



**SENATOR THE HON MURRAY WATT
FEDERAL MINISTER FOR EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**

**HON JACINTA ALLAN MP
VICTORIAN PREMIER**

JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

Friday, 16 February 2024

WORKING TOGETHER FOR VICTORIANS AFTER EXTREME STORMS

The Australian and Victorian Governments are protecting and supporting Victorians affected by the catastrophic weather event on 13 February that destroyed homes, damaged vital transmission infrastructure and brought down poles and wires across the state.

To help people still impacted by outages, the Australian and Victorian Governments will provide a Prolonged Power Outage Payment – households without power for seven days following the storm are eligible for \$1,920 per week for up to three weeks.

The payment is jointly funded by the Australian and Victorian Governments through the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA).

The payment will be administered by distribution businesses and will help families buy much needed basic items and find alternative accommodation.

Extensive damage to the electricity network left 500,000 Victorians without power at its peak. 90 per cent of those customers were reconnected within 48 hours.

To ensure residents have access to power, generators are being prepared for distribution. Priority will go to the most vulnerable who are remaining at homes with prolonged power outages. Further information on how people can apply to access generators will be distributed soon.

AusNet has already deployed a large-scale generator into the Mirboo North community – providing a central hub for residents to access power.

Customers impacted by power outages may also be eligible for assistance under the Victorian Guaranteed Service Level payments. Assistance is in the form of electricity bill credits – the amount customers are entitled will depend on individual circumstances.

In addition, from Saturday, the waste levy will be completely waived for storm impacted residents across 21 Local Government Areas (LGAs) until 30 April 2024. Residents from these areas will be able to dispose of disaster waste at their local tip free of charge.

In collaboration with councils and the waste industry, the Victorian Government is ensuring all impacted communities have access to a facility or site to dispose of their waste quickly and safely.

Other LGAs impacted by bushfires and storms will be added to the list as required, so affected communities can undertake clean up and recovery activities without paying for waste disposal.

For more information on eligibility visit, esc.vic.gov.au/electricity-and-gas/information-consumers/guaranteed-service-level-payments-energy-outages.

Quote attributable to Federal Minister for Emergency Management Murray Watt

“The Australian and Victorian Governments are working together to ensure households can get the support they need to buy much needed basic items to help their recovery.”

Quote attributable to Premier Jacinta Allan

“This catastrophic weather event has had a devastating impact on so many communities and we’re making sure Victorians who need help are getting it as quickly as possible.”

Quote attributable to Minister for Energy and Resources Lily D’Ambrosio

“Extra generators and support payments will not only help financially but ensure affected residents can get back on their feet.”

Quote attributable to Minister for Environment Steve Dimopoulos

“There is a big task ahead to clean up storm damaged areas and we’re helping get that recovery underway by waiving fees for storm waste disposal at local tips in the most heavily impacted areas.”

The 21 local government areas eligible for waste fee waiver are:

- East Gippsland Shire Council
- Wellington Shire Council
- Latrobe City Council
- South Gippsland Shire Council
- Bass Coast Shire Council
- Baw Baw Shire Council
- Yarra Ranges Council
- Cardinia Shire Council
- Alpine Shire Council
- Murrindindi Shire Council
- Greater Dandenong City Council

- Monash City Council
- Casey City Council
- Knox City Council
- Kingston City Council
- Bayside City Council
- Glen Eira City Council
- Mitchell Shire Council
- Melton City Council
- Greater Geelong City Council
- Mansfield Shire Council

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