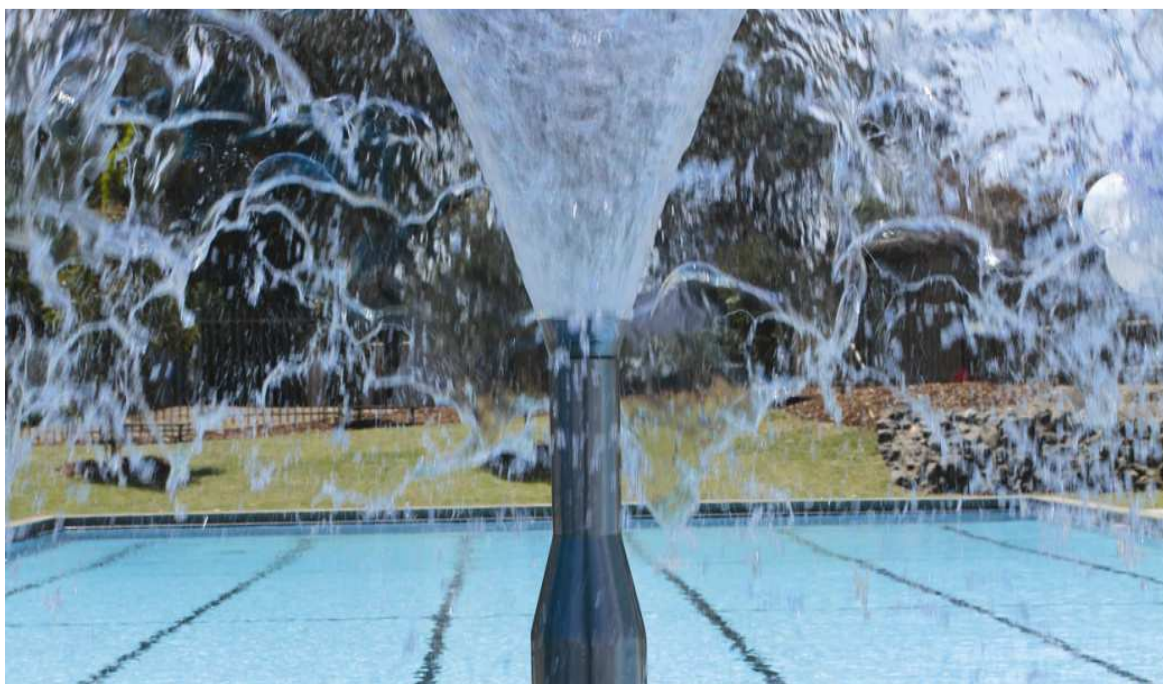


Heat Plan



Strategy Owner	Manager Community Strengthening Sustainable Communities
Creation Date	3/2/2015
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Please check Council's Intranet to ensure this is the latest Revision

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Executive Summary

The Heat Plan is a sub-plan of the Mitchell Shire Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP) and Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (MHWP).

The aim of the Heat Plan is to reduce the risk of harm caused by heat and heat events within Mitchell Shire by:

- Identifying demographic groups within the community who may be most vulnerable to heat event;
- Outlining the role of Mitchell Shire Council, its partners and the community before, during and after a heat event;
- Proactively educating the community and raising awareness about the impacts of heat events on health, infrastructure and services;
- Developing and implementing a clear communication strategy for each phase of a heat event, inclusive of key messages, tips and guidelines on how to stay cool; and,
- Ensuring consistency with Emergency Management Victoria's State Heat Plan, other Victorian Government, Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) guidelines and Mitchell Shire Council strategies and policy frameworks.

Mitchell Shire is predominantly a rural area but has substantial residential areas in the townships of Broadford, Wandong-Heathcote Junction, Kilmore, Seymour, and Wallan.

In 2013, the population of Mitchell Shire was 34,637; however, in 2015 the population of Mitchell Shire is estimated to reach 40,663. Mitchell Shire is one of the fastest growing municipalities in Victoria and is forecast to increase by 4.25% per annum, with a projected population of 79,646 by 2031.

17.5% of the Mitchell population were aged 65+ compared to Victoria's average of 19.8% for this age group. In heatwave conditions, mortality rates in people aged 65 years or older may increase by 19-21%.

The DHHS has identified the importance of reducing harm to identified vulnerable population groups such as babies and young children, older people, people with a pre-existing medical condition and people with a disability. Looking after our identified vulnerable population groups, including the very young and our older community, is an essential component of the plan.

Heat Event education is a key aspect which will be delivered:

- Through the provision of information to the community and staff
- By providing heatwave information kits in public places
- By providing heatwave information on Mitchell Shire's website and Facebook page.

The heat plan will be reviewed periodically to ensure it reflects the capacity of council and partner agencies to protect or support community members from heatwaves.

1. Introduction

Heat events have become increasingly frequent and intense throughout Victoria with records continuing to be exceeded each year. The two worst Victorian heatwaves on record happened in January/February 2009 and January 2014¹. In January 2014, Melbourne's average temperature reached a record high of 35.45 degrees.

Across the state, there has been a five-fold increase since 2000 in the number of days each year where somewhere in the state tops 45 degrees². By 2050, it is estimated that there will be between 980 and 1318 deaths per year with a heatwave event projected to occur once every 2-5 years³.

The Bureau of Meteorology describes heat events as the most under-rated weather hazard in Australia. Heat events kill more people than any other natural hazard in Australia and the heatwave that preceded the Black Saturday bushfires killed 374 people⁴. Heat events are also more likely to result in health issues rather than structural damage to property, and have an accumulative rather than a sudden impact. As a passive emergency, heat events are often overshadowed by droughts and bushfires. However, heat events rarely occur in isolation. Infrastructure stress and failure, and other natural emergencies can compound the impact on the community, economy and services.

1.1 Aim of the Plan

The aim of the Heat Plan is to reduce the risk of harm caused by heat and heat events within Mitchell Shire by:

- Identifying demographic groups within the community who may be most vulnerable to heat;
- Outlining the role of Mitchell Shire Council, its partners and the community before, during and after a heat event;
- Proactively educating the community and raising awareness about the impacts of heat events on health, infrastructure and services;
- Developing and implementing a clear communication strategy for each phase of a heat event, inclusive of key messages, tips and guidelines on how to stay cool; and,
- Ensuring consistency with Emergency Management Victoria's State Heat Plan, other Victorian Government, Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) guidelines and Mitchell Shire Council strategies and policy frameworks.

This plan will be reviewed periodically to ensure it reflects the capacity of council and partner agencies to protect or support community members from heat events.

¹ Bureau of Meteorology, National Climate Centre (2014), "One of south-east Australia's most significant heatwaves", p.5.

² *ibid*

³ Australian Department of the Environment (2014) <http://www.environment.gov.au/>

⁴ Commissioner for Environmental Sustainability (2012) Climate Change - Victoria: The Science, Our People and the State of Play, p.117.

2. Heat Events and their Impact

2.1 What is a Heat Event and or Heatwave

In Victoria, a **heat health alert** is issued when the 'heat threshold' for the local climate is reached. A heat threshold is when the temperature is likely to impact on the health of the community. Above this threshold health related illness and mortality will increase substantially.

For Mitchell Shire which falls within the North Central District this threshold is:

A 24 hour period where the daily (day/night) mean temperature is 30 degrees Celsius or above

This threshold is based on the average between the daily maximum temperature and the overnight minimum temperature in Seymour.

The North Central District includes:

Central Goldfields Shire, Lake Mountain Alpine Resort, Mitchell Shire, Mount Alexander Shire and Murrindindi Shire

When this heat threshold is reached, a heat health alert notification is issued by the DHHS. This ensures that the appropriate stages of the Heatwave Plan are initiated.

A **heatwave** is a period of unusual and uncomfortable hot weather that could impact on human health, infrastructure and services, and flora and fauna. In Australia, a heatwave is defined operationally as a period of at least three days where the combined effect of high temperatures and excess heat is unusual within the local climate⁵.

2.2 Impacts of a Heat Event

Key areas of impact as a result of extreme heat conditions could include, but not be limited to:

- Increased morbidity (rate of human illness);
- Increased mortalities;
- Deceased livestock and native fauna;
- Transport closures/diversions (buckled railway lines, bridge closures etc.
- Increased risk of fires;
- Stress on power networks because of high electricity demand;
- Power failures or load shedding impacting upon the availability of electricity resulting in further potential for heat stress, especially for vulnerable persons;
- Trees/branches falling from dryness;
- Supply chain disruptions;
- Economic cost to local businesses;
- Public events with increased risk of heat related illness;
- School closures or mass gathering event cancellations;
- And crop damage and food loss.

⁵ BoM (2012) Annual Climate Summary 2012. Bureau of Meteorology
http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/annual_sum/2012/index.shtml.

2.2.1 Vulnerable groups

Heat and heatwaves may affect anybody although factors such as age, disability, health, geographic location, environment and other social and economic circumstances can make some groups of people more vulnerable than others.

For the purposes of heat event planning 'heat vulnerable' groups are primarily identified as:

- individuals aged 65 years and over, and children under 5 years of age
- pregnant or nursing mothers
- people with a disability or pre-existing medical conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, kidney disease or mental illness
- people taking certain medications such as those for Multiple Sclerosis and for certain mental health conditions
- those living alone with little social contact
- people with a disability

Other at risk groups include:

- people without air conditioning or those who refuse to use it
- homeless persons
- low income earners
- those with limited access to transport
- people who are outdoors for any reason, especially doing strenuous activity like working or playing sport
- residents in the upper floors of multi storey buildings
- some people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds who cannot access health services or information.

In emergency situations a list of the most vulnerable people as determined by DHHS can be accessed via the Vulnerable Persons Register which is monitored by the Municipal Recovery Manager.

2.2.2 Infrastructure and services

Critical infrastructure is also susceptible to the impact of heat events. Failure of power supply, telecommunications and transport can rapidly increase the impact of a heat event. Agencies responsible for this infrastructure have a responsibility to take action to ensure that they prepare for and protect these services during a heat event.

Business and services may also be impacted by heat events and all agencies/businesses have a responsibility to protect the health and safety of their workers as far as practicable. This also has impacts on Council service delivery due to inability to have staff outdoors and/or have clients come at particular hours.

2.2.3 Flora and fauna

Heat events can have a significant impact on flora and fauna. Sustained heat can dry out vegetation and increase the risk of bushfire. Animals can be affected by heat in similar ways to people, requiring regular water and shade.

2.2.4 Heat-related illnesses

When we experience an increase in temperature we also experience a risk of developing a heat-related illness. A heat-related illness is a medical condition which results from the body's failure to cope with heat and cool itself. It is important that a heat-related illness is treated for to ensure it does not lead to serious complications, even death.

Heat-related illnesses can occur progressively through three stages; Heat cramps, Heat exhaustion and Heat stroke.

Illness	Symptoms	What to do
Dehydration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Profuse sweating • Increase in body temperature • Lethargy and tiredness • Loss of appetite • Being thirsty • Irritability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cease activity and find a cool, shaded place. • Drink plenty of fluids. • Try to keep cool by turning on air-conditioner • Using a spray bottle of water on face and body. • If remaining unwell, seek medical advice as soon as possible.
Heat Cramps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Muscle pains • Spasms in the abdomen, arms or legs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stop activity and sit quietly in a cool place • Increase fluid intake • Rest a few hours before returning to activity • Seek medical help if cramps persist
Heat Exhaustion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pale complexion and sweating • Rapid heart rate • Muscle cramps • Weakness • Dizziness • Headache • Nausea & Vomiting • Fainting 	Assist the person to a cool area and lay them down, remove their outer clothing, wet their skin with cool water or wet cloths, seek medical advice
Heat Stroke (A life threatening emergency)	<p>Same symptoms as heat exhaustion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dry skin with no sweating • Mental condition worsens • Confusion, headache, dizziness and nausea. • Seizures or convulsions • Disorientation, delirium or collapsing • Unconsciousness 	Call an ambulance, get the person to a cool area and lay them down, remove their clothing, wet their skin with water, fanning continuously, position an unconscious person on their side and clean their airway

3. Mitchell Shire Community Profile

Mitchell Shire Community Profile

Mitchell Shire Council is located in Central Victoria, about 80 kilometres from Melbourne. The Shire is bounded by the City of Greater Bendigo and the Shire of Strathbogie in the north, the Shire of Murrindindi in the east, the Cities of Whittlesea and Hume in the south and the Shires of Macedon Ranges and Mount Alexander in the west. Mitchell Shire is predominantly a rural area but has substantial residential areas in the townships of Broadford, Wandong-Heathcote Junction, Kilmore, Seymour, and Wallan.

In 2013, the population of Mitchell Shire was 34,637; however, in 2015 the population of Mitchell Shire is estimated to reach 40,663. Mitchell Shire is one of the fastest growing municipalities in Victoria and is forecast to increase by 4.25% per annum, with a projected population of 79,646 by 2031.

Age	Number	Percentage
0-14	7,617	22%
15-24	4,746	14%
25-44	8,948	26%
45-64	9,244	27%
65+	3,665	11%
85+	417	1%



Of people who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander



Is the proportion of our population born overseas



Of the population in Seymour are aged over 65



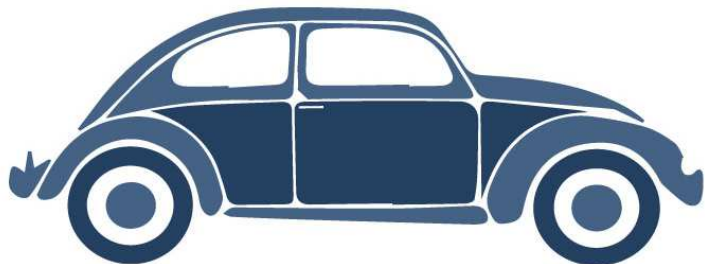
Of residents in Wallan and Beveridge are aged under 25

4.4%

Proportion of households that do not own a car

26.7%

Proportion of households that own only one car



21.3% of the population live alone

20.2% households have internet connection

Mitchell Shire Community Profile



Overall, 8.3% of the population earned a high income compared to 11.5% for Victoria



Is the median monthly mortgage repayment



Overall, 37.1% of the population earned a low income compared to 36.8% for Victoria

\$548 Is the median total personal income (weekly)

\$1,170 Is the median total household income (weekly)

20.8% Of households are low income (\$600 or less)



The average Socio-Economic Index for Areas (SEIFA)

score for Mitchell Shire is 996.1

Seymour has a very low SEIFA score of 898.7.

These are both below the Australian average of 1002.0.



A lower proportion of people finished Year 12 or equivalent in Mitchell Shire



Of the population have a core activity need for assistance



4. Planning for Heat Events

4.1 Policy Context

The *Mitchell Shire Heat Plan* is a sub-plan of the *Municipal Emergency Management Plan* and the *Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2014-17*.

The Heat Plan will also align with other local plans and strategies including the *Municipal Strategic Statement*, the *Council Plan*, the *Emergency Management Policy and Framework*, *Business Continuity Plan* and the *Code Red Policy*.

At the State level in Victoria, the following legislation relate to heat events:

- *Emergency Management Act 2013* – outlines the governance arrangements for managing all types of emergencies, including heat events.
- *Emergency Management Act 1986* – outlines the responsibility of local government to develop a Municipal Emergency Management Plan. This Act needs to be read together with the *Emergency Management Act 2013*.
- *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and *Local Government Act 1989* – these ensure better planning of the built environment in order to withstand the impact of a range of likely emergencies, including heat events.
- *Local Government Act 1989* – outlines the responsibility of local government to protect public health in emergencies.
- *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008* – strengthens the role of local government in protecting public health through the municipal health planning process.

The *Heat Plan* is also informed by the *Emergency Management Victoria, State Heat Plan 2014*.

4.2 Responsibilities

Everyone is responsible for preparing for disasters, including heat events.

4.2.1 Regional Level

Victorian Emergency management arrangements cover the prevention of, response to and recovery from emergencies such as heat events. As outlined below, the roles in which the three teams provide to the region apply a systematic approach, with a focus on mitigating risks, before, during and after an emergency in order to reduce the potential impact and consequences of the emergency on the community.

Team	Role
Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)	DHHS plays a major role in monitoring the BOM forecasts and notifying departmental regional agencies and local councils of impending heatwave conditions. North Central district specific heatwave thresholds are utilised and the heatwave alerts are based on 7 day predictions and daily adjusted forecasts.
Victoria Police (VicPol)	VicPol is the control agency for a heatwave and their primary role includes coordination at the regional, municipal and incident tiers of

	<p>emergency response management.</p> <p>VicPol has guidelines for the Operational Response to Heatwaves which assist Victoria Police members to perform their control and coordination function.</p>
Regional Emergency Management Team (REMT)	<p>The REMT is a collaborative forum where agencies with roles and responsibilities during a heatwave meet to discuss the risks and likely consequences of the heatwave event and plan a whole-of government approach to the management of these risks and consequences at their respective tier.</p> <p>The REMT ensures the response and recovery agencies, other agencies; local government and service providers are coordinated in their approach.</p>

4.2.2 Mitchell Shire Council

Mitchell Shire Council has a responsibility to have an up-to-date Heat Plan and liaising with partner agencies to ensure a coordinated heat event response. Upon receipt of a heat health alert, Mitchell Shire Council will activate this plan.

In a municipality, local government is the primary source of information about the community, community networks, infrastructure and industry. Therefore, Mitchell Shire Council will play a key coordinating role in communication and information dissemination before, during and after a heat event. It will also, through this Heat Plan, help to ensure the impact and consequences of the heat event on the community are identified and managed in an integrated and coordinated manner.

As the closest tier of government to local communities, local government are also in a central position to work with the local community to plan and prepare for heat events. Through community engagement and capacity building, Mitchell Shire Council will work with the community to build awareness and resilience to environmental emergencies.

Should a heat event result in an emergency incident, the MSC Internal Emergency Management Team will be activated to support response activities and provide and co-ordinate relief and recovery activities.

4.2.3 Individuals

Individuals should take care for their own health and the health of their friends and family, and actively plan and prepare for heat events.

The State Heat Plan states ‘the reduction of the impact and consequences of a heat event ultimately depends upon all individuals recognising the risk of heat and taking the necessary action to look after themselves, their family, those who are most vulnerable to the health impacts of heat, their neighbours and those in the wider community, wherever possible’⁶.

Individuals should consider:

- How extreme heat may affect their daily activities
- Plan daily activities to stay out of the heat

⁶ Department of Justice (2014) State Heat Plan, Emergency Management Victoria, Melbourne, p. 6

- Implement strategies to stay cool and keep hydrated

4.2.4 Municipal Stakeholders

Mitchell Shire Council works in partnership with stakeholders across the municipality to implement the Heat Plan. These stakeholders are important for supporting vulnerable communities prepare and respond to a heat event because of their direct service function. Agencies that work with clients from vulnerable groups should also prepare for increased service demand during heat events.

Key stakeholders include:

Internal:

- Maternal and Child Health
- Children's Services
- Customer Service
- Leisure services
- Library services
- Transfer Stations
- Parks

External:

- Nexus Primary Health
- Vulnerable Person's Register Agencies
- Family care
- Private providers of Homecare in Mitchell Shire Council
- Royal District Nursing Service
- General Practice
- Pharmacists
- Senior Citizens and U3A
- Probus, RSL, Rotary, Lions & Scouts service clubs
- Local churches
- Community Centres
- Ambulance Victoria
- Aged care services
- Red Cross
- Retirement villages
- Department of Human Services

5. Summary of Heat Events Activation Stages

The core elements of the Heat Plan can be divided into stages with each stage characterised by a set of key actions. These stages include:

Stage 1: Heat Event Preparation (Before)

Stage 2: Heat Event Alert (During)

Stage 3: Heat Event Response (During)

Stage 4: Heat Event Recovery (After)

Mitchell Shire Council's heat event activation stages are intended to not only react to heat events, but also to ensure guidance is provided throughout the year to help prepare in advance for the very hot summers which Mitchell regularly experiences. A number of key actions sit under each stage as shown in the table below. Each stage also has a flow chart to assist understanding of activation.

Summary of Heat Event Activation Stages

Stage 1	<p>Heat Event Preparation - Pre summer preparation during April 1 to November 30</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organise pre prepared communication tools and templates - Identify and update vulnerable groups and update community/agency registers - Identify and update cooler places across the Shire - Restock heat health information in public places, customer service, GP clinics, community health, libraries and leisure centres - Engage Key Stakeholders in planning and preparations.
Stage 2	<p>Heat Event Alert - Mitchell Shire Council receives a Heat Health Alert from DHHS or BOM.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mitchell Shire Council activates communication plan for heat alerts within the Mitchell area. - Heat Event alert messages disseminated via social media, media releases and the MSC website. - Healthcare providers/Volunteer groups alerted to contact identified vulnerable members of the community and provide warning of temperature threshold being reached.
Stage 3	<p>Heat Event Response - Mitchell Shire Council alerts Community support stakeholders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MECC is placed on alert. - Mitchell Shire Council activates communication plan for Stage 3 - increased local media campaigns and social media across Shire with promotion of cooler places etc. - Liaise with agencies and stakeholders to support implementation of local Heat Plans. - Healthcare providers/Volunteer groups contact/visit identified vulnerable members of the community. - MECC responds to any infrastructure failure. - MECC deals with issues such as drinking water supply and relief centres.
Stage 4	<p>Heat Event Recovery - Mitchell Shire Council deactivates heat event response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organisations to deactivate heat event plans. - Local media campaigns and social media reduced. - Stakeholder debrief session held within 7 days if required. - Agencies and stakeholders review actions taken and outcomes of heat plan. - Facilitation of a stakeholder review session at the cessation of the summer season, to review heat event management outcomes.

6. Stage 1: Heat Event / Heatwave Preparation (Before)

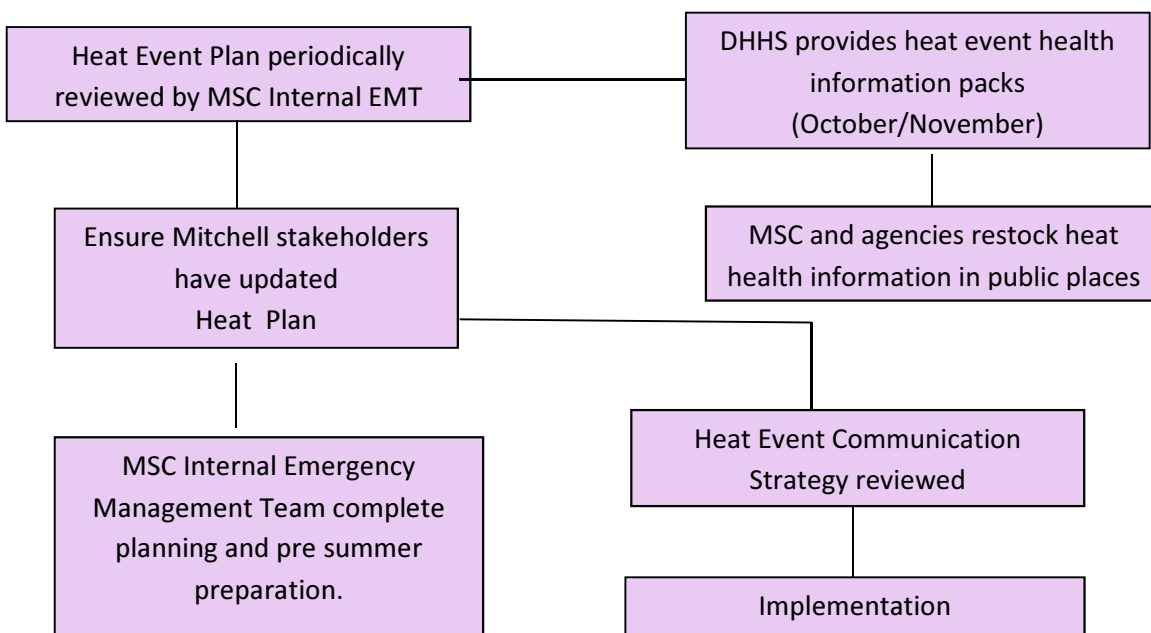
Heat Event Preparation (Before) includes a range of strategies before a heat event to build resilience amongst identified vulnerable residents and communities during a heat event. This stage is divided into two parts:

Part 1: Pre summer preparation occurring from April 1 to November 30 and

Part 2: During summer preparation from December 1 to March 31.

The two stages are described below.

Part 1: Activation Before a Heat Event / Wave



6.1 Pre summer preparation (April 1 to November 30)

During the Pre summer preparation stage, a range of activities and initiative are implemented to build resilience amongst Mitchell residents in preparation for the summer months. This stage is an important period in which pre-prepared community information and media releases can be organised and heat health resources distributed to places such as GP clinics, customer service centres, community health centres, libraries and leisure centres. It directly involves the actions of most key stakeholders and allows for preparation and revision of standard heatwave alert templates for distribution prior to and during summer.

The Pre summer preparation stage also allows Mitchell Shire Council to identify and update vulnerable persons lists and update community and agency registers.

6.2 During summer prevention (December 1 to March 31)

To enhance responsiveness to heat events during summer, Mitchell Shire also conducts prevention during the summer period. This includes:

- Working with community services and organisations to support vulnerable populations
- Engaging in communication and social media campaigns using heatwave messages consistent with the DHHS materials
- Responding to state activated heat alert system in a timely and vigilant manner; and
- Promoting the use of cooler places around the shire.

7. Stage 2: Heat Event Alert (During)

The Heat Event Alert stage will commence upon receipt of a health heat alert from the Chief Health Officer of the DHHS. An email alert will be sent to the MRM on the day/s in which forecasted temperatures first exceed threshold levels. The MRM and/or the MERO may attend the Hume Regional Emergency Management Team briefing. This enables agencies to develop consistent situational awareness regarding the emergencies affecting the defined Region, identify risk and consequences and develop a Regional plan outlining Regional level actions of all agencies.

Mitchell Shire Council will then communicate the potential heat event that is forecasted for the Mitchell area. Timely distribution of communication messages will be disseminated through the community via media releases, social media and the Mitchell Shire Council website.

In addition, health care providers and volunteer groups will contact the identified vulnerable members of the community that a potential temperature threshold has been forecasted. Typically this is done via telephone contact. Nexus Primary Health and other providers of home based services will maintain regular client contact through their home care, meals on wheels and/or planned activities group services.

8. Stage 3: Heat Event / Wave Response (During)

The Response stage occurs when the temperature threshold is triggered and where the combined effect of high temperatures and excess heat is unusual with the local climate.

The Chief Health Officer of the DHHS may also have issued a number of Heat Health Alerts over consecutive days to; government agencies, health agencies, health service providers (residential aged care facilities, hospitals etc) and local governments.

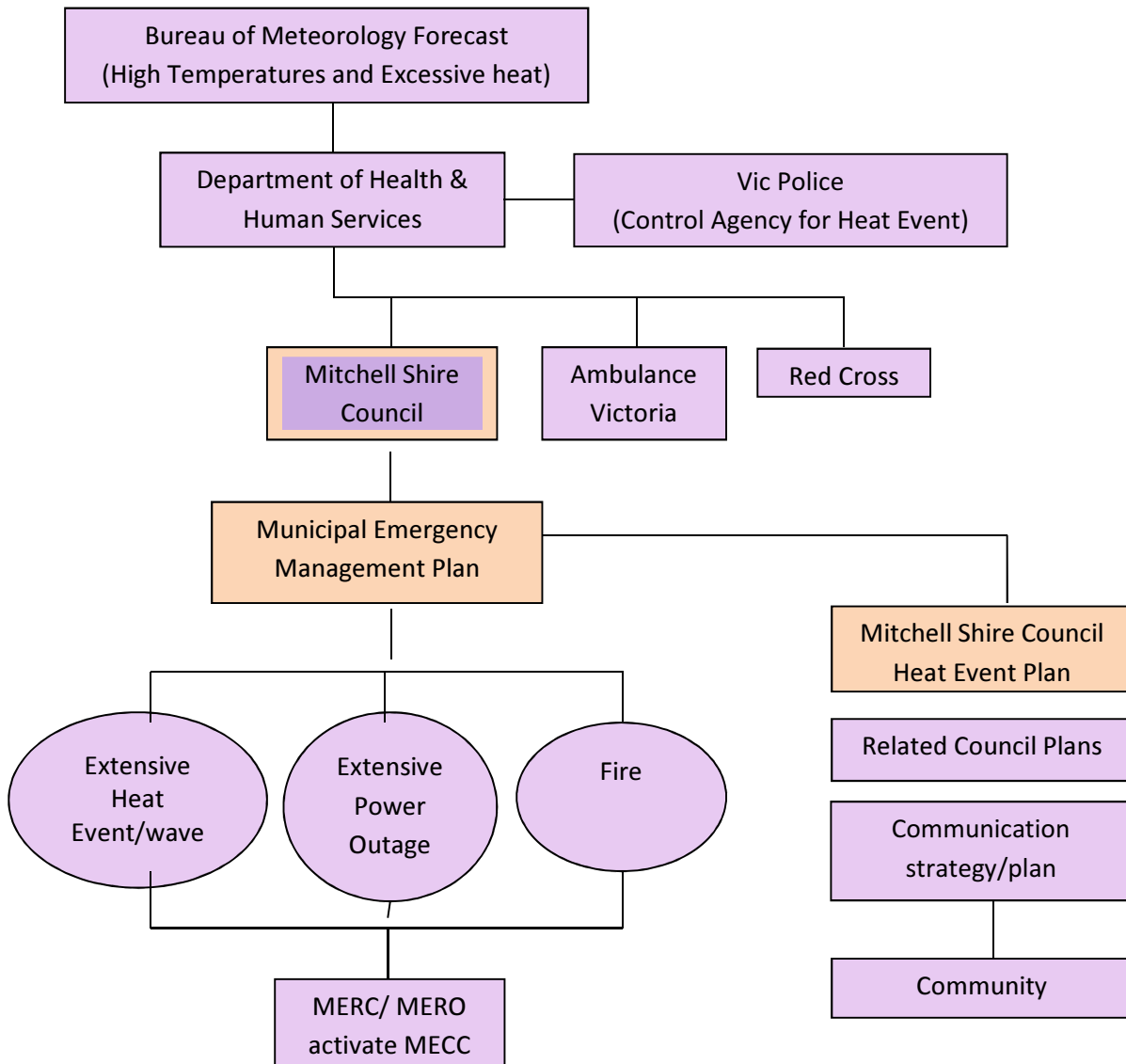
Agencies are expected to implement their internal heat event plans in these circumstances.

An increase in local media campaigns and via social media will occur during this stage. Service providers and agencies are required to make contact (via phone and/or visit) with the vulnerable members of the Mitchell community.

During this stage the MECC is required to be on alert and respond to any significant emergency incidents and/or infrastructure failure that may have occurred within the area.

Additional issues that may require the MECC to consider include the supply of drinking water, and the potential for relief centres to be activated if required (power or infrastructure failure etc).

Activation During a Heat Event and/or Heatwave



9. Stage 4: Heat Event / Wave Recovery (After)

The Heat Event Recovery stage involves Mitchell Shire Council and agencies deactivating their internal heat event plans. There is a decrease in local media campaigns and social media within the Shire during this stage.

Debriefing during this stage is important and, if deemed necessary, a Stakeholder debrief session is to be held within 7 days. Agencies and organisations within Mitchell should review actions taken and outcomes of the heatwave plan. Facilitation of a stakeholder review session within 28 days of the cessation of the heatwave emergency is recommended in order to review heatwave management outcomes.

This final stage also includes continuing care of heat vulnerable individuals as research states that significant mortality can occur immediately following a heat event.

10. Communications

Effective communications are a key component in responding effectively to a heat event/wave. Raising awareness of a heat event/wave in the community results in better heat health management.

This awareness also helps to reassure the community that Council is leading effective and informed action. Communication messages before, during and after a heat event/wave will provide timely and accurate information to the community to reduce the impact of extreme heat events.

Heat event/wave advice and warning messages are prepared by the Victorian Government Chief Health Officer in the Department of Health and disseminated by Department of Health, Department of Human Services, the Bureau of Meteorology, Ambulance Victoria, service providers, health professionals and local media including Council as a supporting agency. A whole-of-government communications and information dissemination strategy, during the summer period, will ensure appropriate information reaches target audiences at all times.

10.1 Key Messages

Media releases can be written as needs arise and in line with the timing of extreme heat event/wave conditions. Council website updates and social media posts can also be utilised as an additional source of communication to inform residents of the pending heat conditions, but should reinforce the heat health messages promoted by the Department of Health and work in with bushfire messaging.

In addition to disseminating DHHS health and safety messages, Council may promote key messages like energy saving tips, innovative ways to keep cool without air-conditioning or messages from the ten key tips. The Beat the Heat campaign will be used to promote staying cool amongst the community and can be found in the appendices of this plan.

It is important to inform and remind the community and staff of the best ways to look after themselves, relatives and neighbours during a heatwave.

The key messages to promote are displayed in the diagram below and are included in the Appendices to this plan.



10.2 Mitchell Shire Council Heat Event Communication Strategy

The broad communication objectives are to:

- Communicate that extreme heat can have a detrimental effect on health, safety and wellbeing but there are precautions that can be taken to reduce these effects.
- Ensure that public communication is relevant, timely and accurate with information and advice on how the Mitchell community can keep themselves and their family, friends and neighbours and pets/livestock safe and well before, during and after extreme heat events.
- To ensure the Mitchell community receives a consistent message.
- Prepare and educate the Mitchell community to become self-reliant and better able to respond to and recover from extreme heat events.

Stage 1 – Pre- Summer

Objective	Actions
1.1 Prepare heatwave information and promotional materials to address the needs of the Mitchell community for heat events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review existing materials and prepare additional resources as required. Ensure vulnerable and at risk populations have access to information and resources. Conduct training sessions as indicated. Complete/check currency of Vulnerable Persons Register.
1.2 Educate and raise community awareness regarding heat events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council website New Resident's Kit Council Newsletter Disseminate information to partners and stakeholders regarding heat events. Identify local media opportunities.
1.3 Provide heat event displays and information at events targeting vulnerable members of the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health and Wellbeing expos. Council venues with displays.
1.4 Provide access to resource and education materials on heat events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council website and intranet. Disseminate information to partners and stakeholders

	<p>regarding heat events.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify local media opportunities.
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Stage 2 – During Summer

Objective	Actions
2.1 Promote and provide key heat event messages to the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council website Council Newsletter Display information in council foyers, libraries and leisure centres, kindergartens, M&CH centres etc. Disseminate information to partners and stakeholders regarding heat events. Identify local media opportunities.
2.2 Promote ‘cool places’ within the municipality.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council website Council Newsletter Local media
2.3 Educate parents of young children about the effects of heat.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarterly Children’s Services newsletter. Displays and resources available at Kindergartens and MC&H centres. Verbal advice during MC&H consultations.
2.4 Promote worklife, animal and pet care during heatwaves.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council website Council Newsletter Local media

Stage 3 – Heat Event Forecast

Objective	Actions
3.1 Alert community to forecast heat event.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Email heat event alerts to internal and external stakeholders. Display heat health alert on front page of council website. Local media. Email staff within information and advice on working in the heat.

Stage 4 – Heat Event - During

Objective	Actions
4.1 Alert people to the extreme heat conditions and provide information on appropriate behaviors and actions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Display heat health alert on front page of council website. All council service providers to promote coping strategies during community contact and promptly report any concerns to relevant co-ordinators and managers. Consider extension of opening hours of ‘cooler places’ Key messages communicated with internal and external stakeholders. Provide advice in the event of power outages.

Stage 5 – Heat Event - Post

Objective	Actions
5.1 Alert people to de-activation of heat event response.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform council staff and internal and external stakeholders regarding heat event de-activation and return to preparedness phase. Conduct reviews and debriefs as indicated.

11. References

The following publications have been used in the preparation and writing of the Mitchell Shire Council Heatwave Plan:

- Australian Department of the Environment (2014) <http://www.environment.gov.au/>
- Bayside City Council Heatwave Sub-Plan 2014
- BoM (2012) Annual Climate Summary 2012. Bureau of Meteorology http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/annual_sum/2012/index.shtml.
- Bureau of Meteorology, National Climate Centre (2014), “One of south-east Australia’s most significant heatwaves”, p.5.
- Commissioner for Environmental Sustainability (2012) Climate Change - Victoria: The Science, Our People and the State of Play, p.117.
- Department of Health, Heatwave Plan for Victoria: Protecting health and reducing harm from heatwaves 2011
- DHS Heatwave Planning Guide: Development of heatwave plans in local councils in Victoria 2009
- Department of Justice (2014) State Heat Plan, Emergency Management Victoria, Melbourne
- Emergency Management Victoria State Heat Plan 2014
- Ibid
- Macedon Ranges Shire Council Heatwave Plan September 2013
- Manningham Balance of city and country Heatwave Sub-Plan 2014-2017
- Pyrenees Shire Council Heatwave Plan 2012

Appendix I - Cooler Places

There are a range of Council and commercial facilities that can be promoted as cooler places. The variety of options and locations will further suit the broad nature of our community.

Air-conditioned or cooler places include shopping centres, community centres, libraries or a friend's place. A few hours in a cooler environment during extremely hot weather lowers the core body temperature and helps saves lives.

The following air-conditioned facilities shown in the table can be accessed during a heat event; however, these will only be accessible during normal opening hours. Opening times are available on the Mitchell Shire Council website www.mitchellshire.vic.gov.au

Libraries

Facility	Address	Phone
Seymour Library	125 Anzac Avenue Seymour	(03) 5792 1861
Kilmore Library	12 Sydney Street Kilmore	(03) 5782 1322
Broadford Library	113 High Street Broadford	(03) 5784 3357
Wallan Library	Wellington Square Wallan	(03) 5783 3555

Leisure Centres

Facility	Address	Phone
Seymour Leisure Centre	Chittick Park, Pollard Street, Seymour VIC 3660	(03) 5792 3068
Kilmore Leisure Centre	White Street, Kilmore	(03) 5734 0600
Broadford Leisure Centre	Mollison Street, Broadford	(03) 5784 1182
Wallan Leisure Centre	Wallan Multi-Purpose Community Centre Bentinck Street, Wallan	(03) 5734 0600

BEAT THE HEAT.

Stay Healthy in the Heat.

1

Drink plenty of water.



2

Keep out of the heat - look for shade and wear a hat.



3

Naturally cool your home - close windows/blinds in daytime.



4

Talk to your health service if you have a health issue.



5

Check on people who may struggle in the heat.



6

Help people who are feeling unwell.



MITCHELL SHIRE COUNCIL



Appendix III - Resources and Materials

Department of Health& Human Services, Victoria Australia

<http://docs.health.vic.gov.au/docs/doc/Heatwave-Plan-for-Victoria>

The community resources include:

- [Staying Healthy in the Heat: Brochure](#)
- [Staying Healthy in the Heat: Poster](#)
- [Staying Healthy in the Heat: Easy to read Poster](#)
- [Staying Healthy in the Heat: Promotional Label](#)
- [Staying Healthy in the Heat: Fact Sheet for Clinicians](#)
- [Staying Healthy in the Heat : In Community Languages](#)

Calls to emergency services for people with a hearing or speech impairment- National Relay Service

<http://relayservice.gov.au/making-a-call/emergency-calls/>

Heat Stress and the Elderly- Better Health Channel

http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/bhcv2/bharticles.nsf/pages/Heat_stress_and_the_elderly?open

Bureau of Meteorology (BOM)

<http://www.bom.gov.au/vic>

Providers of residential aged care services

<http://www.health.vic.gov.au/agedcare/publications/racsheatwave/>

Red Cross Information on coping in heat

http://www.redcross.org.au/files/2014_RED_Fact_Sheet_Heat_Waves_v3.pdf

Power outages

<https://www.powercor.com.au/power-outages/what-to-do-in-a-power-outage/>

Fire and Emergencies

<http://www.depi.vic.gov.au/fire-and-emergencies>

Heatwaves and Your Pets

http://www.mitchellshire.vic.gov.au/downloads/Services/Local_Laws_Animals_Parking/Dogs_Cats_Livestock/Responsible_Ownership_Animals/FS_Heatwaves_and_your_pets_Information_Flyer.pdf

Heatstroke in Dogs and Cats

<https://www.petfinder.com/dogs/dog-health/banfield-heatstroke-dog-cat/>