



11 am, 16 February 2019 – Day 12

Nelson Tasman Civil Defence have announced that restricted residential access to fire-affected valleys today (16 February) has been cancelled. High winds pose too much of a risk to allow people into the area – including MPI animal welfare staff. This also means that planned conditional re-entry for the remaining Pigeon Valley Road residents, (including Sharp Road) has been cancelled today.

Fires present unique challenges relating to cordons and access to properties. Animal welfare is a serious matter but preserving human life is always the top priority.

It's not possible for MPI to go into areas beyond the cordon for individual cases, unless they are extreme animal welfare situations and it's safe for our staff to do so.

The animals in these areas were last fed yesterday and will be fine for 2-3 days if necessary, as long as they have access to water.

MPI staff are working hard to ensure the welfare of animals in the Tasman region.

When it becomes safe for us to enter, MPI will coordinate our animal welfare staff and vets will move through the area to assess any immediate animal welfare needs.

Evacuated animals are still being cared for at the Richmond A&P Showgrounds, where there is housing, food and water. Animals of any size can be brought directly to the Showgrounds to be looked after by the amazing team of volunteers.

If you need any support regarding the welfare of your animals please call MPI on 0800 008 333, option 4.

[More information available on Civil Defence's latest web update.](#)

4pm, 16 February 2019 - Day 12

Today has been a challenging day for fire affected residents in the Tasman region.

Nelson Tasman Civil Defence announced this morning that restricted residential access to fire-affected valleys was cancelled. High winds posed too much of a risk to allow people into the area – including MPI animal welfare staff.

It's not possible for our animal welfare officers to go into areas beyond the cordon for individual cases, unless there are extreme animal welfare situations and it's safe for our staff to do so.

The animals in the evacuated and restricted access areas were last fed yesterday (Friday) and will be fine for 2-3 days if necessary, as long as they have access to water.

Evacuated animals are still being cared for at the Richmond Park Showgrounds, where there is housing, food and water. Animals of any size can be brought directly to the Showgrounds to be looked after by the amazing team of volunteers. Come to main gate at 358 Lower Queen Street. Please don't use the Richmond entrance (the gum gate) – that's for heavy vehicles only.

Remember, make a plan for your animals so that if you need to evacuate again, you can settle them in first - don't leave animals in vehicles.

If you need any support regarding the welfare of your animals please call MPI on 0800 008 333, option 4.

Be prepared!

Fires are unpredictable and evacuations can happen at any time. We encourage all animal owners to have plans in place for your animals should you ever need to evacuate your home.

Planning ahead saves animals' lives. Same as you do with your family's Emergency Survival Kit, think first about the basics for your animals – food, water and warmth.

If you have to evacuate, take your pets with you – if you can do so safely – or take them to a safe shelter place. If you have to leave your animals behind, make sure they're in a safe place, well away from any fire risk, such as a recently ploughed paddock.

Safer areas should be away from dense vegetation, scrub, bush or forest - anything that will fuel a fire. Safer areas should be fenced, have water supply, short pasture, and protection from radiant heat.

Farmers and lifestyle block owners should identify alternative escape routes from their property in case the main access is blocked, or make sure they have another plan, such as a safer area or access to sprinklers if these are available. You should check you have an appropriate vehicle to transport animals, and animals need access to clean, uncontaminated feed and water until they can be returned to their paddocks.

If you stay on your property, you should check all animals are contained and that fences have not been destroyed by fire. Opening gates gives stock easy access to safe ground, but do not open gates onto roadways or cut roadside fences. Protect your fences from fire by keeping grass away.

If you have to evacuate your animals, check you have an appropriate vehicle to transport them to a safe shelter place or ask your neighbours if they're able to contain them on their property.

If you need any support regarding the welfare of your animals please call MPI on 0800 008 333, option 4. The team will take down details and send it to the team in Nelson to triage.

[More information on planning for major disasters that could affect your family and animals](#)