

CENTRAL HIGHLANDS flood recovery coordination

NEWSLETTER

Issue #6, March 25th 2011



Meet the team...

Megan Daniels

Environmental Sub Group Chair

"My work experience to date has been derived from various business roles across a number of industries within the finance and agricultural sectors.

As Chair of the Environment recovery group, my role is to coordinate the assessment of the impact on the environment, both rural and urban, from the floods. This is undertaken with the assistance of an environment group which is a committee of representatives from local and state government and local business and industry. The environment group also provides CHRC with recommendations on planning and mitigation strategies that may be able to be put in place to help reduce the impacts of future flood events on our environment.

As well as chairing the environment committee I am the Executive Officer of Central Highlands Regional Resources Use Planning Cooperative (CHRRUP). CHRRUP is a community owned not-for-profit organisation that focuses on improving natural resource management practices and building a sustainable region. We work with all sectors of the Central Highlands community, as everyone is a stakeholder of natural resources.

As part of our current programs we are working with primary producers to help improve water quality through the reduction of sediment, pesticide and nutrient run off. We hold an annual Natural Resource Management (NRM) Expo that has each year attracted over 600 school children from schools across the Central Highlands. We also provide educational opportunities for the community on topics that are key to the improvement of natural resource management and sustainability."

Local businesses look to the future

In a testament to Aussie ingenuity, Emerald business people are proving that when times get tough the tough get going.

Stileteo's shoe shop Amber Williams business in the Centro Market Plaza was flooded in 2008 and again in 2010,

"Last time we didn't have insurance but this time we did. It's still is hard though, the insurance company hasn't paid out yet so making ends meet till then is going to be a challenge", Amber said.

"It is really difficult when you have suppliers and staff to pay but no money coming in. I had to think of a way to get my stock to customers".

With the Centro Market Plaza under construction Amber knew she needed to improvise a way to sell stock without a shop. "All the shoes were sitting in their boxes at my in-laws house so that isn't the best retail situation. I couldn't find anywhere to lease in the short term so I had to think of different ways to get to my customers".

By offering different services Amber has managed to keep



her business moving, "We have been having shoe parties and the website has been selling some stock too. Also, if a customer is interested in a particular style, for example, the girls have been doing house visits and taking some stuff over for the customer to try. We just had to get our stock out there, we didn't have time to wait".

Stileteo's is a situation all too common around the region with many businesses doing it tough after months of displacement on top of the loss of stock and income.

Sherry Smith from the Central Highlands Development Corporation (CHDC) has been contacting business people in Emerald to gauge the economic damage and the level of support needed. "There is such an amazing resilience around town, business people are just getting on with it. Where they can, they are cleaning up and trying to get back to business as usual as soon as possible. A lot of people are doing it tough but they are trying and the community needs to support the eco-

nomc recovery by shopping locally", Sherry said.

In the wake of the announcement of QRAA Special Disaster Flood Assistance loans being increased from \$250 000 to \$650 000, Sherry highlighted the need for businesses to be proactive, "I would encourage businesses to assess their needs and apply for the support most appropriate to them and then utilise that assistance to get back on their feet. We also need people in our region to support these businesses by shopping locally and employing local services".

While the road to recovery is not over yet Amber is excited about the opening of an interim shop at Blossoms Gift and Homewares at 2 Brief Street Emerald, "It will be until we can open in our regular shop again, we had to be open in time for everyone to get their race gear!" They are now open from 9am to 5pm on weekdays, 9am to 1pm on Saturdays and 10am to 1pm on Sundays.

To discuss business support options, contact Sherry at CHDC on 07 4982 4386.

Community Information Session

Where: McIndoe Park Function Centre

When: March 28 at 5:30

The Central Highlands Regional Council is holding a flood information session for the community.

The session will include input from Council, Recovery Group and members from organisations key to the recovery process. Building Services Authority, Queensland Department of Communities, DEEDI, QRAA, Insurance Council of Australia, Master Builders, Lifeline and Anglicare will be the Function Centre to provide information from 12 to 4:30pm.

For more information call the Recovery Group on 4987 7267.

Other News...

Assistance Application forms due soon

Flood affected residents are reminded that applications for various types of financial assistance are closing soon.

Premiers fund: **ROUND 1 CLOSING SOON**

Closing date: 31 March 2011.

Forms are available from the Department Communities office at 51 Ruby Street Emerald. Or call 180 22 66.

Premiers Fund Round 2

Closing Date: April 15 2011

This payment is for residents whose primary residence must be demolished due to flood damage.

There is an initial payment of \$10 000 which is available event for those with insurance. An additional \$90 000 of assistance may be available subsequently depending on the circumstances.

There is an income test of \$150 000 per household however there is no asset test.

For more information call Queensland Department of Communities on 07 4982 1520. Forms can be downloaded from www.qld.gov.au

Applications for the Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment

Closing Date: 4 July 2011.

For application forms go to www.centrelink.gov.au or call 180 22 66.

Local Central Highlands Flood Appeal

These forms can be collected from the Neighbourhood Centre at 17 Yamala Street, Emerald. For more information call 4982 1696

Important Contacts:

Central Highlands Flood Recovery Coordination

26 Opal Street
07 4987 7267

recovery@chrc.qld.gov.au

Central Highlands Regional Council

1300 242 686

www.centralhighlands.qld.gov.au

Lifeline 24 Hour Crisis Counselling

13 11 14

Anglicare Central Queensland

07 4982 4358

Lifeline Emerald

07 4982 3730

Emerald Neighbourhood Centre

07 4982 1696

Salvation Army Disaster Relief Care Line

1300 66 22 17

Legal Aid

1300 65 11 88

Building Services Authority (BSA)

1300 272 272

Flood Commission

Public Hearing

The dates of the Flood Commission hearings have been announced.

The Commission will be holding a public hearing into the 2010-11 flood events in Emerald on May 24 and 25 for the Central Highlands region.

The public hearings will focus on issues to be covered in the Inquiry's interim report on matters associated with flood preparedness.

The interim report is due in August 2011, to enable early recommendations to be implemented before next summer's wet season.

The deadline for submissions to be discussed at the public hearing has passed however submissions for the Commission are open until April 4 2011.

To make a submission or for more information, including the Commission's terms of reference, go to www.floodcommission.qld.gov.au