File No.:

Date:

To:

Address:

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Emergency Order – Buildings damaged by bushfire**

Your safety, as well as the safety of others in our community, remains the primary concern for council following the recent bushfires across the municipality.

Although the fires have passed, the risk of injury from fire-damaged buildings has not. In the past, unsafe brick walls and chimneys have collapsed and injured people who were sifting through nearby rubble.

Council has been inspecting properties with fire-damaged buildings in the municipality to assess the level of risk to anyone who may be on the property. Now that property access has been restored by the Country Fire Authority (CFA), Australian Defence Force (ADF) and Emergency Management Victoria (EMV), council is legally obliged, where necessary, to issue appropriate orders under the *Building Act 1993*.

Depending on the extent of the damage, council will issue an Emergency Order or Building Order for Minor Work. The order will include information on ways to minimise the potential for collapse, such as demolition, bracing to make safe or fencing the area off to restrict access.

After inspection of the buildings at PROPERTY ADDRESS, it is necessary, in this instance, for council to issue an Emergency Order. This includes some options for making the structure safe while you wait for a site clean-up.

You can arrange for site clean-up through the State Government’s free voluntary clean-up program or by engaging your own registered contractors.

The State Government’s voluntary clean-up program can carry out any emergency works required. You can register for the program by calling 1800 560 760 or visiting <https://www.vic.gov.au/bushfire-clean-up-program>.

If you have already registered, please contact the hotline and provide details of your Emergency Order. Alternatively, if you prefer to organise a site clean-up yourself, please contact your insurance company to see whether the required works are covered by your insurance policy.

Council’s aim is to ensure all sites are made safe as soon as possible, which is why we have requested the works to make your structures and/or land safe be completed within NN days. Given the challenging circumstances, however, council understands that this time frame may be difficult for some people to meet. If you would like more information, or would like to discuss your circumstances, please contact me on PHONE NUMBER or EMAIL ADDRESS.

Thank you for your understanding in these challenging and distressing times. Council is committed to assisting the community to rebuild as quickly as possible, while upholding safety at all times.

Yours sincerely,

NAME

Municipal Building Surveyor

Council