

# Information for residents and businesses impacted by the recent storms in NSW

June 2016

The NSW Government and your local council are working together to ensure you have the information you need to help you recover from the recent storm damage in NSW.

## Overview

NSW experienced a significant weather event from 2-7 June 2016 that stretched across the entire coast of NSW. The storm resulted in damage across a number of areas.

The recovery process will take time, and we want to make sure people have the support they need to get back on their feet as quickly as possible

There is a range of assistance measures available to people in affected areas including loans, grants and subsidies.

There are also many agencies offering more personalised support to people in distress. Details of disaster assistance and agencies offering support are at the end of this document.

## What assistance is available?

In the first instance, people affected by these storms should talk to their insurance company.

There is also assistance available to eligible people who are not insured whose homes and belongings have been damaged, and who meet an assets and income test. **Call 1800 018 444 for advice.**

Assistance is also available for councils to help with the costs associated with cleaning up and restoring damaged infrastructure.

Concessional interest rate loans are available for small businesses, primary producers and not for profit organisations, and freight subsidies are available for primary producers.

## I am a resident impacted by the storms so where can I get the information I need to access disaster assistance?

Information about disaster assistance schemes can be found at

<https://www.emergency.nsw.gov.au/for-the-community/disaster-assistance/natural-disaster-assistance-schemes.html>

A handy summary is also available at the end of this document.

## What about green waste?

A number of councils are offering assistance with the excess green waste generated by the storm event.

Contact your local council for more information.

## Where can I get advice about assistance for my business?

You can seek business advice through the Small Biz Connect Program. To connect with a local business advisor call 1300 134 359 or visit [www.smallbusiness.nsw.gov.au](http://www.smallbusiness.nsw.gov.au)

Small Biz Connect is funded by the NSW Government and provides quality and personalised business advisory services.

## Is there specific assistance available for businesses?

Yes. We recognise that businesses have specific needs such as the need to restock, pay staff and get their business up and running again quickly.

In areas declared a disaster, loans of up to \$130,000 may be available at a concessional interest rate for small businesses who meet eligibility criteria.

Primary producers can also apply for loans of up to \$130,000.

## Is the damage statewide?

No. Damage was mostly in the east of NSW. There is damage to the environment and infrastructure across a broad number of local government areas, from the Tweed on the north coast, to Eden on the South Coast.

Damage includes; storm damage to homes and businesses; crops and farmland; infrastructure such as roads and impact on a number of industries including aquaculture, manufacturing and tourism.

Natural disasters have been declared in 37 local government areas across the state.

This is the first tranche of natural disaster declarations and the NSW Government is working with other affected councils to identify impacts and make more declarations where appropriate.

### Where can I find information on storm assistance?

Individuals who have sustained damage to homes or contents by this event can call **1800 018 444** for guidance.

Information can be found at **[www.emergency.nsw.gov.au](http://www.emergency.nsw.gov.au)**.

The 37 declared councils are:

1. Bega
2. Blacktown
3. Byron
4. Camden
5. Campbelltown
6. Canterbury-Bankstown
7. Central Coast
8. City of Sydney
9. Coffs Harbour
10. Eurobodalla
11. Fairfield
12. Hornsby
13. Inner West
14. Kiama
15. Ku-ring-gai
16. Lane Cove
17. Lismore
18. Liverpool
19. Maitland
20. Northern Beaches
21. Parramatta
22. Penrith
23. Port Macquarie-Hastings
24. Queanbeyan-Palerang
25. Randwick
26. Ryde
27. Shellharbour
28. Shoalhaven
29. Sutherland
30. The Hills
31. Tweed
32. Waverley
33. Willoughby
34. Wingecarribee
35. Wollondilly
36. Wollongong
37. Woollahra

### What is happening to the affected coastline on the northern beaches?

The Northern Beaches council is monitoring the situation and taking interim measures to stabilise the foreshore. The council is leading the local recovery committee and keeping the Recovery Coordinator briefed as to progress in this area.

## **How is the recovery process being coordinated?**

Former Deputy Police Commissioner Dave Owens has been appointed State Recovery Coordinator.

Local and regional recovery committees have been established in the worst affected areas, ensuring cooperation between government services, local government and community organisations.

Regional recovery committees have been established for both the north and south coasts. These committees have met and committee representatives are in regular contact with the State Recovery Coordinator to ensure issues can be directed to the appropriate agency for action.

## **How long will the recovery process take?**

Recovery will be a long term process for those affected and will occur at different rates, depending on the level to which communities were impacted.

During this time, we are ensuring that people have access to the information and assistance they need to get back on their feet as quickly as possible.

There will be a long lasting effect and the emotional toll can be significant.

People in the affected areas are encouraged to access local counselling services and get access to help.

## **What has been done so far to reach out to individuals and communities?**

A number of proactive measures have been put in place to assist individuals and businesses affected by the storm event.

The Small Business Commission is working with impacted businesses and where necessary, guiding them through the assistance options available to them.

Welfare agencies are actively door-knocking affected communities to ensure that any

assistance that is required can be focused on the right areas.

Councils are engaging with their affected communities to make sure that they keep abreast of community needs during the recovery and the State Recovery Coordinator is consulting with all recovery organisations to ensure that there is consistency in the approach and that all recovery operations are undertaken in a coordinated and timely manner.

## **How do I make sure I am not being scammed when I try to get repairs done?**

Understandably individuals and small business want to get back on their feet as quickly as possible, however there are a number of 'watch outs' people should be aware of.

### Use qualified and licensed tradespeople:

Sadly after events such as these people might be approached by 'cold callers', offering to undertake repairs at what appear to be low costs. This is often due to the fact that such people are unqualified and/or unlicensed.

The NSW Department of Fair Trading offer advice on using appropriately qualified tradespeople. Information can be found under the Consumer Warnings section of their website <http://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au/>.

## **Is my area safe after the storm?**

There are a number of health issues that can arise after storm events. This primarily relates to hygiene when cleaning storm affected areas.

NSW Health offer advice on how you can maintain your safety when cleaning up after storms. This can be found at <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au> on the Flood Safety and Health Information page.

**If you feel like you need someone to talk to about how you are feeling there is help available.**

If you experience persistent issues that interfere with your life you are encouraged to talk to your General Practitioner or health care provider.

In NSW you can contact your local mental health service via the **NSW Mental Health Line on 1800 011 511**.

Further information and resources are available on the NSW Health website.

A list of other support services is also available in the attached document.

## For more information

[www.emergency.nsw.gov.au](http://www.emergency.nsw.gov.au)

Individuals affected by this event can also **call 1800 018 444** for guidance.

For disaster assistance for individuals:

[www.emergency.nsw.gov.au/for-the-community/disaster-assistance/disaster-assistance-for-individuals/](http://www.emergency.nsw.gov.au/for-the-community/disaster-assistance/disaster-assistance-for-individuals/)

To prepare your personal emergency plan:

[www.emergency.nsw.gov.au/for-the-community/before-an-emergency/personal-emergency-plans/plans.html](http://www.emergency.nsw.gov.au/for-the-community/before-an-emergency/personal-emergency-plans/plans.html)

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