***This community bulletin aims to update you on the recovery efforts across the Central Coast following the recent severe weather event.***

***Included are also some helpful links and other contacts that you can call on to ask further questions and get the information you need so you can get your life back to normal as quickly as possible.***

***As we move forward together, information is key, and this will be one way of staying in touch during the weeks ahead.***

**Recovery efforts**

The Central Coast experienced peak rainfall of 400mm in the recent weather event.

The local SES crews received more than 1,100 requests for assistance across the Central Coast and the flooding has been declared a natural disaster by the State and Federal Governments.

Recovery efforts are now well underway with teams from NSW SES, RFS and Fire and Rescue undertaking building assessments and Council crews who are undertaking clean-up, across the flood affected and storm damaged areas across the Coast.

Council teams have also been on-the-ground, focused on making areas safe for the community and clearing debris from roads, footpaths and public spaces and repairing the significant damage to our road networks across our local government area, our lakes and coastal foreshores.

We thank you for your patience and understanding as we continue the clean-up.

**Advice from NSW Heath**

NSW Health provides basic hygiene advice during the flood and clean-up period. Some helpful tips include:

* Wash hands thoroughly with soap and clean water after handling flood-affected items or participating in any flood clean-up activities, after going to the toilet and always before handling or eating food.
* Avoid coughing or sneezing on others and avoid the use of common or unclean eating utensils, toothbrushes, towels or handkerchiefs.
* Avoid all unnecessary contact with mud and floodwaters. If you must walk through mud or enter floodwaters, always wear solid shoes, not thongs or sandals. Always wear gloves when handling flood-affected items or mud. Keep children out of flood-affected areas.
* All cuts and abrasions should be cleaned, treated with antiseptic and covered immediately. If you have a deep cut or wound, if a wound has had contact with floodwaters or if a wound develops redness, swelling or discharge, seek immediate medical attention.
* Avoid being bitten by mosquitoes. Use an insect repellent on exposed skin areas and reapply every couple of hours. Cover up as much as possible with loose-fitting and light-coloured clothing.
* Should you or any of your family have severe diarrhoea or vomiting, please seek immediate medical assistance. If you have these symptoms, you’ll need extra fluids to replace what you lose. The best fluids to take are those that contain a mixture of special salts (electrolytes) and sugars, (e.g. Gastrolyte) which can be purchased from local pharmacies.

**Please avoid swimming and any other recreational contact with our waterways.** Extended heavy rainfall increases the risk of our waterways being impacted by pollution due to stormwater run-off.

**Central Coast beaches and ocean baths are closed until Tuesday 30 March**. Council will provide an update to the community on water quality and debris early next week. Please check Council’s website for further information.

If you use bushland reserves you should take care as the conditions of access roads, walking tracks and fire trails may have changed as a result of the storm. Any reports of damage to walking tracks and fire trails should be reported to Council on 1300 463 954.

**Clean-up information**

Please be advised that floodwaters may also contain sewage contamination and the community is advised to take appropriate precautions. This includes wearing of protective gloves and clothing and following health advice. For information on personal protection when cleaning up around your property, NSW Health and Red Cross can provide information for general public health. [redcross.org.au/get-help/emergencies/looking-after-yourself](https://www.redcross.org.au/get-help/emergencies/looking-after-yourself)

**Waste**

Weekly kerbside bin collections are continuing as normal. For properties located on sections of road currently closed to vehicles, kerbside services will resume as soon as the roads re-open and residents should keep their bins on the kerbside (if safe to do so) until they are collected. Collections will continue over the weekend if necessary.

If you need to clear excess flood impacted bulk household waste and debris from your property as a result of the severe weather, you can book a standard bulk kerbside collection for both excess garden waste and normal bulk waste accepted by 1coast.

This waste will be collected within a week of booking, generally on the next scheduled bin servicing day. Residents can book up to six general or green waste bulk kerbside collections a year of two cubic metres per allocation. Bulk kerbside entitlements are reset annually on 1 February.

To book contact Cleanaway on 1300 126 278 or [**1coast.com.au**](http://www.1coast.com.au/)

Residents can also dispose of their flood impacted bulk waste directly at one of Council’s two waste management facilities.

Reduced fees apply as a result of the NSW government waiving the waste levy for flood impacted waste.

Residents may also take seagrass wrack and floating debris that has entered their property to our waste management facilities for free. Small amounts may also be added to your green waste bin.

Residents may also stockpile and place seagrass and vegetation debris in a safe location next to access roads or pathways within foreshore reserves, or the road kerbside outside of your property. Once placed on the kerbside, please call Council on 1300 463 954 for a ‘Tuggerah Lakes Seagrass’ booking or book via the 'Report an issue' form on our website.

**Water and sewer services**

With a state of natural disaster declared on the Central Coast as a result of the severe weather event, a number of properties have had water and sewer services impacted.

Council is managing the network and all jobs are logged with crews working through repairs as quickly as possible in the current difficult conditions, however we are experiencing a longer than normal delay in response time.

Crews are prioritising repairing faults as flood waters recede across impacted suburbs.

We encourage Central Coast residents to continue letting us know immediately if you are experiencing any water or sewer concerns - any time day or night. You can log your concern online via the Report an Issue on our website or call 1300 463 954.

Our crews are currently completing daily checks of flood affected areas to determine safe access for crews to commence restoration of sewerage services.

**Disaster relief for individuals**

A Disaster Welfare Assistance Point is open for residents affected by flooding. The centre is located at Diggers@The Entrance and is operating daily from 8am to 8pm.

Grants are also available from the NSW Government for eligible individuals and families whose homes and essential household contents have been damaged or destroyed by a natural disaster.

Contact the Disaster Welfare Assistance Line on **1800 018 444.**

More information on other support services across the Coast is available on our storm recovery webpage (link below).

**Want more info?**

We are adding to our online recovery resources daily. Stay up-to-date with the latest information at [centralcoast.nsw.gov.au/council/news/storm-recovery-on-coast-0](https://www.centralcoast.nsw.gov.au/council/news/storm-recovery-on-coast-0)