

## **Update for residents affected by the Pigeon Valley Fire Newsletter #1 Saturday, 9 February**

This newsletter provides an update on the management of the Pigeon Valley fire as well as information that you might find helpful to get you back on your feet following the evacuation from your home. This is also a way of communicating directly to evacuated residents.

### **Fire update**

The fire continued to burn actively overnight, moving closer to the Wakefield area at around midnight, passing the trigger point for evacuations which had been proactively undertaken earlier.

Over 100 personnel are currently working hard to fight the fire and create control lines. There is still a large amount of unburnt vegetation within the control line.

Fire activity has increased this morning. Our most significant efforts are currently focused on a fire front near Wakefield which is moving slowly downslope.

Fighting the fire today are:

- 23 helicopters
- 2 fixed wing planes
- 1 drone team
- 29 firefighting crews and around 150 firefighters
- 47 Incident Management staff
- 23 heavy machines (excavators and dozers).

Additional resources from around the country will also be arriving to assist and replace some crews who have been working for five days. In addition to the fire fighters there is an army of support personnel, including Police, NZ Defence Force, Ministry of Primary Industries and Council staff.

The relative humidity has increased this morning which will help firefighting efforts today. Today's winds are also forecast to be lower than yesterday, gusting up to around 30km/h by 6pm today and are predicted to reach 50km/h tomorrow.

### **Getting back into your home**



We know that you want to return to your home as soon as possible, but most importantly it needs to be safe to do so. Your personal safety is our paramount concern.

At this time, it is only considered safe for some people to return to their properties for short periods of time. You will be advised if there is an opportunity to temporarily visit your home or property under a managed access visit.

### **Public Meetings**

Public meetings are being held on a regular basis. This is an opportunity for you to get an update on the latest news and key information from representatives across a number of agencies. You will be notified of upcoming meetings but also keep an eye on the nelsontasmancivildefence, NCC or TDC Facebook pages.

### **Registering your evacuation**

Whether you are asked to leave or home or self-evacuate, it is really important that you register with Civil Defence.

You can either go to the Civil Defence Centre at Saxton Stadium at Saxton Field, Stoke or phone 03 543 8400.

They can help you with accommodation and let you what other assistance might be available. This includes:

- Civil Defence payments from Work and Income. You can also contact them on 0800 559 009 to discuss this.
- Assistance with animals – contact MPI on 0800 008 333 - option 4
- Free GP visits if you are finding things overwhelming.

More information on who and what help you can get is available on the [Work and Income Civil Defence webpage](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/products/a-zbenefits/civil-defence-payment.html) : [www.workandincome.govt.nz/products/a-zbenefits/civil-defence-payment.html](http://www.workandincome.govt.nz/products/a-zbenefits/civil-defence-payment.html)

### **Protecting your personal property**

Police are managing the cordons with support from the NZ Defence Force and regular proactive monitoring of the area is undertaken to ensure that there isn't people in the area that shouldn't be there.

### **Schools**

Please check with your child's school about any changes to the normal routine and bus routes.



### **Rural Support Trust – a free service**

Anyone in a rural area who feels they need support can also contact the Rural Support Trust for a confidential chat on 0800 787 254. This service is free.

### **Insurance**

When you return to your property take photos and call your insurance company to log a claim.

### **Water Supply**

A Helpsheet is available on [tasman.govt.nz](http://tasman.govt.nz).

### **Animal welfare**

Some residents have expressed concerns about the effects of smoke inhalation on their pets and livestock. MPI has advised that current smoke levels are not considered unsafe, however if you have a pet or livestock in distress, contact your usual veterinarian.

A number of veterinarians have come forward and offered their support during this event and the Ministry of Primary Industries has an Animal Welfare Emergency Response team providing support in the area.

If you require any assistance with your animals including stock, please contact the Ministry of Primary Industries on 0800 008 333 – option 4 or email [awem@mpi.govt.nz](mailto:awem@mpi.govt.nz).

### **Personal wellbeing**

If you are finding things overwhelming please contact your GP who will facilitate free confidential session/s with a certified counsellor or psychologist.

- If you need help accessing a GP please contact [Sally.Tohill@nbph.org.nz](mailto:Sally.Tohill@nbph.org.nz) PH: 03-5437841
- If you want to discuss any health needs and cannot access your doctor please contact [Yvonne.Youngman@nbph.org.nz](mailto:Yvonne.Youngman@nbph.org.nz) PH: 03-5437852

Nelson Bays Primary Health are here to help you [www.nbph.org.nz](http://www.nbph.org.nz)

### **Sharing this update**

Civil Defence is here to help, if you think there's other topics we need to cover in this newsletter let us know.

Hardcopies of this newsletter will be available at the Tasman District Council Customer Service Centre and at each end of the Wakefield cordon.



If you have family or friends that cannot access a computer, please share this information with them.

**Remember, it is ok to ask for help. If you need help and you're not sure who to ask, call Tasman District Council on 03 543 8400 (24 Hours).**