



BUSHFIRE INFORMATION UPDATE #9

27 May 2020

The latest State Government released newsletter can be found at:

<https://www.emergency.nsw.gov.au/Documents/community-Recovery-Information-covid-19-update.pdf>

This is specific LOCAL information for the Nambucca Valley Local Government Area affected by the Kian Rd bushfire.

NUTS AND BOLTS OF RE-BUILDING

Now that the state government sponsored clean-up for Nambucca Valley is underway, it's timely to turn to rebuilding and what's involved. This newsletter aims to provide some helpful information about rebuilding after the bushfire.

1. NSW Government planning changes: temporary accommodation/moveable dwelling

People whose homes were badly damaged in a bushfire can install a moveable dwelling, such as a caravan, on land without council approval for up to two years. A movable dwelling is defined under the Local Government Act 1993 and can include a tent, caravan or van used for human habitation. It can also include a manufactured home, which is a self-contained dwelling that is designed to be moved from one position to another. If you plan to stay in the moveable dwelling beyond two years, council approval will be needed. Approval can be obtained by submitting a completed application form which can be found at the following link and attaching plans of the proposed

dwelling: <https://www.nambucca.nsw.gov.au/page.asp?f=RES-CFC-28-13-84>

2. Rebuilding an approved dwelling

If you have decided you want to live back on your property long term, you will need to start a process for rebuilding called a development application. Some buildings can be done without a development application, but if you plan to LIVE in a dwelling/shed/any structure, it requires a D.A. Without approval you will run into problems for insurance and ongoing compliance measures from Council, which may include being asked to move on. You need to put in a D.A. before you start to rebuild. Putting one in after or halfway through your build makes the task much more difficult and could lead to disappointment.

3. Getting ready for a DA

There are several steps to a D.A. The detail can be found at Nambucca Valley Council's website:

https://www.nambucca.nsw.gov.au/cp_themes/default/page.asp?p=DOC-FRP-50-44-25

Below are a couple of key starting points.

4. BAL ratings and access issues

One of the key points that will affect the cost of building are what's known as Bushfire Attack Levels (BAL). In short, the lower the BAL, the more economical the cost to rebuild. Location is vital in the BAL. You need a wide clearing around any proposed dwelling. The flatter and less slope, the better. In particular, if your access road includes a slope that is above 10 degrees, you may need to have the part of the road that is steep sealed. The NSW RFS website has an explanation at: <https://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/plan-and-prepare/building-in-a-bush-fire-area/building-after-bush-fire/your-level-of-risk>

They also have a publication which looks in depth at these issues:

<https://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/plan-and-prepare/building-in-a-bush-fire-area>

Drafts people, builders, engineers can provide advice on these as part of your build plans. Council's planners can also answer questions.

5. On-site sewerage management systems (OSSMs)

On-site sewerage management systems are essential in rural areas that are not connected to the town sewer system. If you already had an approved OSSM and you replace the damaged one with the same set up, you will not need to put in an application for a new one. Replace like for like. If you want to build a new OSSM, or locate it in a different spot, you will need to fill in an Application for Approval to Install an OSSM (Form:

<https://www.nambucca.nsw.gov.au/page.asp?f=RES-NRL-03-77-58>). A plumber can advise, draw up the necessary plan and conduct the works. There are other options, such as composting toilets. These too have regulations around them. You can always talk to Council's Water and Sewerage Officer if you have further questions.

6. Beware dodgy tradies

Ask for a tradesperson's full name and licence number and check they are licensed to do the work. You can check licence details at:

<https://www.onegov.nsw.gov.au/publicregister/#/publicregister/search/Trades>

Using unlicensed traders, you run the risk of substandard work, being left out of pocket if the trader leaves before a job is finished or paying more for a legitimate tradesperson to repair shoddy work. Be wary of cheap, cash only offers and don't pay in full up front.

7. Council measures

→ Council is donating DA fees for people who lost their home as well as for those who lost a shed where a DA is required. These fees and charges include but are not limited to development application fees; complying development fees; s68 application fees, construction certificates fees; advertising and notification fees; inspection fees; and Section 7.12 developer contributions (where applicable).

→ Council has also resolved to "seek concurrence from the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment for a variation to the minimum lot size requirement for any development application which may be lodged to replace accommodation destroyed in the Kian Road bushfire." This means that if you are on a lot size that did not allow for a dwelling entitlement, you can now put in for a variation for a minimum area entitlement, Council will seek state government approval to allow it.

→ There is a water tank rebate program available but conditions apply. The form, including eligibility criteria, is here: <https://www.nambucca.nsw.gov.au/page.asp?f=RES-SQN-15-00-61>

You can contact Council Town Planners or Building Surveyors between 11.00am and 1.00pm Monday to Friday or at other times by making an appointment Ph: 02 6568 2555

BRICKWORKS OFFER

For people who lost their home in the bushfire and who had built their home with Austral Bricks, Brickworks Building Products will replace all the bricks, free of charge, including delivery.

For homes constructed from other building materials, Brickworks will assist the re-build with 50% off all materials in the Brickworks Building Products portfolio. This includes bricks, pavers, roof tiles, masonry blocks and retaining walls.

Contact Brickworks on **13 27 42**: More info: <https://www.brickworks.com.au/bushfire-relief>

TOOL LIBRARY OPENS

Rotary has now opened a tool library for bushfire affected residents.

Located next to the RFS Shed at South Arm Hall.

**Opening Hours:
Fridays 10am-12pm**

To see the range of tools available visit:

<https://nambuccavalleytoolibrary.myturn.com/library/inventory/browse>

GAS BOTTLES

If you had hired gas bottles on your property, don't forget to contact your provider. They could still be charging you for burnt-out gas cylinders.

Connecting electricity if your property was affected by fire

Due to the unprecedented damage to the electricity network caused by both the North Coast and South East of NSW bushfires during 2019/2020, for the next two years, Essential Energy is waiving the normal connection fee and offering customers, whose property was affected by fire, a rebate towards the cost of restoring service mains.

If power supply connection to your home or business premises has been damaged or destroyed by bushfire, you should contact an appropriately qualified electrical contractor – an Accredited Service Provider (ASP) – to help you through the reconnection process. A list of ASPs is available on the [Energy NSW website \(energysaver.nsw.gov.au\)](http://energysaver.nsw.gov.au).

The process for reconnecting your property to the network is as follows:

Step by step connection process:

- > The customer engages the services of an appropriately qualified Level 2 AS.
- > The customer or ASP submits an Application for Low Voltage Connection, stating that the application is for a 'Rural New Connection' (even if the connection is for an urban area), noting in the comments that this is for a bushfire-affected customer
- > Essential Energy will assess the application and connection prior to the bushfire event and determine an appropriate costing on a 'like for like' replacement basis – the offer and a reimbursement form will be sent to the customer.
- > The customer will sign the offer and send back to Essential Energy
- > The ASP will carry out the work to replace the connection to Essential Energy's network
- > The customer will pay the ASPs invoice for the works.
- > The customer then has the ability to submit the paid invoice and reimbursement form to Essential Energy for reimbursement



If you or your ASP need technical information about connecting to the electricity network, you can contact Essential by calling 13 23 91. Further information is available on the Essential Energy website, <http://www.essentialenergy.com.au/covid-19>