

# Eastern Bay of Plenty floods

## What support is available and where can I get help?

### 0800 Government Helpline

A Government Helpline has been set up and operates from 8am to 6pm seven days a week. Call **0800 779 997** if you would like assistance, if you are struggling to support yourself or your family, or you would like more information about how we can help.

There are lots of ways we can help and we can point you in the right direction based on your situation. You don't have to be on a benefit to call for help.

### Civil Defence Emergency Management

Civil Defence Emergency Management is co-ordinating assistance to communities. Evacuees should go to friends and family or to the Civil Defence Centres (CDCs). Key agencies have people at the CDCs who can answer questions and provide advice.

The following **Civil Defence Centres (CDCs)** are open 24 hours a day.

- Whakatāne – Whakatāne War Memorial Hall, Short Street
- Kawerau – Rautahi Marae, Onslow Street

Register at the Civil Defence Centres above or online at [www.whakatane.govt.nz](http://www.whakatane.govt.nz). For other requests for welfare services call the Government Helpline **0800 779 997**.

### Schools and early childhood centres

Most schools across all regions are now open with some exceptions. Parents should check with their school or early childhood centre for updated information.

### Keeping children safe

If you're worried that a child or young person you know is not safe or being cared for, or you know a child who has been separated from their parents or caregivers you can call Ministry for Vulnerable Children, Oranga Tamariki on **0508 326 459**, 24/7, or email [contact@mvcot.govt.nz](mailto:contact@mvcot.govt.nz).

### Stress and support

Emergencies caused by floods are usually unexpected, sudden and overwhelming so to feel distressed afterwards is normal and understandable. It's completely normal for you and your family to be emotionally and physically drained by the floods. You're not alone in feeling this way and you don't need to cope on your own. Friends and family members not affected by the event may help you cope with the added stress.

If you need support or advice, please call the Government Helpline **0800 779 997** or visit a Civil Defence Centre (listed above). In an emergency always call 111.

More help and information may be obtained from:

- your GP or local community health centre, or look in the phonebook under medical white pages;
- Youthline 0800 376 633 ([www.youthline.co.nz](http://www.youthline.co.nz));
- Rural Support Trusts 0800 RURAL HELP;
- your employer, if they are part of the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) they will give you contact details.

### Iwi support

If you feel more comfortable speaking with Māori staff, please contact [kataraina.obrien@boprc.govt.nz](mailto:kataraina.obrien@boprc.govt.nz) or call 021 224 9323.

## Support for rural communities

If you have requests for, or can offer help, on the farm, please contact Federated Farmers on **0800 327 646**. They can help with stock movements and feed.

### Rural Support Trusts

Rural Support Trusts have local people trained to offer assistance and support in times of hardship. Contact the local co-ordinator for free and confidential information.

Call **0800 RURAL Help (0800 787 254)** or visit [www.rural-support.org.nz](http://www.rural-support.org.nz).

## Financial support for individuals

There is support following the wide-spread flooding and damage in eastern Bay of Plenty.

### Civil Defence payments

Extra financial support is available to people affected by flooding.

Civil Defence payments can cover the following costs:

- payments if you're hosting evacuees (private homes, marae or community centres);
- accommodation costs if you're evacuated and are staying in tourist accommodation (motels, hotels, or temporary rental accommodation);
- loss of livelihood (where you can't work and have lost your income because of the floods);
- food, clothing and bedding (immediate needs up to a maximum amount).

For immediate assistance visit the Civil Defence Centres (listed over) or call the Government Helpline **0800 779 997**.

## Insurance and lodging an EQC claim

### Who is covered?

To make a claim with EQC for home or contents damage, customers must have a home or contents fire insurance policy with an insurance company when the natural disaster damage occurred.

Customers with home insurance will also receive EQC cover for certain land damage.

What EQC covers depends on how the damage occurred:

- For storms and floods, EQC covers damage to residential land only, within certain limits (private insurers cover house and contents damage, according to the terms of an individual's policy).
- For natural landslip damage, EQC covers damage to home, contents and land, within certain limits.

**If your home, car or contents have been damaged by the floods, take photos before you remove or repair anything and report it to your insurance company as soon as possible.** Your insurance company will let you know what you need to do next, how to claim and how EQC works.

If you need to make your home safe, sanitary, secure and weather tight please record the work done, take photos and keep a copy of the bills paid.

Make a claim with EQC online at [www.eqc.govt.nz/claims](http://www.eqc.govt.nz/claims) or call **0800 326 243**.

## Tax relief

If you've been affected by the recent floods in the Bay of Plenty, we know that tax won't be front of mind for you right now. Please don't worry if you can't meet a particular filing or payment date. IRD are able to take a realistic and flexible approach in these circumstances.

Customers who've missed filing returns or making payments can ask IRD to grant relief from penalties.

If you've been impacted by the flooding, and are struggling to deal with your tax or payments, please contact your tax agent or accountant. You can also call IRD on **0800 473 566**.