

Rates, Fees & Approvals Relief Measures



The NSW Government is providing immediate council rate relief for people who have lost their homes or businesses in the 2020 Bega Valley Bushfires.

Council has also resolved to waive several fees and charges. Steps to implement these waivers can only be taken once the required 28-day public exhibition period ends on 17 March 2020.

Other relief measures in place include the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment's waiving of a number of building works and temporary accommodation approvals.

Council continues to advocate on behalf of the community for additional government and private sector assistance measures. Please visit Council's website: <https://www.begavalley.nsw.gov.au/> for the latest details.

NSW Government Rates & Stamp Duty Relief

The NSW Government will pay the full cost of your council rates from 1 January through to 31 December, 2020.

To have the payment covered, residents and small business owners need to take their council rates notices to their local [Service NSW centre](#). If you have already paid your rates you will receive a refund.

The government will also provide stamp duty relief for people who lost their homes during the bushfires and who choose to purchase a replacement home elsewhere rather than rebuild. People purchasing replacement homes will only begin paying stamp duty once the amount payable exceeds \$55,000. Eligible people who have already paid duty will be able to apply for a refund.

NSW Government Fee Waivers

The NSW Government has also waived the following government fees:

BASIX Certificate and Planning Reform Fund fees – from 4 February 2020, these fees will be waived on all development applications related to homes damaged or destroyed in the recent. Affected property owners can contact the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment to arrange for a BASIX Certificate to be issued free of charge. The dedicated BASIX Bushfire Recovery Hotline number is 1300 054 464.

Amendments to the Building and Construction Industry Long Service Payments Regulation 2017 now allow for full or partial exemptions to payment of the Local Service Levy, specifically for the NSW bushfires of 2019/2020. For more details, go to;

<https://www.longservice.nsw.gov.au/bci/levy/paying-the-levy/exemptions-bushfire-recovery>

Council Fees and Charges Waivers

- All fees associated with the lodgement of a development application, including any pre-lodgement advice, or complying development certificate and other certificates for current owners to rebuild their lost or damaged buildings or subsequent inspections. Should a current owner decide to increase the density of development on site, Council fees will apply to the additional development. Reasonable modifications of the bulk, scale and design of the new building, including requirements to meet contemporary building design standards, will not be considered additional development for the purpose of fee calculation.
- Waste disposal gate fees for fire-affected material, subject to the NSW Government financing the cost to Council to dispose of and manage this waste.
- Interest on General Rates instalments for the remainder of the financial year for fire affected properties (not destroyed but unable to be lived in).

- Lease and licences fees paid to Council for use of Council owned and managed land and buildings from 1 January – 30 June 2020.
- Fees for the reconnection of meters for properties who have had their water meter destroyed by fire.
- Library charges for books lost due to bushfires and photocopying of replacement documents for bushfire affected residents.
- Tree assessment fees on bushfire affected properties.

Other direct Council assistance

- Those who have lost their homes won't be charged for water used since the last time their meter was read until a new meter is installed.
- A \$50 credit will be applied to the water account of customers across all Council water systems whose water use for the current period is calculated to be more than 10% above the previous three-year average.
- A one-off reimbursement of up to 13,000L of water (cost of water only and not cartage by contractor) will be available to residents within fire affected areas that are not connected to Council's reticulated water supply and have utilised the services of water carters accessing Council water fill stations.
- Residential and non-residential sewerage customers who have lost their homes or businesses will receive a credit of 50% of the annual sewer and water access charges.
- Free access to pools until 30 June 2020 for those who have had their primary residence damaged or destroyed.
- Fire damaged pressure sewer systems will be repaired free of charge.

NSW Government Approvals Waived for Some Building Works & Temporary Accommodation Solutions

The NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment has waived approvals for some building works and temporary accommodation solutions as follows:

- Demolition of bushfire affected buildings
- Temporary repairs and non-structural permanent repairs
- Temporary installation of a shipping container for storage purposes for up to two years.
- Temporary accommodation options for people affected by bushfires
- Extended stays in a caravan park or camping ground for up to two years.
- Installation of a moveable dwelling – such as a caravan – on land for up to two years.

Changes have also been made to allow councils to modify conditions for primitive camping grounds.

Council Continues to Advocate on Behalf of the Community

Along with the direct assistance being offered above, Council continues to communicate with the state government and the private sector about other assistance measures as follows:

- Requesting that the Minister for Local Government and Deputy Premier/Minister for Recovery seriously consider extending general rate relief to all ratepayers of the Bega Valley Shire Council for a six-month period.
- Encouraging the NSW Government to reduce payroll tax for employers in bushfire affected local government areas for the next three months.
- Encouraging all landlords across the Shire to follow Council's rent reduction lead for the immediate future.
- The General Manager has been delegated authority to advertise the waiving of green waste fees should the NSW Government commit to funding the management, handling and processing of green waste for a fixed period.