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SCENIC RIM

\$2.50



SAVED BY A HEADER AS STORM SAVAGES SHED

QUICK thinking and a grain header saved a Mt Walker farmer from injury or worse, during the once-in-a-lifetime severe wind and hail storm that passed through his property on Sunday afternoon.

Norm Kerle was working in his big machinery

shed when he noticed the forecast storm was looking as if it would hit the Mt Walker area.

"I got two of the tractors out of the shed so I could bring the header in," Norm said.

"I was just about to put a tarpaulin over the three

tonne of wheat in the grain bin I'd put in the shed earlier in the week, when I noticed the shed walls were starting to rock."

He dropped the tarpaulin and crawled under the header hoping it would protect him.

As he took shelter, the

shed door was blown in, the roof lifted and the walls caved in.

"Part of the roof ended up on top of the header."

For the next five to 10 minutes, he watched roofing iron missiles and other debris fly past.

"I've never experi-

enced any wind like it.

It was ferocious and I was sheltered by the header and to some extent, parts of the collapsed walls."

When the storm passed, he emerged to scenes of chaos.

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COUNCILLORS TO REGAIN POWERS IN REFORMS BILL

by WENDY CREIGHTON

COUNCILLORS will be able to appoint senior council staff and conduct breaches will be removed from the councillor conduct framework under new legislation the Crisafulli Government plans to introduce to State Parliament, before the end of the year.

Local Government Minister Ann Leahy announced a raft of reforms last week to be contained in the Local Government (Empowering Councils) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill.

Under the proposed reforms the council watchdog, the Office of the Independent Assessor (OIA), will only have jurisdiction to investigate serious misconduct or corruption complaints.

Further, Mayors and councillors will be able to speak publicly about community matters without fear of repercussions and the appointment of senior staff will involve a panel of three - the CEO, Mayor, Deputy Mayor or a councillor committee member.

The councillor conflict of interest framework is also proposed to be made clearer.

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Norm Kerle stands in front of the chaos of what was his big machinery shed filled with plant and equipment. The bin loaded with three tonne of grain which was toppled by the storm wind is in the background to the left and the header under which he took shelter can be seen in the centre background.

Photo: LYLE RADFORD

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Saved by a header as storm savages shed

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"You can't describe the storm like a hurricane or a tornado," Norm said.

"It never turned, it came from the south west and it was still storming in from the south west when it passed."

We spoke with Norm on Monday morning and his assessment of the damage couldn't be made until heavy machinery was brought in to lift the roof and wall debris from the machinery and equipment housed in the shed.

"When I first got out, it was hard to take in what I was seeing."

"There was iron wrapped around one of the tractors I'd moved out of the shed and there was a timber pole jammed up under one of them."

"Three of the grain silos had been rolled across the paddock like bowling balls, the grain bin weighed down by three tonnes of wheat had been toppled over inside the shed and there was debris all up the paddock



Top Left: The remains of Norm Kerle's big machinery shed and in the foreground, the tractor which stopped a roofing iron missile. Photos: LYLE RADFORD

Above: A tree fell on the roof of the Rosevale Retreat Hotel.

Left: The wind damaged St Paul's Lutheran Church at Rosevale.

behind the shed."

Norm would later find that the two windmills on the property had also been damaged.

"Those things are built to withstand some pretty severe turbulence, but on both of them the blades had been folded back."

"I found iron from the shed roof and walls about three-quarters of a kilometre up the paddock

"There were trees down everywhere."

"I don't think any boundary fence around here has been spared from fallen trees."

He estimated that about 10 to 15mm of rain fell. The rain gauge on his property, like so many others, had been blown away.

The 'big marble' sized hail that 'fell in sheets' added to the savagery

of the storm.

"It was still piled up three inches deep against things hours after the storm went through," Norm said.

The storm's funnel of destruction in that part of the Scenic Rim appears to have been worst around the southern end of Mt Walker and the eastern end of Rosevale.

A neighbour down the road from the Kerle's

property, reported golf ball sized hail.

"We weren't home during the storm but when we returned, we found the hail still clogging the gully, our shed roof in the middle of the road, power lines down and trees pushed over everywhere," said Zac Christensen.

He said his father, Mark, had been working on Neville Christensen's property at the end of R Christensen Road, when the storm hit.

"Dad said you couldn't stand out in it ... if you did you'd be killed by the debris flying past."

"I don't think there is a property around here that has escaped damage."

"One property owner had a small shed blown away ... the cement floor is still there but the shed or any debris from the shed hasn't been found."

On Monday night, after the family had been helping out around the district, Zac said there "were scenes of devastation everywhere".

"We've seen hundreds

of acres where almost every tree has had its top blown out and the branches that remain are stripped bare of every leaf and twig."

"One of the landowners who has lived here for over 50 years said she had never experienced a wind like it."

We asked Zac if he thought the wind velocity had reached the 96 to 100km/h reported in some areas of Brisbane?

"I wouldn't know. There's no way to measure it but it would take a big wind to rip big trees out of the ground and there is lots of evidence of that."

"This was no normal storm wind."

"There's places where there's just a pile of hay lying on the ground to show where the hayshed stood."

Other buildings were damaged too, including the former Rosevale Retreat Hotel where a tree was pushed over onto the roof and the Rosevale Lutheran Church was stripped of more than a third of its roof.

Proposed local government reforms 'brilliant' says Mayor

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Minister Leahy said the proposed reforms were in response to calls from councils over many years.

"The changes deliver on a key election commitment of the Crisafulli Government to help rebuild the relationship between state and local government and demonstrates the promise to work alongside councils

to deliver for Queensland.

"The reforms will remove costly and time-consuming red tape and streamline legislative requirements."

The Crisafulli Government has also signed an Accord with Queensland's Indigenous Leaders, in the next step in enacting the Equal Partners in Government Agreement.

"The Accord mirrors the Rural and Remote

Councils Compact and is another way the Crisafulli Government is working with councils to deliver on water, sewerage, infrastructure and jobs."

Minister Leahy said the reforms would finally give councils the framework they needed to deliver for Queenslanders.

"We are delivering a fresh start and empowering local governments to deliver for Queensland communities."

Accountable to the people

"PREMIER David Crisafulli went out of his way to say that councillors are responsible to the people not the bureaucrats and that message was sent home strong and hard," Mayor Tom Sharp said.

The Premier made the initial announcement about the proposed local government reform legislation at the Queensland

Local Government Association Conference last Tuesday (October 21) before Local Government Minister Ann Leahy went public with the news.

Cr Sharp said he was in the room when the Premier gave some detail to the representatives of the 77 Queensland local authorities about the Local Government (Empowering Councils) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill.

"From my point of view, the news was exceptionally well received," Cr Sharp said.

"These reforms are well overdue ... so let's put these reforms into action and see what happens particularly around reducing red tape, eliminating waste and increasing efficiency."

"But from my point of view the reforms around conflict of interest and the OIA are brilliant."



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