

VICTORIA'S BUSHFIRES

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Victorian Dairy Manufacturers

Bushfires in Victoria's regional areas raged over the weekend with many still burning throughout the State.

Dairy Food Safety Victoria is maintaining close contact with those manufacturers in the worst affected areas in order to gather information about the situation and impacts affecting milk factories and farms.

The information made available from contact with manufacturers so far has indicated:

- No factories have been damaged by fire. However, two factories, although intact, have been smoke affected and require clean-up before production resumes.
- The bushfire situation over the last few days has resulted in:
 - interruptions to power supply – both outage and failure
 - suspensions of production due to the presence of smoke
 - limited or loss of access to farms by tankers for milk pick-up
 - disruption to distribution and deliveries through road closures
 - the unavailability of staff as they attend to family and property concerns

DFSV will remain in close contact with factories in areas where fires are still burning. Factories still under threat are Tangambalamba and Gundowring Fine Foods, both located in the Kiewa Valley.

Victorian Dairy Farms

It is understood that farms have also been experiencing issues that are impacting on the supply of milk to processing factories. These issues are:

- loss of power supply, either outage or failure, affecting the ability to milk the cows and the subsequent rate of cooling the milk
- the closure of roads and the inability for tankers to pick up farm vat milk, resulting in the need to dump milk on farm

The Department of Primary Industries (DPI) is assessing the situation on farms and issues affecting animal welfare.

The United Dairyfarmers of Victoria, the Victorian Farmers Federation and Dairy Australia are contacting affected farmers to determine their needs.

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