

Property Eligibility

The NSW Government and the Commonwealth are jointly covering the clean-up cost of insured and uninsured residential and eligible commercial (small business and primary production) properties destroyed in the NSW bushfires since 1 July 2019.

This clean-up assistance is in addition to the small business and primary producer grants.

- The primary focus of the clean-up program is on removing destroyed or damaged buildings and associated safety hazards and debris **that could impede people rebuilding their homes or businesses**. Damaged buildings are those that are uninhabitable, unusable or beyond economic repair.
- This could include potentially hazardous material, like asbestos and dangerous trees that are near homes or commercial buildings, as well as things like damaged driveways, that could impact on the safety of the clean-up activities or hinder the rebuild process.

Buildings types can include:

- Residences
- Buildings on commercial properties used for primary business operation
- Garages/sheds and outbuildings that are uninhabitable or unusable and within the vicinity of the primary residence or business operation on a property, subject to individual site assessment
- Farm homesteads
- Farm sheds and outbuildings, subject to the same criteria as garages/sheds
- Commercial properties, including shops and tourism-related businesses, owned by small businesses or primary producers.

On-Site Scope

On-site assessments are undertaken by Laing O'Rourke inspection teams. Assessors will take a common sense approach to assessing on-site scope.

Under the program, no work will commence on site until the property owner has signed the scope of works deed of agreement. A final approval is also sought from the property owner at the completion of the works.

Inclusions (by agreement with owner):

- a) Clean up works to each property will only extend to that property's boundaries
- b) Removal of support structures such as concrete slabs on ground, concrete footings and brick piers, in relation to the destroyed or damaged buildings. Bored / driven piles and similar are to be removed down to ground level only
- c) Removal of destroyed or damaged above ground water tanks
- d) Removal of destroyed or damaged photovoltaic systems
- e) Removal of trees and stumps that are identified as fire affected and present an obstacle or safety impact to carry out clean-up of eligible destroyed or damaged building structures on the property
- f) Removal of fire-affected cars, caravans, boats and other vehicles or vessels that directly impact on or present an obstacle or safety impact to carry out clean-up of eligible destroyed or damaged building structures on the property
- g) Removal and/or termination and capping off of redundant services to properties or buildings such as in-ground sewer pipes, stormwater pipes, water, gas and electrical services where these have not been previously capped off and are required to be removed and/or terminated and capped off to remove safety hazards or avoid blockages of the line or impact on the utility owners main line
- h) Removal of contaminated of hazardous materials including asbestos
- i) Removal of above ground pools, spas, decking and pool fencing where affected by the bushfires (destroyed or damaged beyond economical repair)

- j) Removal of intact or fire affected fences around or in the vicinity of destroyed or damaged buildings, but only where they are required to be removed to safely undertake the clean-up works proper
- k) Clean up and removal of fire related debris associated with the clean-up of destroyed or damaged buildings within the property

Exclusions:

- (unless after on-site individual assessment and agreement by relevant parties that they can be included in the works)
- a) Anything not within the Property boundary unless this is required to safely access the property for demolition works
- b) Trees (except where covered in paragraph (e) above), landscaping, retaining walls and driveways
- c) In-ground swimming pools, spas and associated pool deck and pool fencing
- d) Irrigation pumps and equipment
- e) Tennis courts, basketball courts and other private sport facilities
- f) Fences not in the vicinity of destroyed or damaged buildings except where required to safely undertake clean-up works
- g) Rural fences
- h) Septic Tanks, unless they present a safety issue. Nature of the works to remove or make safe will be subject to individual on site assessments
- i) Private power poles and bridges
- j) Tyre dumps
- k) Private museums / collections which require storage outside the primary residence
- l) State or national listed Heritage buildings or properties – until such time that appropriate consideration is given to treatment of any remaining or intact heritage listed aspects or items on the eligible properties

The Assessment Process

The on-site assessment process of the extent of bushfire debris to be removed is based on the NSW and Australian Government's agreed criteria and the program's primary focus of:

- removing eligible destroyed or damaged buildings and associated safety hazards and debris that could impede people rebuilding their homes or businesses, which includes the ability to live safely on, or operate businesses, on their properties.

The on-site assessment includes:

- gaining an understanding of the property layout including access to and from the property and to the structures that might need to be cleaned up
- an assessment of how the use of structures (and the area around them) that are not destroyed or damaged on the property might be impacted by burnt structures or debris remaining on those properties.
- Consideration is also given to the use and layout of the neighbouring property or properties and potential impact on those residents.

Given the varied nature and extraordinary number of properties that have been affected, it is difficult to reduce the extent of the clean-up zone to a 'one size fits all distance' from a residence or commercial business building.

Typically, the extent of the clean-up zone would extend to an area within the bounds of a standard suburban residential allotment. These assessments are undertaken by Laing O'Rourke on-site Inspection Teams and advice is sought from PWA as required.

Consistency in approach ensures that all eligible property owners receive the support that they are entitled to, within Government's targeted timeframes and at a reasonable cost.

To achieve this:

- Laing O'Rourke regularly briefs their on-site inspection, delivery, and management teams (during induction and ongoing)
- PWA briefs its regional assurance teams and staff who attend community meetings
- Regular review meetings are held between PWA and Laing O'Rourke, which includes discussions related to specific complex property scenarios

Key contact details

Service NSW – register for the bushfire recovery clean-up program online or call **13 77 88**.