

## Disaster Information and Preparedness for Multicultural Communities

Version 1

### Introduction

AWECC is a member-driven community organisation, committed to empowering people from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds. We focus on advocating for and with cultural and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities, improving access and equity, and promoting respect and community harmony in Albury-Wodonga, as well as surrounding regional areas.

The purpose of this AWECC information packet is to ensure that refugee, migrant, and other CALD communities are informed and prepared to keep their families safe during times of disaster or emergency. This version is designed specifically for the ongoing bushfire emergency in North East Victoria and Southern New South Wales.

### Be Aware

Like any other country, Australia experiences natural disasters like flooding, storms, and fires. In some places, like regional Victoria and New South Wales, bushfires are common during the summer season. Coastal areas are vulnerable to storm and flooding. Events like these can be scary and stressful, which are natural human reactions.

The good thing is, it is possible to prepare in advance so that you and your family can keep yourselves safe. **It is important and useful to be aware of the possible disaster risks in your area or neighbourhood.** If possible, seek advice from knowledgeable friends, neighbours, and other contacts whom you trust.

The more reliable sources of information are the government emergency services. These organisations have websites and apps that provide detailed advice on the status of active disasters, and they give instructions on what to do to keep everyone safe. **It is very important to monitor these sources for the latest information.**

**To access emergency information in other languages, call the Translating and Interpreting Service on 131 450 (free call) and ask them to call VicEmergency if you are in Victoria or Bush Fire Information Line if you are in New South Wales.**

For bushfires in Victoria

- Visit the Emergency Victoria website [emergency.vic.gov.au/respond/](https://emergency.vic.gov.au/respond/)
- Download the Emergency Victoria app from the Apple App Store [apps.apple.com/au/app/vicemergency/id356559665](https://apps.apple.com/au/app/vicemergency/id356559665)
- Download the Emergency Victoria app from Google Play [play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.naturallybeing.fireready](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.naturallybeing.fireready)

For bushfires in New South Wales

- Visit the NSW Rural Fire Service website [www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/](https://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/)
- Download the Fires Near Me app from the Apple App Store [apps.apple.com/au/app/fires-near-me-nsw/id370891827](https://apps.apple.com/au/app/fires-near-me-nsw/id370891827)
- Download the Fires Near Me app from Google Play [play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=au.gov.nsw.rfs.firesnarme.nsw](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=au.gov.nsw.rfs.firesnarme.nsw)

You can also listen to ABC Radio. In Albury-Wodonga down to Wangaratta, ABC Radio can be found at AM 990 or FM 106.5. To see the radio channels of other areas, visit the ABC reception list at [www.abc.net.au/reception/](https://www.abc.net.au/reception/).

### Albury-Wodonga Ethnic Communities Council

F9, 151-153 High Street, Wodonga VIC 3690 | PO Box 920 Wodonga VIC 3689  
p: (02) 6024 6895 e: [contact@awecc.org.au](mailto:contact@awecc.org.au)  
ABN: 50 192 038 354

### Be Prepared

Due to the recent fire incidents in our immediate area, AWECC strongly recommends that each family prepare an emergency kit.

Pack the contents in a bag that is easy to access and carry. Your emergency kit should contain:

- Change of clothes for each family member
- Toiletries and sanitary supplies
- Important documents (passport, photos, will, insurance papers)
- Medicines and first aid kit
- Mobile phone and charger
- Battery-powered radio, torch, and spare batteries
- Printed or handwritten contact information (family, doctors, council, utilities companies)
- Safe drinking water
- Woollen blankets

Keep monitoring the official sources of emergency information listed above.

**Stay calm. Follow government instructions, especially if an order to evacuate is issued.** Local government takes the lead in organising safe evacuation centres. Their contact details are:

- Albury Council 02 6023 8111 [www.alburycity.nsw.gov.au/](http://www.alburycity.nsw.gov.au/)  
[info@alburycity.nsw.gov.au](mailto:info@alburycity.nsw.gov.au)
- Wodonga Council 02 6022 9300 [www.wodonga.vic.gov.au/](http://www.wodonga.vic.gov.au/)  
[info@wodonga.vic.gov.au](mailto:info@wodonga.vic.gov.au)

**Think about anyone in your community that has limited English or special needs. If you can please translate or check in on them and make sure they are aware.**

### Be Engaged

AWECC is working with its partners to assist families to recover from the bushfire disaster. They will need a lot of help and support in the coming months. If you would like to express interest in joining the AWECC Disaster Recovery Team, please send an email to [contact@awecc.org.au](mailto:contact@awecc.org.au). We are looking for generous people who can volunteer their time to do the following:

- Repairing fencing and small structures on farms
- Working with livestock and other farm animals
- Planting vegetables, trees, and gardens
- Cooking and preserving food
- Cleaning and general maintenance
- Supporting families and children
- Driving

If you feel you need any help in understanding how to use these emergency website please contact AWECC and we can try to guide you to feel more confident to understand how they work. **Each of us has a role to play to keep our families and communities safe during disasters. Let us all work together and support each other during difficult times.**