



South Island Severe Weather Event – July 27

What support is available and where can you get help

West Coast Civil Defence Emergency Management (CDEM)

West Coast Civil Defence Emergency Management is coordinating assistance to communities affected by the Buller flooding event. This information is accurate at 5pm on Tuesday 27 July and will be updated as information changes.

Call us free 0800 768 348 for flood recovery help

You can call Civil Defence free to ask for help dealing with the aftermath of the flood, or with any questions you have.

For our welfare support team, you can also call 0800 768 348 any time between 9am and 6pm to ask for help lifting wet carpets, cleaning out your flood-damaged home or other support.

You can register for assistance at the Community Hub located in the NBS Theatre, which is open from 10am to 2pm over the weekend, and from 9am to 4pm during the week. The Hub has representatives from:

- Buller District Council
- Homebuilders
- Age Concern
- Public Health
- Red Cross
- Te Ha o Kawatiri
- Buller REAP
- Number 37 Community House
- Animal Welfare
- West Coast cultural advisors and iwi advocates

Please note, not all representatives may be present at these times.

A drop-in centre will be open at the Salvation Army, corner of Henley and Russell Streets, until Friday 30 July, from 10am-3pm. Everyone is welcome.

Work & Income will be open Sunday from 10am to 2pm, and then normal work hours during the week.

For any more information please contact:

- <https://www.facebook.com/BullerCD>
- <https://bullerdc.govt.nz/district-council/news/severe-weather-event-updates/>
- Emergency Operations Centre 03 789 7999

Where to turn for help and support

When times are tough, it is normal to feel a bit worried, frustrated or overwhelmed. As we recover, going back to basics and focussing on the thing we **can** control, can really help.

Here we share our top tips for looking after yourself and others:

- www.allright.org.nz/coping-tough-times
- www.sparklers.org.nz/parenting/supporting-kids-after-floods/
- www.farmstrong.co.nz/
- www.hewakaora.nz/

If you or someone you know is struggling, there is free help available. **Free call or text 1737** anytime, 24 hours a day. You can also call **Lifeline** on **0800543354** or **text HELP** to **4357**.

We all need a little help from time to time, and you don't have to go it alone.

If you have health questions, phone **Healthline** on **0800 611 116**. Healthline is staffed by experienced registered nurses 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

If you have questions about your child or baby's health or wellbeing, phone **PlunketLine** on **0800 933 922** to speak to a Plunket nurse. PlunketLine runs 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

In an emergency, always call 111.

Local healthcare services

The Buller Health Centre has now re-open.

The primary care drop-in clinic remains open at Masonic Lodge, 51 Russell Street in Westport, with no appointments necessary for this week. If you have a respiratory illness, please wear a face mask or covering.

More information and updates about the local healthcare services can be found at www.wcdhb.health.nz/health-news.

Contact your midwife for support and advice during pregnancy and postnatal care.

- **Remember, in an emergency, always call 111.**
- Police non-emergencies: **105**

Māori community/iwi support

For support please contact:

Te Rūnanga O Ngāi Tahu

Phone: 0800 KAITAHU

Email: info@ngaitahu.iwi.nz

Ngāti Apa ki te Rā Tō Trust

Phone: 0800 578 900

Email: office@ngatiapakiterato.iwi.nz

Te Puni Kōkiri Te Waipounamu Christchurch Regional Office

Phone: 0800 875 839

Email: tpk.te-waipounamu@tpk.govt.nz

Pacific Support

For support please contact:

Ministry of Pacific Peoples – Christchurch Regional Office

Phone: 03 366 7202

Email: southern@mpp.govt.nz

Financial support

Financial support is available to people in the Buller District affected by the South Island Severe Weather Event. Everyone's situation is different and there is a range of help available.

Civil Defence Payments are available for people who have been affected by the flooding in the Buller District. You don't have to be on a benefit to qualify for a Civil Defence Payment. In most cases it doesn't matter what your income is or what assets you have. These payments are available for a limited time.

Civil Defence Payments can help with:

- emergency food, clothing and bedding if yours has been damaged or destroyed by the flooding
- accommodation costs if you're evacuated and are staying in accommodation such as motels, hotels or temporary rental accommodation
- loss of income because you can't work due to the flooding
- payment if you have evacuees staying with you in places such as a private home, marae or community centres.

Go to workandincome.govt.nz and search for Civil Defence Payment.

Call Work and Income on **0800 752 102** for more information

Help with other costs - depending on your situation, there are lots of other ways Work and Income may be able to help you and your family, including things like medical costs, bedding, food, rent, power bills, repairs or replacing appliances.

You don't need to be on a benefit to get help, it's also available to people on a low income. **You may have to pay the money back depending on your situation.**

More information: go to workandincome.govt.nz/eligibility/urgent-costs/index.html

Contacting Work and Income

Contact Work and Income if you:

- would like assistance
- aren't sure if you can get assistance
- are struggling to support yourself, or your family
- would like more information.

Visit the Work and Income website www.workandincome.govt.nz or phone **0800 559 009**.

Work and Income may be able to help you over the phone, without you coming into an office.

If you do need to come in, Work and Income will make an appointment and tell you what to bring.

Buller Mayoral Relief Fund

The official Buller Mayoral Relief Fund is open for the public to donate to support communities impacted by the recent flooding.

The Fund bank account number is 03-1354-0583471-00.

The Government has contributed \$300,000 to the Buller Mayoral Relief Fund with an additional \$200,000 support funding for farming and growers in the Buller district.

The fund will be administered by the Deputy Mayor, a councillor and community representatives through the Buller District Council to meet the needs of affected families and individuals and community organisations.

Forms are available for download: [Mayoral Relief Fund Application Form](#); or you can pick one up at the Community Hub, at the NBS Theatre.

Temporary Accommodation Service

The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) has activated the Temporary Accommodation Service (TAS) to assist displaced people find suitable accommodation.

Whether you need assistance in finding temporary accommodation immediately or think you may need some help in the future, you can register your details via our website www.tas.mbie.govt.nz

If you are not able to complete the form online, you can call 0508 754 163 to discuss your requirements.

If you are currently staying in emergency accommodation or are staying with friends or whānau and think you will need a longer-term accommodation solution while your home undergoes repairs following the flooding, you can talk to TAS now about the options available.

After registering, you will be contacted by a temporary accommodation staff member who will assess your needs and work with you to help you find suitable temporary housing.

There will be a cost for temporary accommodation; this is not income or asset tested. If you are uninsured, or your insurance policy doesn't cover temporary accommodation, you may be eligible for financial assistance. Our coordinators can direct you to agencies providing financial assistance for the event that has damaged your home.

If you are the tenant or landlord of a rental property www.tenancy.govt.nz has information on your rights and obligations after a natural disaster.

If you need further information, you can phone us on: 0508 754 163; or email temp.accom@mbie.govt.nz

Returning to your home after flood damage

Remember that flood waters are polluted with sewage so all items in contact with flood water should be treated with caution. Small children should be kept away during the clean-up phase.

To be habitable a house must be at least electrically safe, have a good water supply and an operative sewerage system, as well as be reasonably clean and dry.

Before returning to your home, please ensure:

1. That the electrical supply authority has checked that electrical installation is safe.

2. That health, building, or plumbing inspectors from your local authority have checked the sewerage system and the water supply.

YOU WILL ONLY BE ALLOWED TO RETURN TO YOUR HOUSE WHEN CLEARANCE HAS BEEN RECEIVED FROM THE ABOVE INSPECTORS.

3. If you have gas at your property, that the gas supply has been checked by an authorised technician.

When you return to your property:

- Use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) when remove any building materials, such as wall linings or solid floor coverings yourself. Old building materials may contain asbestos. You should contact an expert to inspect building materials that may contain asbestos before removing them.
- Discard or thoroughly disinfect anything that has been in contact with flood water.
- Get rid of any water or mud left behind.
- Do things to encourage quick and thorough drying. Quick drying is important. Don't be afraid to cut out material – it can be repaired.
- Repairs and redecorating should be carried out only when the structure of the house is dry enough. Do not rush this work. Wait until the house is fit to live in and thoroughly dry.

In most cases it will take months, rather than weeks, to completely restore your home after it has been damaged by flood water.

A NOTE ON INSURANCE: In all cases approach your insurance company prior to disposing of any goods or carrying out any restoration on your house. If an agreement cannot be reached with the insurance company in this matter, guidance can be sought by an environmental health officer at your local Council.

CHECKING FOR STRUCTURAL DAMAGE - has the house moved? Look for:

- Buckled floors
- New cracks in walls
- Out of shape door frames.

Cleaning inside homes which have been flooded

Always wear protective gear when cleaning up after a flood, including gloves and masks, in case you're exposed to hazardous material. Wash your hands thoroughly after each clean-up session and before handling food.

- Blankets, sheets, drapes, clothing etc that can be boiled, can be re-used. Materials of this nature that cannot be boiled should be thoroughly washed with the use of disinfectant. Other such articles of value can be restored by dry-cleaning.
- Pillows, mattresses (flock, kapok, inner sprung and foam rubber mattresses) as well as soft upholstered furnishings, should be discarded. Shoes should also be discarded.
- Carpets and rugs should be discarded.
- Furniture that is absorbent, such as wood, should be discarded.
- Vinyl on concrete that shows lifting or damage at the joins or coving must be discarded. Vinyl on wooden flooring must also be discarded.
- Soft toys must be discarded, as must plastic or metal toys that cannot be cleaned effectively.
- Electrical appliances such as refrigerators, deep freezers, electrical heaters, etc, should be checked by an electrician before using.
- Frozen foodstuffs which have thawed should be discarded. Any food stuff which is not in a waterproof container and has been covered with flood water should also be discarded. Foodstuffs contained in bottles and jars with crown caps that have been under flood water should also be discarded.

- Food in freezers can only be retained if it has not thawed, has not been in contact with flood water and an alternative storage can be found, otherwise it should be discarded.

Collecting flood-damaged goods

Council's contractors and NZDF staff have completed the kerbside collection of household waste from around Westport. The Westport Transfer Station will continue to accept flood-damaged waste.

- If you need help moving flood related household waste, please contact the Buller Emergency Operations Centre on 03 789 7999 or 0800 768348.
- The Transfer Station is still accepting flood damaged goods free of charge until this Wednesday. If your street/section has already been cleared, please don't put more out on the kerb yet. Please take your waste to the Transfer Station yourself if possible or keep it on your property for now. If you need help with this, contact us on 0800 768 348.
- If you are stripping any building material such as gip or lining please keep it on your property for now. If you have insurance, check what solutions they might be able to provide.
- Dangerous things like paint, batteries etc can be dropped to the Transfer Station yourself. Please don't leave it on the kerb in case a child decides to drink or play with it.

Insurance and lodging a claim

If your home, car or contents have been damaged by the flooding, report it to your insurance company as soon as possible. You only need to contact your insurance company and they'll let you know what you need to do next, how to claim and – if applicable – how EQC cover works.

If you need to make your home safe, sanitary, secure and weather tight, please record the work done, take before and after photos, and keep copies of the bills you paid.

- Before throwing anything away, make sure you take lots of photographs and carefully list the items.
- If carpets are soaked from the floods, you may carefully take up the carpets but remember they could be contaminated, so ensure you use proper protective equipment. Keep a sample of the carpet to show your insurer.
- If you are insured, make sure you contact your insurance company and ask for guidance.
- Don't attempt to remove any wall linings or solid floor coverings as this could cause more damage. Also, some older linings or coverings may have an asbestos risk.
- As some elements of your building may contain bracing components, it is important that any removal and replacement is done by a qualified tradesperson, usually under the guidance of your insurance company. Builders will be talking with local council to agree requirements.
- Don't attempt to remove any fixtures or fittings from the home. This may cause further damage. Your builder will remove kitchens and bathrooms, if required, at the appropriate time.

If you are an uninsured homeowner, speak to Council regarding the Mayoral Relief Fund, or contact the EOC Welfare team on 03 789 7999. If you don't have house insurance but do have contents insurance, speak to your insurer about what is covered. Make sure you take lots of photos and keep good records before you throw anything out, where possible.

Help for farmers and the rural community

Many in our rural community have been hit hard by the flood. Help is available.

For initial help or updates on the farm, get in touch with your industry body:

- <https://www.dairynz.co.nz/business/adverse-events> **0800 4 DairyNZ (0800 4 324 7969)**
- <https://beeflambnz.com> **0800 BEEFLAMB (0800 233 352)**
- **Federated Farmers on 0800 327 646.**

Rural Support Trusts have local people who are trained to offer assistance and support, and their help is free and confidential. Phone **0800 RURAL HELP (0800 787 254)** or visit www.rural-support.org.nz.

Need help cleaning up flood damage or debris on your farm or rural property? Please type <https://arcg.is/1LvX1b> into your browser and fill in the self-assessment form.

Animal welfare

Log any animal welfare concerns with the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) on **0800 008 333**.

Feed support

Need help sourcing supplementary feed, grazing, or to complete a feed plan? Call **0800 FARMING (0800 327 646)**.

Rural Support Trust

The Government has classified the flooding as a medium-scale event, unlocking extra funding for wellbeing support. Farmers who need wellbeing support should call the Rural Support Trust on **0800 RURAL HELP or 0800 787 254**.

Can you help a flood-affected farmer or grower?

Register your offers of assistance: <https://arcg.is/1riOW8>

Removing flood debris, waste disposal and burning

Please check with your local council if they have special arrangements for collection and disposal of flood debris from rural properties.

If you believe your property may contain asbestos, you must follow the guidelines from WorkSafe. The same applies to any workplace. Visit www.worksafe.govt.nz for advice.

Rules for burning green waste, and flood-related exemptions

You **CAN** burn trees and other green waste, provided you meet these requirements:

- Stockpile the green waste and only burn it when it is dry
- You check with the West Coast Regional Council at www.wcrc.govt.nz
- Properties over 2ha in size in a clean air zone may only burn between 1 September and 30 April
- Check that Fire and Emergency does not have any burning restrictions in place, see www.checkitsalright.nz/

Any properties under 2 hectares in size within a clean air zone should contact West Coast Regional Council, so staff can assist in planning how flood debris might be burned as an exception.

Do not burn:

Treated fenceposts and baleage wrap should **NOT** be burned.

- Fencing materials that cannot be reused or recycled can be buried on-farm or taken to your local council's transfer station.
- Silage wrap should be collected for recycling (e.g. Plasback) or taken to your local council's transfer station disposal.

Support available from Inland Revenue

If you've been impacted by the South Island Severe Weather event, and are struggling to deal with your tax or payments, please contact your tax agent or accountant. If you have missed filing returns or are late on payments, you can ask Inland Revenue to grant relief from penalties.

The **Inland Revenue** website also has information on managing financial difficulty and debt — visit www.ird.govt.nz/how-to/debt or call **Inland Revenue** on **0800 473 566**.

Tenancy information

If you are the tenant or landlord of a rental property, you can find information on your rights and obligations at www.tenancy.govt.nz or by phoning 0800 TENANCY (0800 836 262).

Schools and early childhood education centres

The Ministry of Education supports all schools and early learning services on the West Coast to help them recover from the event. Parents and caregivers should check with their school or early learning service for updated information.

Check with your school to see if early childhood centres have been affected by the floods.

Keeping children safe

If you're worried that a child or young person you know is not safe or being cared for, or you know a child who has been separated from their parents or caregivers you can phone **Oranga Tamariki** on **0508 326 459** (24 hours a day, 7 days a week) or email contact@ot.govt.nz

Animal welfare

Pet shelter

The Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI), HUHA ('Helping You Help Animals' charity), and the SPCA have been working together to provide temporary shelter for animals affected by the floods.

They have set up a temporary local dog shelter to run until August 6. If you have been impacted by the floods and are unable to find accommodation for your dog in the short-term, please contact awem@mpi.govt.nz or leave your details at the community hub located at the NBS Theatre and someone from the welfare team will contact you.

The shelter currently has space for small to medium dogs, and they are sourcing larger kennels, which they expect to have ready this week. If you are in immediate need and have a larger dog please still get in touch.

If you need shelter for your cat, please contact the SPCA at 03 7897520 and leave a message, and someone will call you back.

Animal welfare concerns

Phone the **Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI)** on **0800 008 333** to log any animal welfare concerns. **MPI** will follow up on animal welfare calls.

Veterinary services

If your animals need veterinary treatment, contact your veterinary clinic.

Pet food

If pet food cannot be purchased at supermarkets, your veterinary clinic or stock and station agents, donated pet food may be available through Westport SPCA.

Livestock

For requests for assistance with livestock, lifestyle Blocks or feed phone **Federated Farmers** on **0800 FARMING (0800 327 646)**.

further information on animal welfare or assess to animals please refer to your local Civil Defence Emergency Management website www.westcoastemergency.govt.nz

The Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) has support available if you need help sourcing supplementary feed or grazing for your livestock.

The **Feed Coordination Service** connects farmers with surplus feed (such as hay, silage, or grazing) to farmers who need it. Lifestylers can also access this service.

The **Feed Planning Service** connects farmers with an industry expert. We can help you do a 'snapshot feed plan' in 20 minutes. Getting a plan in place can help give you peace of mind.

To access feed support, call **0800 FARMING or 0800 327 646** and follow the voice prompts. Alternatively, you can visit mpi.govt.nz/funding-rural-support/adverse-events/dealing-with-floods/#support

Loose livestock

Any loose livestock found please notify the Buller Emergency Operations Centre phone 03 789 7999.

Please advise the Buller Emergency Operations Centre of the location and number of stock when contacting.

If you are able to safety secure the stock in an enclosed area away from other livestock, please do so.