

South Australia Essential Services Reconnection Grant Guidelines

River Murray Floods

Released 14 January 2023

Program overview

This Essential Services Reconnection Grants program will provide grants to support the following:

- **Inspection:**
 - \$400 towards an electrical safety inspection, written report and certification for reconnection of electrical services, and
 - \$200 towards inspection of mains supplied gas for the purpose of reconnection of gas supply, and
 - \$200 towards inspection of septic systems for the purpose of repair.
- **Repair:**

Up to a total of \$4,200 towards repair work needed to reconnect any of these essential services and/or for reconnection of water and/or sewerage supply.

The program is jointly funded by the Commonwealth and South Australian Governments under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (AGRN 1042) (the “2022 South Australian Floods”, commencing 15 November 2022).

To be eligible for the program, a principal place of residence must have incurred direct flood damage due to the South Australian floods that commenced on 15 November 2022 and be located within a local government area deemed eligible, being the Alexandrina Council, Berri Barmera Council, Coorong District Council, District Council of Karoonda East Murray, District Council of Loxton Waikerie, Mid Murray Council, Pastoral Unincorporated Area, Renmark Paringa Council and Rural City of Murray Bridge.

The program will open for applications from 14 January and close on 31 July 2023, or earlier if funds are exhausted. The program may be extended if deemed appropriate and funds are available.

The program is administered by the SA Housing Authority.

1. Who is eligible for participation in the program?

- 1.1 *For an inspection grant*, a person or persons who were living in a place which at the time of the flooding event was their principal place of residence (i.e., they were living in the principal place of residence on or after 15 November 2022 and before the flood has been determined to have ended), and
- 1.2 *For a repair grant*, the property owner of the principal place of residence where an inspection was undertaken as a result of a grant provided under this program for inspection of services and/or the property owner of the principal place of residence for the repair of water or sewerage supply, and
- 1.3 The principal place of residence is within an affected local government area, and
- 1.4 That principal place of residence has sustained damage caused by the flood event (i.e., the damage was caused by the South Australian Floods on or after 15 November 2022 and before the flood has been determined to have ended), and that damage has affected electricity connection (including turbine, solar or generator if this is the only source of power), mains connected gas, water supply, sewerage and/or septic systems, and
- 1.5 The principal place of residence at the time the damage was sustained was in a fixed location and connected to those services to be inspected (i.e., connected to electricity, mains supplied gas or septic, including where a service was disconnected as a preventative measure prior to flooding) or those services to be repaired (water or sewerage supply), and
- 1.6 The principal place of residence was not covered by a policy of insurance at the time the damage was sustained, or a policy of insurance was held but it does not cover the inspection and/or repair of essential services as outlined in this grants program.

2. What is not covered by the program?

- 2.1 Buildings, premises, shacks, holiday homes, sheds, caravans, boats and houseboats not occupied as a principal place of residence.
- 2.2 Structures that are not legally approved dwelling places.
- 2.3 Damage that existed or was sustained before the flooding event.
- 2.4 Works outside repair needed to reconnect the assessed essential service/s.

3. How will someone apply for a grant?

- 3.1 An eligible person, or someone acting on their behalf, may apply for a grant at a South Australian Government Relief or Recovery Centre, or by applying through the

sa.gov.au/floods webpage. Applications for grants will be made to the SA Housing Authority, as the agency responsible for administering the grants program.

- 3.2 *For an inspection*, an eligible person applying, or a person applying on their behalf, will need to supply the name of the eligible person, name of the person applying (if different), contact details (mobile phone and email address) of the person applying, the address/geo location of the principal place of residence, **evidence of residence**, date, details and photos (if possible) of the damage to the essential service/s, and electronic funds transfer information where grant monies are to be sent.
- 3.3 *For repair*, an eligible person applying or a person applying on their behalf will need to supply the name of the eligible person, name of the person applying (if different), contact details (mobile phone and email address) of the person applying, the address/geo location of the principal place of residence, **evidence of property ownership**, and either a quotation or invoice for professional repair services to the essential service, and electronic funds transfer information where grant monies are to be sent (also refer to paragraph 3.4).
- 3.4 *For repair*, grant monies will only be provided where a prior inspection has taken place under this program for electrical and/or gas reconnection and/or septic repair, and an accompanying written inspection report determines that repair work is needed. No inspection report is required for repair to water or sewerage supply (note, however, as per paragraph 3.3, a quotation or invoice for professional repair services is required).
- 3.5 *For repair*, where a property owner of a principal place of residence is not located within a reasonable distance of a relief or recovery centre and is therefore unable to attend a centre, they should contact the Information Line on 1800 302 787 for further guidance about applying for a grant.
- 3.6 Evidence of residence can be by provision of council rates notice, Emergency Services Levy notice, drivers' licence, or utility account. Evidence of property ownership is to be by provision of council rates notice or Emergency Services Levy notice.
- 3.7 Evidence of connection to an essential service at the time of the flooding damage must be made where appropriate (for example, utility account statement). Evidence of connection at the time of the flooding damage may take into account circumstances where a service was disconnected as a preventative measure prior to flooding.
- 3.8 An application must be accompanied by either a statutory declaration stating that the primary place of residence is not covered by a policy of insurance or accompanied by a certificate of insurance that demonstrates no cover is in place for flood losses.
- 3.9 Application for repair must be at the same time or follow an application for inspection, where an inspection is required, i.e., it cannot precede an application for inspection.

4. Assessment of applications

- 4.1 Applications for grants will be assessed against the eligibility criteria in Section 1. The SA Housing Authority will reserve the right to request further information from an applicant or from any business or individual engaged by the applicant, to assist in

assessing an application and to verify any information provided in an application. Failure to provide such information may result in SA Housing Authority refusing an application.

- 4.2 The SA Housing Authority reserves the right to refuse an application where eligibility criteria are not met, or where the applicant does not or cannot provide sufficient information for the SA Housing Authority to determine if eligibility criteria have been met.
- 4.3 Applications submitted may be subject to audit by the SA Housing Authority or its agents in order to determine compliance with scheme guidelines.
- 4.4 Complete applications will be assessed in order of receipt. Incomplete applications will not enter the assessment queue until all required information is provided.
- 4.5 Before applying for a grant under this program, applicants should seek advice from their legal, business or financial advisers about the tax implications of this financial assistance.
- 4.6 In exceptional circumstances, consideration may be given to applicants who do not meet the eligibility criteria, upon agreement between the SA Housing Authority and the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA).

5. Disbursement of grants

- 5.1 Grants will be disbursed to the nominated electronic funds transfer location provided by the applicant.
- 5.2 *Grants for inspections* will be to the maximum amount (\$400 towards an electrical safety inspection, written report and certification for reconnection of electrical services, \$200 towards inspection of mains supplied gas for reconnection of gas supply, and \$200 towards inspection of septic systems for the purpose of repair), and provided upon assessment of eligibility and provision of all required information.
- 5.3 *Grants for repairs* will be up to the maximum amount (\$4,200), and provided upon assessment of eligibility and provision of all required information, including a quotation or invoice for professional repairs.
- 5.4 Grants may not fully cover the required costs for inspection or repairs. Any costs above a grant amount will be the responsibility of applicant.
- 5.5 An email will be sent to the applicant advising one of the following:
 - 5.5.1 a grant has been made; or
 - 5.5.2 is intended to be made on the basis of a quotation or invoice; or
 - 5.5.3 that an application has been rejected. If an application is rejected an applicant may seek clarification from the SA Housing Authority as to the reasons.

6. Removal of an applicant from the program

- 6.1 The SA Housing Authority may at any time remove an applicant from the application assessment process or terminate an agreement, if in the Authority's opinion association with the applicant may bring the Authority, a Minister or the State of South Australia into disrepute.

7. Program evaluation

- 7.1 All program participants agree to comply with the Authority's performance monitoring and evaluation requirements including the potential participation in an evaluation survey.

8. Compliance and audit

- 8.1 Program participants may be subject to audit by the South Australian Government, Commonwealth Government or their representatives on the accuracy of their application.

9. False and misleading information

- 9.1 By application for a grant under this program, you are declaring that the information provided in the application and any supporting documentation is true and accurate.
- 9.2 Providing inaccurate, untrue or misleading information may be a breach of criminal law for which serious penalties may apply.
- 9.3 If any information provided in an application or supporting documentation is found to be inaccurate, untrue or misleading, legal action may be taken against you, including action to recover the funds.

10. Privacy statement

- 10.1 Information provided for this program will be used by the Authority for the purposes of assessment of eligibility, program administration and program review. In applying to participate in the program, applicants consent to the sharing of information for the purposes of progressing the program.
- 10.2 If there is an intention to include personal information about a third party in the application, the applicant applying must ensure the third party is aware of and consents to the contents of this privacy statement.
- 10.3 Any personal information about the applicant applying or a third party will be collected, held, managed, used, disclosed or transferred in accordance with legislative requirements and applicable laws.

11. Other information about this program

- 11.1 The Authority reserves the right to amend these guidelines and application terms at any time as it deems appropriate.
- 11.2 If an unsuccessful applicant considers that their application has been incorrectly assessed, they may lodge a complaint. The complaint must be received within 60 days from the date the Authority notifies the applicant of the outcome of their application. If a complaint is not received within 60 days, the decision will be final.

12. Assurance and acquittal

- 12.1 The SA Housing Authority and South Australian Department of the Premier and Cabinet will keep evidence/documentation to support Commonwealth audit and assurance activities to ensure amounts being claimed are eligible for reimbursement under the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements.
- 12.2 For the grants, evidence requirements could include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Funding request (including Category C/D request form) and approval letters;
 - b. Local news/media articles regarding the delivery of initiatives;
 - c. Grant/loan applications and grant/loan guidelines;
 - d. Governance arrangements; and/or
 - e. Transaction listings used to reconcile invoices.
- 12.3 For assurance purposes, State/Territory agencies and Australian Government agencies may, at any time, request documentation from funding recipients and South Australian Government agencies to evidence compliance with any aspect of the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements and other applicable laws, policies, guidelines, and regulations.

Glossary

Term	Definition
applicant	For an Inspection - A person living in a principal place of residence or a person acting on their behalf. For Repairs – A person who owns a principal place of residence which has undergone an inspection as a part of this program, or a person acting on their behalf
application	An application submitted by or on behalf of the applicant to the Authority for participation in the program
Authority	SA Housing Authority
eligible local government area	Alexandrina Council, Berri Barmera Council, Coorong District Council, District Council of Karoonda East Murray, District Council of Loxton Waikerie, Mid Murray Council, Pastoral Unincorporated Area, Renmark Paranga Council and Rural City of Murray Bridge
Flood/flooding event	The 2022 South Australian Floods commencing 15 November 2022 up until an end date, yet to be determined
guidelines	Essential Services Reconnection Grant Guidelines (this document)
principal place of residence	A building or place, generally defined as a house, apartment, unit, flat or other fixed dwelling used as a principal place of residence, and includes a shack, caravan, boat or houseboat used as a principal place of residence which was, at the time of the flood event, in a fixed location and connected to one or more services including electricity (including turbine, solar or generator if this is the only source of power), mains connected gas, mains water supply, mains sewerage, or a septic system.
participant	The person who participates in the program as a result of a successful application.
program	Essential Services Reconnection Grants Program