

Thursday 12 January 2012

NEW ONLINE EMERGENCY VOLUNTEERING REGISTER LAUNCHED

Latrobe Valley residents who are willing and able to assist during an emergency are being encouraged to submit their details to a new Emergency Volunteer Register.

Nationals Member for Morwell Russell Northe said information from the register would be supplied to local councils or emergency organisations in the event of an emergency or natural disaster.

“Volunteers from all over Victoria have shown enormous generosity and kindness in the wake of events like the 2009 bushfires and the 2010-11 floods, offering their skills, time or services to help people in need,” Mr Northe said.

“The intention of the Emergency Volunteer Register is to harness that goodwill and provide a mechanism to better manage and direct the offers of assistance during emergency or disaster events.”

Mr Northe said the register would invite volunteers to list specific interests and skills that would help local councils co-ordinate the use of volunteers by matching skills, interests and capacity to local tasks at hand.

“In addition to regular volunteers, during emergency or natural disaster events we often see a large spike in spontaneous volunteers offering support which has in the past inadvertently added pressure on local resources to manage,” Mr Northe said.

“The new register is designed to provide a system for local government to better manage volunteer resources and achieve better outcomes on the ground.”

During an emergency people will be encouraged to register details and wait to be contacted, rather than call local councils direct or travel straight to the affected area.

“With the valuable database of generous and willing volunteers available local councils will be able to find suitable volunteers as they are required.”

Mr Northe said the Emergency Volunteer Register had been developed as part of Victoria’s Volunteering Portal which is already a one-stop-shop for volunteers.

To register as an emergency volunteer or to check out the range of other volunteering opportunities across the state, visit Victoria’s Volunteering Portal www.volunteer.vic.gov.au