



# Cherbourg Public Health Operations Manual

**Version 1.0**

**Dated:** March 2020

**This Manual has been developed to provide guidance to the Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council and the Cherbourg Local Disaster Management Group on the protection of the community by preventative public health measures.**

**The manual details the steps to be taken to ensure public health in the Cherbourg community is maintained during and after a disaster event.**



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# Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	2
Approval of Plan.....	3
Amendments and Review.....	4
<b>1. Governance</b>	
Overview.....	5
Purpose.....	5
Scope.....	5
Objectives.....	5
Context.....	5
Supporting Agencies.....	5
Public Health Messages.....	5
Existing Environmental Health Arrangements.....	5
<b>2. Public Health Functions</b>	
Safe Water Supply.....	6
Short Term Disruption.....	6
Medium Term Disruption.....	6
Long Term Disruption.....	6
Supply of Potable Water.....	6
Supply of Bottled Water.....	7
Authority for Provision of Bottled Water.....	7
Safe Food and Food Related Concerns.....	7
Asbestos Management.....	7
Provision of Emergency Ablutions.....	8
Refuse Disposal.....	8
Vermin and Vector Control.....	8
Infectious Disease Control.....	8
Disposal of Dead Stock and Animals.....	8
<b>Annexure 1: Public Health Operations Checklist.....</b>	<b>9</b>

## Authority to Plan

This Public Health Operations Manual has been prepared by the Cherbourg Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG) under the provisions of Section 57(1) of the Disaster Management Act 2003.

## Approval

The preparation of this Public Health Operations Manual has been undertaken in accordance with the Disaster Management Act 2003 to provide for public health during and after a disaster event in the Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council local government area.

The Manual is endorsed for distribution by the Cherbourg Local Disaster Management Group.

**Cr Elvie Sandow**  
**Chair**  
**Local Disaster Management Group**

**Date:** .....

## Amendments and Review

This manual will be reviewed as required by *Section 59 of the Disaster Management Act 2003*, with relevant amendments made and distributed.

Approved amendments to the manual will be circulated as per the distribution and contacts lists, which are maintained by the Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council on behalf of the LDMG.

## Document Control

### Amendment Control and Version Register

The controller of the document is the Cherbourg Local Disaster Coordinator (LDC). Any proposed amendments to this manual should be forwarded in writing to:

*Cherbourg Local Disaster Coordinator, Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council, 22 Barambah Avenue, Cherbourg Qld 4605*

The LDC may approve inconsequential amendments to this document. Any changes to the intent of the document must be approved and endorsed by the Local Disaster Management Group.

### Amendment Register

Amendment		Manual Updated	
Version	Issue Date	Author	Reason for Change
1.0	February, 2013		Original Document
2.0	March, 2020	Warren Bridson Consulting	Redeveloped to contemporary public health management practices and procedures suitable for Cherbourg LDMG
	January 2023		Reviewed

## Distribution

This manual is not publicly available, and is not for distribution and/or release to persons or agencies other than those identified in the Cherbourg Local Disaster Management Plan.

# 1. GOVERNANCE

## 1.1. Overview

Queensland Health is the lead agency for the management of public health but the Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council has many roles and responsibilities relating to public health that are carried out by Environmental Health Officers and staff. There are roles that these officers carry out as business-as-usual and there are roles that they carry out before, during and after a disaster event in relation to public health.

## 1.2. Purpose

The purpose of this manual is to provide an effective preparation and response by the Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council and the Cherbourg Local Disaster Management Group to public health related functions before, during and after a disaster event.

## 1.3. Scope

This manual should be used in conjunction with any Council Environmental Health processes and procedures.

## 1.4. Objectives

- To harness the efforts of a range of organisations into an efficient coordinated public health response during disaster events that may have a major impact on public health.
- To provide clear, concise and timely public health information to the Cherbourg Community and to the Local Disaster Management Group.

## 1.5. Context

A disaster event may cause significant disruption or damage to essential services, posing a range of risks to public health. Water supplies, sewerage treatment, refuse disposal and access to safe food may be compromised. There may also be an increased risk of disease for some time after the event.

## 1.6. Supporting Agencies

The Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council will work in cooperation with Queensland Health to fulfil shared responsibilities under the Local Disaster Management Plan for the provision of public health services to the Cherbourg Community.

Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council Environmental Health Officer will join Queensland Health to assess potential public health risks and provide specialist advice to the community following a disaster event.

## 1.7. Public Health Messages

Cherbourg will keep the community informed by providing public health information and information on any temporary public health measures implemented. All public health messages will be managed in accordance with the **Information and Warnings Manual**.

## 1.8. Existing Environmental Health Arrangements

Cherbourg already has a range of Council procedures and standards for provision of sound environmental health in the community. These are to be used to provide Public Health services to the community. However, Cherbourg's existing resources are minimal and are likely to be overwhelmed during a moderate or large event. The LDMG will need to request additional resources through the Gympie District Disaster Management Group as required.

## 2. PUBLIC HEALTH FUNCTIONS

### 2.1. Safe Water Supply

A disaster may affect the Council's ability to provide safe and adequate water. More regular water inspections and quality testing may need to be carried out to ensure water quality and safety.

- Householders are to be provided with information on how to adequately treat water before drinking
- General information and advice to be freely distributed relating to potential hazards from polluted drinking water supplies

Council's Environmental Health Officers shall assist with the provision of safe and adequate water supplies.

#### Issues to be addressed include:

- Water quality assessment
- Safety and control of supply
- Bacterial sampling
- Water source monitoring
- Water treatment
- Water storage
- Transport and distribution of potable water

Disruptions to supply may be:

- Short Term (a few hours)
- Medium Term (a day or two)
- Long Term (more than two days)

### 2.2. Short Term Disruption

In some cases there may only be a short term interruption to water supply of a few hours. In such cases it will be likely no specific action is required other than to inform the community of the outage, the reason for it, and the anticipated return of supply along with any special instructions.

### 2.3. Medium Term Disruption

Where water supplies are expected to be disrupted for more than a day, alternate water supplies for the community must be obtained. Bottled water is the preferred option however, for a community the size of Cherbourg; this represents a large supply of water. It will need to be determined if water is being provided for drinking only, or for hygiene and cooking also. As a guide 4 litres per person is required for drinking and up to 11 litres is required to support hygiene and cooking per day. See the Table on page 7 for an indication of the number of 600 ml bottles required to meet this demand.

### 2.4. Long Term Disruption

Long term disruption to safe water supply to the Cherbourg community will need to be managed in conjunction with the Disaster District and the State. It may be deemed that evacuation of all or part of Cherbourg is in the best interests of the community. Decisions on actions required for such an event will be made taking into account the situation at the time.

### 2.5. Supply of Potable Water

The provision of potable water is based on the minimum requirement of 15L/person/day.

- Evacuation centres must be supplied with sufficient potable water.
- Where no potable water is available from mains or tanks at the evacuation centres, bottled water may be supplied

## 2.6. Supply of Bottled Water

The table below highlights the enormous quantities of water that may need to be brought into Cherbourg in the event of a complete loss of water. Storage, distribution and waste are significant secondary issues that arise from using large quantities of bottled water for a community the size of Cherbourg. Restoration of normal water supplies must be the first priority for Cherbourg with bottled water supplies being a last resort option for short term outages only.

Number of people	Number 600 ml Bottles at 4 Litres per day	Number 600 ml Bottles at 11 Litres per day
1000	6,667	18,333
1500	10,000	27,500
2000	13,333	36,667

## 2.7. Authority for Provision of Bottled Water

The provision of large quantities of bottled water to the community in response to a medium term failure of the water supply system is not considered to be a resupply issue. In such cases the LDC should inform the DDC of the requirement and submit a Request for Assistance to the District. The Disaster District will work with the LDC to resolve any issues.

The distribution of bottled water within the community is the responsibility of the Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council.

## 2.8. Safe Food and Food-related Concerns

The risk of food poisoning and disease arising from spoilt food is high in disaster environments. Loss of power can lead to widespread spoilage of food causing a waste disposal issue. Temporary kitchen facilities may be established to help feed the community or those in evacuation centres and incorrect food handling can cause food poisoning. Food Safety in the home can also be a concern and information about food safety will be distributed as per the **templates in the Information and Warnings Manual**.

Greater vigilance is required to ensure that food handling in mass feeding environments is maintained at the highest standard. The Cherbourg Environmental Health Officer will ensure regular inspections of all food handling and preparation activities to ensure standards are maintained.

With only one Environmental Health Officer, Cherbourg may need to seek assistance from Queensland Health for additional environmental health resources to undertake these roles. The LDC should consider if such support is necessary and submit a request for assistance to the Gympie District Disaster Coordinator.

## 2.9. Asbestos Management

Damage to buildings caused by a disaster may result in high levels of asbestos waste material. The requirements for the safe handling and removal of asbestos must be adhered to at all times. If significant quantities of asbestos material require removal, additional assistance may be required. The LDMG should consider if such assistance is required and forward a Request for Assistance to the Gympie District Disaster Management Group if required.

Information about asbestos safety and about arrangements for asbestos removal in Cherbourg will be distributed in accordance with the procedures in the **Information and Warnings Manual**.

## 2.10. Provision of Emergency Ablution Facilities

Loss of sewerage services to the community greatly increases the risk of disease and illness. Sewerage treatment outages may be:

- Short Term (a few hours).
- Medium Term (a day or two).
- Long Term (more than two days).

### Short term

Short term outages are unlikely to require any specific action other than to inform the community of the outage, the reason for it and the anticipated return of service along with any special instructions.

### Medium term

Medium term sewerage outages may require alternate facilities to be deployed to support the community and may include porta-a-loos. If it is deemed necessary to provide such resources to the community, the LDC should submit a request for assistance to the DDC.

### Long term

Long term outages to sewerage treatment to the Cherbourg community will need to be managed in conjunction with the Gympie District Disaster Management Group and the State. It may be that evacuation of all or part of Cherbourg is in the best interests of the community. Decisions on actions required for such an event will be made taking into account the situation at the time.

## 2.11. Refuse Disposal

Council remains responsible for disposal of refuse and waste during disaster events. The quantities of waste following a disaster may be significantly higher than normal.

Additional resources may be required to manage waste during a disaster. The LDMG should consider whether external assistance is required to effectively manage waste and submit a request for assistance to the Gympie District Disaster Management Group if necessary.

Public health messages regarding refuse disposal and the actions required of individuals will be provided to the community in accordance with the **Information and Warnings Manual**.

## 2.12. Vermin and Vector Control

It is likely that additional vermin and vector control will be required in the aftermath of any disaster event to ensure the maintenance of public health. Cherbourg has limited capacity to undertake such operations and it is probable that external assistance will be required. The LDMG is to consider the need for vermin and vector control and will seek assistance from the Gympie District Disaster Management Group as required.

Public Health messages regarding vermin and vector controls may be required. This information will be provided in accordance with the **Information and Warnings Manual**.

## 2.13. Infectious Disease Control

Queensland Health has lead agency responsibility for the clinical management of any infectious disease outbreak. The LDMG and Council provide support to Queensland Health and offers community support as needed. While Pandemic remains a risk to Cherbourg, outbreaks of infectious disease are more likely to occur after a disaster event.

Ongoing community education on preventative measures that reinforce good hygiene practice is carried out. This is done through the Annual Community Education and Awareness Programs.

## 2.14. Disposal of Dead Stock and Animals

Cherbourg Council has procedures for the disposal of dead stock and animals as part of the Council's animal management plan.



## Annexure 1: Public Health Operations Checklist

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	CONTACT DETAILS	STATUS
Make contact with Queensland Health Public Health Unit personnel	Env. Health Officer	Ph: Mob:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prepare and release media advisories regarding the function of public health	Env. Health Officer Communications Officer	Ph: Mob: Ph: Mob:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prepare and release media advisories regarding public health risks	Env. Health Officer Communications Officer	Ph: Mob: Ph: Mob:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prepare and release media advisories regarding Water Supply	Env. Health Officer Communications Officer	Ph: Mob: Ph: Mob:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prepare and release media advisories regarding Bottled Water supplies	Env. Health Officer Communications Officer	Ph: Mob: Ph: Mob:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prepare and release media advisories regarding Sewerage Services	Env. Health Officer Communications Officer	Ph: Mob: Ph: Mob:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prepare and release media advisories regarding Safe Food storage & Eating	Env. Health Officer Communications Officer	Ph: Mob: Ph: Mob:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prepare and release media advisories regarding Emergency Ablution Facilities	Env. Health Officer Communications Officer	Ph: Mob: Ph: Mob:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prepare and release media advisories regarding Vermin Control	Env. Health Officer Communications Officer	Ph: Mob: Ph: Mob:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prepare and release media advisories regarding Infectious Diseases	Env. Health Officer Communications Officer	Ph: Mob: Ph: Mob:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prepare and release media advisories regarding Refuse Collection	Env. Health Officer Communications Officer	Ph: Mob: Ph: Mob:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provide advice on public health risks to the community for the LDC /LDMG	Env. Health Officer Communications Officer	Ph: Mob: Ph: Mob:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provide logistic support to Queensland Health outreach teams	Env. Health Officer	Ph: Mob:	<input type="checkbox"/>

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	CONTACT DETAILS	STATUS
Provide personal protective equipment to Environmental Health personnel and appropriate public health safety information to operational personnel.	Env. Health Officer	Ph: Mob:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Undertake surveillance and reporting on public health risks and potential public health risks in the community	Env. Health Officer Communications Officer	Ph: Mob: Ph: Mob:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Facilitate treatment of public health risks in the affected environment (e.g. vector control, disinfection), including Council facilities.	Env. Health Officer	Ph: Mob:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ensure that emergency temporary accommodation post impact has no public health risks.	Env. Health Officer	Ph: Mob: Ph: Mob:	<input type="checkbox"/>