

TOPIC : “GET READY” PREPARATIONS FOR DISASTERS

GUEST SPEAKER : MELANIE FERGUSON (SUNSHINE COAST COUNCIL)

MALENY GARDEN CLUB MEETING : 23 February, 2016

- Melanie has been at Council for 17 years, the last 5.5 to 6 years in Disaster Management
- 3 permanent staff work in the Emergency Centre to co-ordinate relief in the event of cyclones, fires, earthquakes, tornadoes, floods
- Role of Council is directed by the Queensland Government preparing plans
- Council’s Disaster Hub is a one stop shop at Nambour with a secondary site at Caloundra
- There will be a generator in Maleny for community use in event of power outage managed by Maleny Disaster Group
- In the Hub, maps of road closures and evacuation warnings are prepared and can be downloaded from Council’s web site to mobile phones
- Map of area of concern and demographic can be drawn to identify number of schools, aged care centres, population etc so alerts can be sent out
- Cyclone went through Cooroy in 2012 lifting off the RSL roof – no other area was affected
- Queensland Fire and Emergency Services take lead role in times of disaster
- Council manages bush trails, installs fire trails and fuel management zones to reduce risk and provide access to fire fighters and controlled burn offs
- At Christmas 2015 an earthquake off Hervey Bay was felt on the Sunshine Coast
- If affected, drop, cover, hold onto sturdy piece of furniture, stay away from bookcases, windows and glass, wait in corner of room, crouch and cover head
- Police, Ambulance, SES, Energex, Unity Water, Queensland Health, Council, Red Cross, Department of Communities, Marine Safety, QFES Urban and Rural are involved in relief
- Local Disaster Co-ordination Centre has 300 Council staff trained in various roles to manage any disaster
- Joint exercises are conducted with Gympie, Noosa, and Sunshine Coast Councils followed by debriefing sessions in readiness for any real events
- District Management Community Groups to mobilise in emergencies are at Maleny, Mapleton, Mooloolah, and Kenilworth
- In planning for evacuation collect medications and prescriptions, some non-perishable food, bottled water, First Aid Kit, important documents, toothbrush and paste, toilet paper, soap/shampoo, torch + spare batteries, whistle, utility knife eg Swiss Army, mobile phone and I Pad, some clothing, portable radio, precious items – jewellery, photos
- Old plug in phone will still work when cordless phone has no power
- ABC Radio 90.3 will broadcast information and text messages will be sent
- Do not walk or play in floodwater
- Do not drive in floodwater

Melanie donated an Emergency Kit, funded by the State Government and valued at \$100, to MGC. She also distributed small power packs to charge mobile phones, I Pads etc, reference guides, fact sheets to aid preparations and waterproof pouches. Once she finds out which trees should be planted to retard fire, she will notify the Club. Further information is available on websites – <http://www.getready.qld.gov.au> ; <http://www.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au> ; Council’s Disaster Hub <http://disaster.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au> END