



Media Release

Victoria State Emergency Service

17 February 2021

Warrnambool and Port Fairy safety signs erected, following floods



New and crucial safety signs have been erected in Warrnambool and Port Fairy in a bid to warn locals and visitors about the flood danger around various popular spots.

The signage, developed by VICSES, Glenelg Hopkins CMA, Warrnambool City Council, and Moyne Shire Council contains key safety information, emergency phone numbers, local imagery, and a handy QR code that links to online flood resources.

The signs can be seen at the **Russell Creek culvert**, Mortlake Road in **Warrnambool** and Martins Point Playground in **Port Fairy**.

A La Nina weather pattern remains current, and has already brought higher than average rain throughout summer in Warrnambool and Port Fairy. The worst individual event was the 'one in 50-year flood' on January 2nd, with Warrnambool receiving 51mm of rain – the majority within one hour.

Local VICSES volunteers were called to 100 incidents as a result, ranging from overflowing gutters to overland flooding or storm water overflows causing residential hazards.

Heavy inland rains also caused riverine flooding in October 2020, affecting the Moyne River in Port Fairy, as well as the Hopkins and Merri Rivers, and Russell Creek in Warrnambool - sparking 45 requests for assistance for local VICSES units – including two rescues from cars stuck in floodwater.

Visitors and residents in the south west are reminded floodwaters can contain broken glass, chemical run-off, litter, sewage, and other obstructions – meaning you should never walk or drive through it.

For more information, contact:

VICSES State Media Duty Officer (6am-10pm)
Phone: 1300 783 933
Email: media@ses.vic.gov.au



VICSES encourages the community to read the new signage, and head to www.vicses.vic.gov.au for more info on staying safe before, during, and after a flood.'

A **photo opp** with VICSES volunteers alongside the new flood preparedness signage can be arranged by appointment. Please call Ysabel Cronin-Guss, Community Resilience Coordinator (0428 245 392).

Quotes attributable to VICSES Regional Officer Emergency Management, Bess Krause:

"We've seen extremely heavy rainfall and a pair of significant flood events in Warrnambool and Port Fairy over the past four months, so knowing your local flood risk is critical."

"Flood water can be dangerous even when it doesn't appear to be deep or fast flowing. It can hide harmful debris, damaged paths, roads or bridges, and toxic contaminants."

"These new signs clearly show the risk of entering any kind of floodwater. It's never safe to walk, play or drive in it, so don't take the risk. We aim to engage locals of all ages, and keep each other safe."

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