

Media Release

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## **Kyogle Council project wins NSW emergency management award**

An innovative project led, by Kyogle Council, to ensure local communities are more prepared and better able to recover from disasters has won the NSW Get Ready Community Award.

The project - Kyogle Community-Managed Action Plan for an Emergency Evacuation Centre - encourages communities to have a Plan B should a disaster isolate them from support agencies.

It was rolled out across the Kyogle local government area earlier this year in collaboration with a number of emergency management partners including the Red Cross, the Department Family and Community Services, and the SES along with other community organisations.

As part of the project, community meetings were held at Wiangaree, Woodenbong, Bonalbo, Mallanganee, and Tabulam to establish village groups to manage and set up temporary emergency evacuation centres.

The idea for the action plan was developed in the wake of the 2017 floods when the local Red Cross, Adventist Development Relief Agency, Country Women's Association and Lions Club with support from council staff and other community volunteers had to set up evacuation centres at Woodenbong, Wiangaree and Kyogle.

The action plan was tested during the recent bushfires in the Tabulam and Drake area when an evacuation centre was established at Bonalbo in case residents of Drake had to be evacuated.

The action plan has proved so successful, that other NSW communities are looking to adopt similar backup models, in planning for disasters.

Kyogle Council's Local Emergency Management Officer Tony Lickiss and Kyogle Red Cross representative Noelle Lynden-Way accepted the award on behalf of the Kyogle Local Government Area community at a special awards function at NSW Parliament House last week.

"The project was initially developed from an idea put forward by community members and has really been a whole-of-community effort," Mr Lickiss said. "Council is very proud of its involvement in the project and has been inspired by how the community has worked together to develop and implement it."

Kyogle Council Mayor Cr Danielle Mulholland congratulated Council staff and the Kyogle LGA community network involved in the project for their commitment to ensuring the safety of the wider community in the event of a disaster.

"It says a lot about this community that the project has been so well supported," Cr Mulholland said. "And the fact that the project may be used as a model for other NSW communities is testament to its success and importance."

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