

# Disaster Resilient SA

February newsletter

## Updates: 2019 SA Disaster Resilience Grant Funding

Funding of up to \$100,000 is available for projects that address disaster resilience in communities by *improving preparedness, building capacity and/ or capability, and increasing resilience*. These grants are open to South Australian organisations including not-for-profits, Business, Local Government or State Government. Expressions of Interest are now being received with applications due before the closing date of 5:00pm Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> February. For further details and the expression of interest form, visit the SAFECOM website:

[https://www.safecom.sa.gov.au/site/emergency\\_management/grant\\_funding\\_opportunities.jsp](https://www.safecom.sa.gov.au/site/emergency_management/grant_funding_opportunities.jsp)

## Red Cross responds to heat waves.

With temperatures soaring, Red Cross activated Telecross REDi heatwave response to check on the wellbeing of over 700 South Australians registered on the service. Between January 15-17<sup>th</sup> and the 22<sup>nd</sup>-24<sup>th</sup>, Red Cross staff and volunteers spent over 900 hours making phone calls across the state to check in on the wellbeing of people who find it harder to cope in the heat.

When activated during a heatwave, Red Cross volunteers call pre-registered clients to check on their wellbeing. The callers ask people how they are coping and remind clients of important measures to assist them through the extreme weather. If a call goes unanswered or if someone is in distress, an emergency procedure is activated to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the client.

This free service provides peace of mind to individuals and their loved ones and over the years there is no doubt that it has saved lives. If you know of anyone who would benefit from the service, talk to them about registering by calling 1800 188 071 or by email:

[telecrossredi@redcross.org.au](mailto:telecrossredi@redcross.org.au). Some people who receive services from support agencies may be assisted to register.



## Resource in focus: Stay Healthy in the Heat- SA Health.

With the hot weather set to continue in the coming months, the resource in focus this edition is [Stay Healthy in the Heat](http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/healthyntheheat) from SA Health. The website provides key information on keeping healthy and coping with extreme weather and includes fact sheets available in English and 20 other languages as well as specific advice for different population groups such as older people, pregnant women, people with chronic illnesses, babies, children and teenagers and also advice on looking after your pets in the hot weather.

Heatwaves kill more Australians than all other natural disasters combined so it's imperative to take hot weather precautions for yourself and those around you.



## Practice Scenario: Dust storm



**8:00am-** It's been very dry in your local area for the past few months with minimal rain and higher than average temperatures. The temperature today is predicted to reach 34 degrees with a cold front expected in the afternoon with 35km-45km per hour winds and heavy rain expected.

**2:00pm-** The temperature has started to drop and the wind begins to pick up. You notice rubbish and lighter unsecured objects being caught in the gusts and blowing down the street.

**2:45pm-** The sky has become dark and visibility is reduced as a dust storm blows through your area. The wind is blowing at 35km per hour with gusts of up to 50km and the dust is abrasive on the skin of those caught outdoors. It is difficult to see, especially while driving.

**3:00pm-** SA Ambulance and the Emergency department at the hospital have had an increase in the number of calls for assistance from those with respiratory issues such as asthma, emphysema or cardiovascular disease. SES are responding to a number of calls of fallen tree branches and a car accident that has occurred due to poor visibility on the roads.

**4:15pm-** Heavy rain begins to fall. Due to the high winds many roof gutters and drains are clogged with leaves and other debris resulting in running water on roads and spilling out of gutters. The ground is so dry that it isn't absorbing the rain resulting in large puddles of collected water.

**4:35pm-** the rain has passed and the air is humid. You're faced with the mess left by the dust storm and the rain to clean up.

For your workplace, consider the following:

- What advice and duties will you be giving your staff?
- What (if any) messages will you be communicating to your clients/ customers/ community members and when?
- Do you, people you work with or any of your clients have breathing difficulties that could be exacerbated by a dust storm? How would this be managed?
- Are staff members or volunteers required to drive as part of their duties? What advice or restrictions will be given to drivers during an extreme weather event such as a dust storm?
- What services will be critical to maintain? Are there any services that will be cancelled or reduced?
- If services will be cancelled or reduced, what impact will this have on clients/ members/ customers/ community?

**In the case of a dust storm, remember that:**

- Research shows that during a dust storm, visits to the emergency department for respiratory problems increase.
- Those with existing health concerns such as respiratory or heart-related problems may find their existing symptoms are aggravated during a dust storm.
- Dust storms can reduce visibility. Extra caution should be used when driving. If the visibility is very low, park in a safe place to avoid collisions and wait for the dust to clear.

***Do you have any questions regarding your emergency planning or your organisations role in an emergency? Contact Jess Law, Community Resilience Project Officer to have a chat.***

***[jlaw@redcross.org.au](mailto:jlaw@redcross.org.au) or 08 8100 4664***