
Media Release



10 February 2012

St George aged care facility flooded ... but extent of damage unknown

With water levels slowly receding, residents of Churches of Christ Care's Warrawee Aged Care Service at St George are anxiously awaiting news on the status of their home after the worst flood in the town's history.

Churches of Christ in Queensland CEO Dean Phelan said it could be a few days before staff members are allowed back the facility to see the full impact of damage from flood waters.

"As Warrawee Aged Care Service is located just outside the levee, which was built to protect the township of St George, it has not escaped unscathed.

"Last year we were very lucky to escape damage to our facility; at 13.4 metres the water came close to our front door, but this time with water levels at 13.95 metres, we know there is at least half a metre of water through our buildings," Mr Phelan said.

"Sadly, many of our buildings, beds and furnishings will be damaged and we face a long, dirty clean up before residents will be able to safely return home.

"It could be a matter of months before residents will be able to return home. Luckily our crisis management planning has contingencies in place to accommodate this situation. We have learnt a great deal after experiencing two floods and two evacuations over the past couple of years."

The State Disaster Management Group has issued a notice asking people not to return to St George until such time they deem it safe, especially after issues with the sewerage system. Queensland Police said it is unlikely residents will be able to return before Saturday.

Mr Phelan said the organisation is keen to start the clean-up and recovery process as soon as possible, so our residents can come home. "We are trying to organise a visit to the site to review the damage and retrieve some of the residents' belongings for safe storage.

"We are in a holding pattern until the State Disaster Management Group meets again today. Unfortunately we just have to wait and see," Mr Phelan said.

The aged care services' residents were evacuated on Sunday 6 February by CareFlight and a RAAF C-130 Hercules to the Gold Coast ahead of the mandatory evacuation notice. They are currently being accommodated by three Churches of Christ Care aged care facilities and host aged care services on the Gold Coast. The evacuation of St George was the largest evacuation in Queensland's history, with over 3000 St George residents evacuating the town.

To support families and individuals in St George, Churches of Christ Care has launched its Queensland Flood Appeal 2012. To make a donation, go to <http://www.everydayhero.com.au/event/ccffloodappeal>

ENDS

Media Release



For further information, please contact:

Annette Densham
Media and Communications Coordinator
Ph: (07) 3363 1747 or 0407 371 688

Desley Millwood
Director - Communications & Marketing
Ph: (07) 3327 1692 or 0419 486 943

About Churches of Christ in Queensland

Churches of Christ in Queensland is a group of mainstream Christian churches which has been an active part of the Queensland community for over 125 years.

Churches of Christ in Queensland operates a range of missional and community care services to assist families, the elderly and people in need through church communities and its care division, Churches of Christ Care.

About Churches of Christ Care

Established in 1930, today Churches of Christ Care is one of the largest, most diverse not-for-profit organisations in Australia.

Churches of Christ Care, a division of Churches of Christ in Queensland and working with Churches of Christ in Vic/Tas, provides a range of care services to vulnerable persons at different stages of their life journey.

Churches of Christ Care is active in the areas of early childhood services, child protection, community and affordable housing, retirement living, community aged care, and residential aged care. We operate more than 140 services throughout Queensland and Melbourne, Victoria with the support of more than 3,000 staff and over 700 volunteers.

Services provided by Churches of Christ Care are funded by a mix of government subsidies, grants, fees and charges for our services such as early childhood services and residential aged care, and through fundraising activities.

Our services are offered to all those in need regardless of religious background. Churches of Christ Care is built on a foundation of Christian values, commitment to quality care, and trust and respect for clients and the community.