

Geotechnical Assessment Rebate Program

FAQs

1. What is the Geotechnical Assessment Rebate Program?

- The Geotechnical Assessment Rebate Program (the program) will support landowners of properties where buildings were damaged or destroyed as a result of the Eastern Victorian Fires that have occurred since 21 November 2019.
- The support will be provided as a one-off rebate payment, to eligible applicants, for eighty percent of the cost of a geotechnical assessment required under the planning scheme, up to a maximum amount.
- The program's intended outcomes are to support landowners to rebuild and to contribute to local economic activity.
- The program is funded through the \$86 million Community Recovery Package, which is jointly funded by the Commonwealth and the Victorian Governments under the Commonwealth-State Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements.
- The program will be open to applicants from July 2020 until 30 June 2023.
- It will be up to the applicant to arrange a suitably qualified geotechnical consultant to undertake the required assessment, to the satisfaction of the council.

2. Who can apply for support under the program?

To be eligible to apply for funding:

- You must be the landowner or have the written permission of the landowner to apply
- Buildings on the property must have been damaged from direct impacts of bushfire, as verified through the bushfire recovery clean-up process
- The geotechnical assessment must be conducted by a suitably qualified geotechnical consultant to the satisfaction of the local council.
- The assessment must be required to satisfy the requirements of the Erosion Management Overlay in the East Gippsland Planning Scheme or the Steep Land local planning policy in the Towong Planning Scheme.
- The property is in the municipality of East Gippsland or Towong.
- You must be intending to rebuild in the same Local Government Area

3. What can I get rebate for under the program?

The program will provide support for required geotechnical assessments prepared by a geotechnical consultant to satisfy the requirements of the:

- Erosion Management Overlay within the East Gippsland Planning Scheme, to the satisfaction of the East Gippsland Shire Council, or
- Steep Land local policy of the Towong Planning Scheme. to the satisfaction of the Towong Shire Council.
- a standard soil report to support an application for a Building Permit.



The program will provide up to eighty percent of the cost of:

- a standard soil report to support an application for a Building Permit, up to a maximum of \$400
- a full geotechnical assessment, to satisfy the requirements of either:
 - the Erosion Management Overlay in the East Gippsland Planning Scheme to the satisfaction of the East Gippsland Shire Council, up to a maximum of \$2,000, or
 - the Steep Land local policy of the Towong Planning Scheme for a proposed building site with a slope of 20% or greater, to the satisfaction of the Towong Shire Council, up to a maximum of \$2,000.

If your total costs are greater than the maximum support outlined above, you will need to meet the additional costs.

4. What will not be considered for funding?

The program will not fund the following activities:

- The purchase of land

5. Who will deliver the program?

- Melbourne Water is responsible for administering this program on behalf of the Victorian Government.

6. When do applications close?

- Applications must be submitted by 31 May 2023; 11:59pm.

Eligibility

1. Who is eligible to apply?

- To be eligible for the rebate you must satisfy the following:
 - You must be the landowner or have the written permission of the landowner to apply
 - Buildings on the property must have been damaged from direct impacts of bushfire, as verified through the bushfire recovery clean-up process
 - The geotechnical assessment must be conducted by a suitably qualified geotechnical consultant to the satisfaction of the local council.
 - The assessment must be required to satisfy the requirements of the Erosion Management Overlay in the East Gippsland Planning Scheme or the Steep Land local planning policy in the Towong Planning Scheme.
 - The property is in the municipality of East Gippsland or Towong.
 - You must be intending to rebuild in the same Local Government Area

2. Who is not eligible to apply?

- You are not eligible to apply if:
 - You are not located in part of the municipality of East Gippsland or Towong Shire. that has been impacted by the bushfire;
 - The damage to a building on the property was not directly from 2019/20 'Eastern Victorian' bushfires;
 - You have received support through other Commonwealth, State or other government programs that could be used towards a geotechnical assessment;
 - You have already received support for a geotechnical assessment through this program;

3. What areas did the 2019/20 Eastern Victorian Fires impact?

- The 2019/20 Eastern Victorian Fires directly impacted the Local Government Areas of Alpine, Towong and East Gippsland.

4. If I have already completed works, am I still eligible for the program?

- Support under the program will be available for any work completed since the commencement of the bushfires on 21 November 2019.
- Eligible households can apply for a standard rebate for the cost of a geotechnical assessment they have already had completed. Verification of the geotechnical assessment has been conducted by a suitably qualified geotechnical consultant and receipts for works must be submitted together with the application.

5. Do I need to use a local supplier and/or service provider?

- It is strongly encouraged that you source local suppliers and service providers to support wider community recovery.
- However, to allow for flexibility and in case there may be a limited number of specialised local service providers it will not be a mandatory requirement of the program.

Application Process

1. How do I apply?

- Support under the program will be available for any work completed since the commencement of the bushfires on 21 November 2019. Eligible households can apply for a standard rebate towards the cost of a geotechnical assessment they have already purchased. They will supply verification of geotechnical assessment has been conducted by a suitably qualified geotechnical consultant and receipts for works with the application.
- Once you have all the information needed and are ready to apply head to the application page: www.melbournewater.com.au/RaSTRprogram – or - complete an application form and email or post to Melbourne Water, together with the supporting documentation

2. What supporting documents will need to be provided?

- Before submitting an application, you should complete the checklist below to make sure you have all the information required:
 - Identification that shows the property address and that you are the owner, or acting on behalf of the owner (e.g. rate notices, electricity bills, phone bills, drivers' licence or similar)
 - Clean up completion certificate from BRV (or evidence that demonstrates your property has been through a bushfire damage clean-up process)
 - Tax invoice/s (copies are acceptable) for the completion of a geotechnical assessment on the land by a suitably qualified geotechnical consultant.
 - Evidence that the geotechnical assessment has been conducted by a suitably qualified geotechnical consultant, and meets the requirements of the planning scheme, to the satisfaction of the relevant council.

3. How much funding is available for each rebate component?

The program will provide up to eighty percent of the cost of:

- a standard soil report to support an application for a Building Permit, up to a maximum of \$400.
- a full geotechnical assessment, to satisfy the requirements of either:
 - the Erosion Management Overlay in the East Gippsland Planning Scheme to the satisfaction of the East Gippsland Shire Council, up to a maximum of \$2,000, or
 - the Steep Land local policy of the Towong Planning Scheme for a proposed building site with a slope of 20% or greater, to the satisfaction of the Towong Shire Council, up to a maximum of \$2,000.

If your total costs are greater than the maximum support outlined above, you will need to meet the additional costs.

4. How long do successful applicants have to claim the rebate?

- Funding for the program will be available over three years from 7 October 2020 until 31 May 2023.



- Applicants will have up until 31 May 2023 to submit an application for a rebate under the program.

5. How do I submit an application?

- You can apply online at Melbourne Water's webpage www.melbournewater.com.au/RaSTRprogram – or - complete an application form and email or post to Melbourne Water, together with the supporting documentation. Relevant email and postal addresses can also be found on their website.
- Make sure you have copies of the supporting information needed to be submitted with your application as outlined in section 2 above.
- Before applying, please read and understand the program guidelines, the application form and any other information that may be relevant to your situation.
- If you have any extenuating circumstances that have caused unforeseen costs or have impacted your eligibility, please contact Melbourne Water to discuss your application.

6. Who can I contact for further information or help in completing my application?

- For application support contact Melbourne Water, via RaSTRprogram@melbournewater.com.au, or on 131 722.
- For further information in respect to the program and other support programs available to fire affected communities please visit Bushfire Recovery Victoria at www.vic.gov.au/bushfire-recovery-victoria

7. When will I hear whether I have been successful?

- Your application will be assessed against the eligibility criteria and provision of supporting documentation.
- Support will be awarded to applications that satisfy the eligibility criteria, subject to available funds.
- When you submit your application, you will receive an acknowledgement that the application has been received.
- To assist with the assessment of your application, you may be contacted during the assessment process to clarify any details or documentation.
- Once the application has been assessed, you will receive notification of the outcome of your application.