

LATEST NEWS FROM WYE CFA – TUESDAY JANUARY 5TH

Firstly I wish to apologise to the Locals who lost their homes, which I missed in my last “News”. Aida and Ogy, Sharon and Stephen, Libby, Greg and Tom and Susie and Pete. My sincere apologies and deepest condolences on your loss.

The contents of this newsletter are to the best of my knowledge at time of writing. I will have it checked by Roy of course but it is not ‘Gospel’ as everything is changing by the minute. I’ve just heard that at 8.00 am tomorrow, Wednesday, the Great Ocean Road will be open to everyone but they cannot stop between Cumberland River and Wye River Bridge. If you see an injured animal please do not stop but call the Wildlife Welfare Officer on 52335566. The best most updated info can be found on Shire’s website or call them on 5232 9400.

The fire threat for us seems over!

This is wonderful news!

The situation in Wye and Sep has now been moved from “Fire active’ mode to ‘Recovery Mode’. This means the Colac Otway Shire is now taking on the recovery role. They are now working tirelessly coordinating what needs to be done to get what is accessible in our areas to return to normal.

- **Trees** in danger of falling have been cut down,
- **Powercor** have been here mending power lines and slowly getting power to as many habitable houses as possible. Do take care when you turn on your power as, if your meter box was not outside, they removed a fuse on the mains. Best to contact Powercor on 132 412 if your power does not come straight back on. If you have the number of your power meter the service will be much quicker.
- **Tanks** If you register with the Colac Otway Shire, Barwon Water has said they will come and clean your roof, empty your tank, clean it and refill it, for nothing!!! The Number to call is 5232 9400. It is definitely best not to drink the water you have in your tanks as the planes were dumping seawater everywhere and also retardant.
- **Gas Bottles** were disconnected and removed. Dave’sH2O plumbing has started to reconnect the Gas bottles. When he has done this, he paints a ‘tick’ on them. Please note that other people may also have reconnected your gas. Please check yourself for leaks with soapy water.
- **Asbestos** is one of the major problems here. ‘The State Government, encouraged by the Incident Controller, Shire, and EPA, are trying to get one company to do the cleaning-up job for the whole region. I haven’t heard any more and neither has the Shire. It is a work in progress (or “Committee”!). The air here has been checked many times a day in 18 different locations and has always come up clean.

LATEST NEWS FROM WYE CFA – TUESDAY JANUARY 5TH

- **Landslips.** We have been very lucky that we have just had light drizzle for the last few days. Heavy rain could cause landslips as so many trees and undergrowth have been burnt.
- **Insurance assessors.** The Insurance Council of Australia has set up an office at the Apollo Bay Shire offices, 69 Nelson St. They are coordinating individual insurance companies to get support to come into the damaged areas.
- **Septic tanks.** As many Septic tanks have been damaged. This is causing another problem which is being investigated by the Shire.
- **Rubbish.** Where accessible, the Shire is emptying bins as normal. The Red bins with food waste are being collected daily until further notice. It is suggested that you throw out most freezer contents too as it will definitely have been thawed at some stage even if it now seems OK.
- **Rubbish bins.** A number of bins have been damaged from the heat. All you have to do is call the Shire and they will organize a replacement.
- The Wye General **Store** and The Wye Beach **Hotel** are open as from Tuesday 5th January.
- **Mail** has been collected from Lorne Post Office. As of today the Wye Post Office is back on track. If you cannot collect your mail please ring the Store.

There are lots more things going on, but these are the major items I can think of.

The Surf Club and its buildings have come up trumps! The Clubhouse is a great facility for our community. It has really had a good work-out! We have been told by the fire fighters countless times that it is the best 'staging place' ever, with lovely staff and great views! At one meal sitting I thought the whole building would topple as ELVIS (the water carrier not dog!) hovered just outside to suck up water from the sea. Everyone was on the balcony taking photos! Those pilots are amazing! Thank you Surf Club.

The News I've heard so far

- The Surf Club has cancelled the Nippers program this year. Their patrols are starting this weekend. Paid lifeguards will start on Wednesday 6th January
- The Progress Association will be holding their AGM/ Community Forum on the 17th January at 10.00am
- The CFA Auxiliary has cancelled the Summer Fete due on the 6th January. They have decided to wait until the Easter Saturday Fete. It will be a whopper, so start collecting goods please.

LATEST NEWS FROM WYE CFA – TUESDAY JANUARY 5TH

- We are hoping to have a Community Picnic as soon as possible so everyone can get together for a chat and start to rebuild our community. Please keep watch for the date. It will be as soon as the area has been deemed safe for all. The Lorne Lions Club has offered to cater! They have been amazing, especially to those locals who have lost their homes.

For me to leave Wye River yesterday to go to Apollo Bay to re-register so we could come back (don't ask me of the logic of that exercise!) was really strange. To see people swimming, sitting in cafes, playing golf as all holidaymakers should, was quite a shock. Those of us who have been here since Xmas or soon after, have been in a sort of cocoon, a surreal world, no TV or newspapers, just visits from the Prime Minister and other politicians! We've been very caught-up in our own highly charged intense world. For me it was strange today not seeing hundreds of men and women in uniforms, Blue Fire chiefs, yellow fire fighters, green DELWP firefighters, blue police, ambulance drivers, and the bright Community Volunteers jackets.

It is great to see people coming back!

A number of new arrivals have come to offer help, after they had cleaned their smelly fridges! One group did a great job cleaning all the white plastic surf club chairs that hundreds of filthy fire fighters had sat on three times a day.

There is so much to doyet so little we can.

If there is anything anyone needs, just ask. Everyone wants to help.

Wye River and Separation Creek will bloom again!

Sincerely

Carolyn

Secretary CFA