



10.30 am, 21 February 2019 - Day 16

With the last group of evacuated residents now granted controlled access to their properties from today, there are a few things we'd like residents to remember.

When you are able to return home, we're encouraging everyone to make sure there is a plan in place for your animals should there be a need to re-evacuate. There are also precautions you need to take for your animal's continued welfare.

MPI staff are on call to assess any animal welfare needs arising from the fires. If you have any animal welfare concerns, call MPI on 0800 00 83 33 (option 4).

Animals at the Richmond Showgrounds

The Richmond Showgrounds will be returning to normal from the end of this week. There is now a small number of animals at the showgrounds and we are asking if all owners can pick up their animals by the weekend.

Where this isn't possible, we will work to provide alternative arrangements. If you need support regarding the welfare of your animals, call MPI on 0800 00 83 33, option 4.

Property check

When you are able to return home, make sure accommodation for your animals is undamaged, or at least fit for purpose. The trees or shelter on your property may be damaged too, so check they are safe for animals to use or be near.

Checking for injury

Your animals will likely be stressed and more flighty than usual. If you have had to leave your animals, make sure to check them over carefully. Look at their hooves/pads/feet and udders in particular for injuries and if you think they may have sustained internal burns, or they look as though they are having difficulty breathing, contact your veterinarian immediately.

Remove any flammable gear from your animals while the fire risk is still high, especially those with polyester or metal components.

Feed and water

If you are on a Tasman District Council (TDC) reticulated water supply, go to the Nelson Marlborough District Health Board updates page for the latest information on your water supply.

[Nelson Marlborough Health District Health Board website](#)

If you are on tank water, do not use it if the smell, taste or appearance is tainted.

If the water is sourced from a roof, check and clean the roof and gutters of any ash or fire suppressant before using the water. You may need to empty the tank and disconnect the feeder pipe until the roof has been checked and cleared.

- Check that feeding troughs are safe and filling.
- Check troughs for ash and debris.
- Check that water is reaching troughs and is not being lost through damaged, melted or blocked pipes.

Fire suppressant is not toxic but it will taste unpleasant and shouldn't be eaten or drunk. You can wash it off surfaces with soapy water and a brush, followed by a clean water rinse. Any suppressant on the ground will soak into the ground when rinsed with a hose or rain and will act as a fertiliser.

Pigeon Valley rural visits

This weekend, Rural Support Trust and Red Cross will begin visiting Pigeon Valley residents. The teams will be assessing damage and needs in each area as well as talking to residents and handing out the latest information to help in managing your return home and dealing with the fire and drought conditions. It's also a good chance for residents to raise questions or concerns they may have. These visits will be weather-dependent.

If you need to evacuate

If you are asked to evacuate, take your pets with you – if you can do so safely – or take them to a safe place. Do not leave pets in cars.

If you visit a Civil Defence Centre, you can take your pets with you as long as they are in a cage or dogs are on leads. Don't take animals to a marae, as they are not equipped to cater for an influx of animals and wish to ensure they are well looked after at a suitable place.

The Richmond Showgrounds will be returning to normal from the end of this week. If you need support regarding the welfare of your animals, call MPI on 0800 083 33, option 4. We will be able to support you to make other arrangements for your pets.

If you have to leave your animals behind, make sure they're in a safe place (such as a recently ploughed paddock) and well away from any fire risk.

Ensure that any livestock left on your property has sufficient food and water for 2 to 3 days and that they have the freedom to move to water.