends or neighbours who can assist you, you may be eligible for special assistance.

Looking after stock.

PIRSA Animal and Agricultural Services may provide assistance with affected livestock and other animals.

Here are some actions to consider:

- When it is safe, inspect livestock for burns or injuries.
- Seek veterinary advice – injured animals may need to be humanely destroyed.
- Enact your plan for backup water, feeding, ventilation, and milking.
- Provide surviving livestock access to good quality clean water, fodder and shelter.
- Monitor livestock for several days.
- Dispose of dead animals in a prompt and environmentally safe manner. See the EPA fact sheet '*On-farm disposal of animal carcasses*' for instructions.

Cleaning up.

Smoke and water can damage your house and contents. If you have insurance, your insurer will appoint a person to handle your claim. They may also help with arranging specialist companies for cleaning, salvage and removal of damaged items and materials.

You may be able to salvage some items but keep in mind that damage to the property often goes beyond what the eye can see. Smoke and soot can travel and penetrate into other rooms affecting walls, carpet, upholstery, curtains, clothing and any other belongings.

Here are some general cleaning tips:

- Get the air moving, by opening windows to ventilate areas, or use a fan to circulate air.
- Dry wet items as soon as possible.
- Dry clean non-washable clothing and curtains.
- Wash regular clothing in warm water with detergent.
- To remove soot and smoke from walls, furniture and floors, wear rubber gloves and wash with detergent.
- Electrical appliances exposed to fire or water will need to be checked by an electrician or authorised service technician prior to use.



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