

DELWP - Bushfire Recovery Planning and Building Assistance Rebate Scheme

Guidelines and Application Process

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Bushfire Recovery Planning and Building Assistance Rebate Scheme

1. What is the Bushfire Recovery Planning and Building Assistance Rebate Scheme?

The Bushfire Recovery Planning and Building Assistance Rebate Scheme (the scheme) will support landowners whose homes were destroyed or significantly damaged in the 2019-20 Eastern Victorian Fires in the Shires of East Gippsland and Towong.

This scheme will support work associated with planning and building permit applications, required to rebuild a home which existed at the commencement of the bushfires on 21 November 2019.

The support will be provided as a rebate payment to eligible applicants, to reclaim expenses accrued in the preparation of professional services and property-based assessments, required under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* or a building permit as required under the *Building Act 1993* and its regulations, on proof of a tax receipt.

The Victorian Government is providing this direct support to ensure landowners affected by the fires can rebuild their dwellings in accordance with the requirements of the planning scheme and that the financial burden of complying with the scheme is reduced.

This program aims to assist people to rebuild and replace their previous home with a dwelling that complies with the appropriate Bushfire Attack Level, to achieve longer term resilience and sustainability for communities located in these bushfire affected areas.

This program is funded by the Victorian Government via the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP). The program will operate from November 2020 until 30 June 2023.

Under the program, eligible applicants are entitled to reimbursement of up to \$5,000 per property for background work, commissioned in support of their planning or building permit application.

All funds will be issued as a rebate for services procured and paid for by landowners.

DELWP and the Victorian Government will not undertake any procurement of services on behalf of landowners.

Please read these guidelines and the application form carefully to understand the full eligibility requirements, and what you will need to provide as part of your application.

The Bushfire Recovery Victoria Hub in your municipality can assist you with registering with the program and submitting your application.

2. Who can apply?

To be eligible to apply for funding, you must be:

- The owner of a dwelling that:
 - was in the Shires of either East Gippsland or Towong;
 - was destroyed or severely damaged as a result of 2019-20 Eastern Victorian Fires which commenced on 21 November 2019; and
 - is on a site that has been registered with the relevant Bushfire Rebuild Support Service (RSS) in your municipality.
- Rebuilding your dwelling either on the same property, or on another site within the same municipality, and a planning permit and / or building permit is required for the rebuild.

- Able to provide the relevant mandatory supporting documentation as outlined in section 7 of this document.

3. Who cannot apply?

You are not eligible to apply if:

- The damage to your home was not directly related to the 2019-20 Eastern Victorian Fires.
- You have already received a rebate for the same services under a different rebate scheme.

4. What will be funded?

The program will provide rebates for costs up to the value of \$5,000 per affected property for:

- Any combination of professional services and property-based assessments and advice, required to support a Planning and/or Building Permit application to rebuild or repair a dwelling within the subject municipalities, such as:
 - preparation of a concept plan;
 - preparation of a planning permit application report and any related supporting technical reports, including those related to bushfire planning or hazard assessments and other environmental considerations;
 - land surveying, building set out, civil or structural engineering reports or equivalent;
 - Arborist reports;
 - Planning consultant fees;
 - Building Permit fees.

Applicants can submit multiple applications for rebates; however, the total value of your rebates will not exceed \$5,000.

5. What will not be funded?

The program will not fund the following activities:

- Any professional services or background work required to support Planning or Building Permit applications for buildings that are not capable of being legally used as a dwelling.
- Any professional services required to support a regulatory requirement other than a planning permit, as required under the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*; or a building permit as required under the *Building Act 1993* and its regulations.
- Full detailed architectural or building design documentation.
- The purchase of land.
- Building or repair work undertaken on site.

6. What are the funding details?

Support will be provided as a rebate payment.

Please ensure that the relevant mandatory supporting documentation as outlined in section 7 of this document is provided with your application.

The maximum support available to successful applicants under this scheme is \$5,000 per affected property.

7. What are the assessment criteria?

Your application will be assessed against the eligibility criteria stated above and the provision of the following supporting documents:

- Evidence that you own the property (such as a recent copy of title or Council rates notice)
- Tax invoices (copies are acceptable) for the purchase of professional/technical services undertaken in support of your planning or building permit application/s for your new or rebuilt dwelling
- Bank account details for the rebate deposit

The Bushfire Recovery Victoria Hub in your municipality can assist you with registering with the program and submitting your application.

Please seek assistance from the BRV Community Recovery Hub in your municipality if you are unsure about any aspects of your application.

8. What are the funding conditions?

Confirmation

DELWP has engaged Melbourne Water to process the rebate applications via their online SmartyGrants portal to provide a single point of access for the community to a number of bushfire related rebates.

Successful applicants will receive notification via email from Melbourne Water, confirming the total rebate provided for each application.

Legislative and regulatory requirements

Applicants should be aware that the administration of the program is required to comply with all relevant Commonwealth and State legislation and regulations, including but not limited to:

The Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth)

The Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Vic)

Tax implications

Applicants should consult the Australian Taxation Office or seek professional advice on any taxation implications that may arise from this rebate funding.

Payments

Payments will be made as long as:

- You have provided the correct account details for the rebate deposit.
- You have provided the receipts or invoices as required; and
- The terms and conditions of this funding continue to be met.

Reporting

Information about the uptake of the rebate program and the types of rebates claimed will be collected and used to evaluate the program's success. Privacy will be protected in the analysis and any publication of reports on the program. Agreement to collection of this information is a condition of the scheme.

Audit

DELWP and its agents reserve the right to conduct audit activities to ensure all information and activities funded under this Program are correct and accurate. This may include site inspections, contacting professional service suppliers, and requests for further documentation from applicants and professional service suppliers.

Privacy

Any personal information about you or a third party in your application will be collected by Melbourne Water, the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) and Bushfire Recovery Victoria (BRV) and their agents. This is for the purposes of administering your rebate application and informing Members of Parliament of successful applications. Personal information may also be disclosed to external experts, such as members of assessment panels, or other Government Departments for assessment, reporting, advice, comment or for discussions regarding alternative or collaborative rebate funding opportunities. If you intend to include personal information about third parties in your application, please ensure they are aware of the contents of this privacy statement.

Any personal information about you or a third party in your correspondence will be collected, held, managed, used, disclosed or transferred in accordance with the provisions of the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* and other applicable laws.

The Victorian Government is committed to protecting the privacy of personal information. You can find the DELWP Privacy Policy online at www.delwp.vic.gov.au/privacy. You can find the Melbourne Water policy online at www.melbournewater.com.au/privacy-policy.

Requests for access to information about you held by DELWP should be sent to the Manager Privacy, P.O. Box 500 East Melbourne 8002 or contact by phone on 136 186.

Requests for access to information about you held by Melbourne Water should be sent to Privacy Officer, Melbourne Water, PO Box 4342, Melbourne 3001 or contact by phone on 131 722.

9. What is the application process?

Before submitting your application, please ensure you have read and understood these guidelines and the application form published at:

www.melbournewater.com.au/bushfire-rebates

If there are any extenuating circumstances that have caused unforeseen costs or have impacted your eligibility for this rebate, please contact the BRV Community Recovery Hub in your municipality to discuss your application.

Applications can be submitted either by you or by your local BRV Community Recovery Hub, on your behalf, via Melbourne Water's online portal at bushfire-rebates@melbournewater.com.au.

Supporting documents must be attached in an acceptable file type, such as Word, Excel, PDF, or JPEG. The maximum file size for each file is 5MB.

Once your application is submitted, you will receive an email acknowledgement that the application has been received, including an application number.

Please quote this number in all communications relating to your application.

If there are documents that cannot be attached to the online application, they can be emailed to bushfire-rebates@melbournewater.com.au, quoting the application number. All documents should be attached to one email, zip the files if required.

Applications must be submitted by the closing date of the program, to ensure rebates are provided prior to the termination of the program.

Incomplete applications or applications received after the closing date of the program will not be considered.

10. Additional information

Delivery of the program

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

Program Contact Details

Post: Bushfire Recovery Planning and Building Assistance Rebate Scheme

Melbourne Water

GPO Box 4342

Melbourne Vic 3001

Email: bushfire-rebates@melbournewater.com.au

11. What is the notification process?

Successful and unsuccessful applicants will be notified via email after the assessment process is completed.

Unsuccessful applicants can request feedback from Melbourne Water on their application.

12. Key dates

Applications open	Late 2020
Applications close	31 May 2023

13. Checklist

Read these guidelines and the information about this program at:

www.melbournewater.com.au/bushfire-rebates

before applying and complete the following checklist.

Have you:

- read these guidelines carefully?
- checked if you are eligible for support?
- checked if your rebuilding activity is eligible for support?
- prepared the appropriate supporting documents?
- registered with your local Bushfire Rebuild Support Service?