

Media Release

The Hon Lisa Neville MP

Minister for the Coordination of Environment, Land, Water, and Planning – COVID-19
Minister for Police and Emergency Services
Minister for Water



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QUALITY MODULAR HOUSING FOR FAMILIES REBUILDING AFTER FIRES

Families who lost their primary place of residence in the 2019-20 Victorian Bushfires will have the option of moving into quality, modular homes on their property while they progress their permanent rebuild.

In the aftermath of the fires, the Victorian Government worked to ensure everyone who lost their homes could access a roof over their head that was safe and secure, with some individuals choosing private arrangements. With the bushfire clean-up powering ahead, many families are now seeking to return to their land to live and rebuild.

The government has placed an order with Victorian manufacturer, Modular Spaces, to provide quality modular homes of between one and three bedrooms. Discussions are also underway with another Victorian manufacturer.

The housing will be delivered to the property or another location where agreed, in line with planning permit exemptions announced by the Victorian Government.

Short-term modular housing will be an option available for households identified as currently being in emergency accommodation or in private accommodation arrangements. They will be able to live in these homes for a period of up to three years while they progress their permanent rebuild.

Eligible households have had a needs-based assessment by case support officers and site inspections have begun.

While the housing will be installed and built at no cost to the resident, recipients of the housing will pay hiring fees benchmarked to public housing rates, with hardship arrangements put in place if needed to ensure that fees do not exceed 25 per cent of a household's total income.

Victorians who lost their primary places of residence in the bushfires are also eligible for free clean-up – a \$25,000 payment from the Victorian Bushfire Appeal and potentially other grants such as Emergency Re-Establishment Payments of up to \$42,250.

Short-term modular housing is jointly funded by the Victorian and Commonwealth Governments as part of the \$86 million Community Recovery Package.

The 2020 Clean-up Program is now over 80 per cent complete. Work has commenced on 649 of the 745 properties requiring clean-up, with 604 completed. 461 properties have been completed in East Gippsland Shire and 137 properties in Towong Shire.

The project is on track to be fully completed by the end of August, with over 2000 individual structures already cleared across the state.

While the asbestos-contaminated bushfire waste can only be handled by specially trained and licenced crews, the clean-up program has made the most of local skills and expertise where possible. Local content on the clean-up is over 50 per cent, with 317 workers from fire-affected postcodes currently engaged on the program.

Under the Working for Victoria program, 80 roles were also recruited in East Gippsland and North East Victoria to support bushfire recovery efforts.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Police and Emergency Services Lisa Neville

"These quality homes will be manufactured to withstand tough Victorian conditions and last the test of time while families progress their permanent rebuild."

"Thankfully, everyone who needed emergency accommodation after the fires was able to access it, and this solution is another way we can support families in need over the coming months and years of recovery."

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