

In Our Thoughts...

Studco would like to express their compassion and sympathies for those affected by the bushfires, especially those who have lost loved ones – you are constantly in our thoughts and prayers.

And we extend our thanks to the emergency services and volunteers who have come from all over Victoria, interstate and overseas to help us, and who have demonstrated to us all a spirit of unselfishness and determination – we hold you in highest regard.

STUDCO GIVES \$50,000

You Don't Have To Be On The Frontline To Help

Conscious of our need to share the pain and loss caused by the 'Black Saturday' fires, Studco management have made a \$50,000 donation to the Red Cross Victorian Bushfire Appeal.

Many of Studco's employees have also been moved by the gravity of the tragedy and made personal contributions to the Red Cross Victorian Bushfire Appeal.

We urge you to consider the scope of the loss as result of the fires and the indiscriminate nature of this tragedy and make a small sacrifice of your own by donating to the Red Cross Victorian Bushfire Appeal 2009. The Victorian Government, in conjunction with the Red Cross and the Federal Government has set up the fund to aid persons affected by the 'Black Saturday' bushfires. All donations over \$2 to the Red Cross are tax-deductible.

DONATION INFORMATION

Go to www.redcross.org.au or mail cheques or money orders to Australian Red Cross, GPO Box 2957, Melbourne VIC 8060 (please indicate that you would like your donation to go towards the Victorian Bushfire Appeal).

STUDCO IS SITUATED WITHIN TEN KILOMETRES OF THE VICTORIAN BUSHFIRES

'Black Saturday' Fires Affect Studco

As you would be well aware of the tragic events of 'Black Saturday', we thought we should inform our customers of how close this tragedy has touched Studco and its valued employees and customers.

The proximity of Studco to the bushfires makes us acutely aware of the intensity of the pain and suffering experienced by

normal people like you and me. As a result, Studco is committed to support those affected and to help rebuild their lives and their local communities.

We have dedicated this entire edition of *The Studco Update* to highlight the plight of the thousands of victims and to honour the effort of the emergency services.

STUDCO DRIVER LOSES HOUSE & ENTIRE CONTENTS ON 'BLACK SATURDAY'

"A Fireball Engulfed My House"



The twisted remains of Keith Beckwith's family home in fire-ravaged town of Glenburn.

Well-respected Studco identity Keith Beckwith's family home in Glenburn was completely razed on 'Black Saturday'. Keith is well known by Studco's Victorian customers, having worked at Studco for more than 18 years and his hard-working attitude has long impressed our customers.

When Keith heard that a fire had begun at Kilmore and was headed in his direction, he didn't panic. After all, Kilmore is 50km from Glenburn. In less than an hour, a huge smoke cloud was billowing towards them at a terrifying speed and Keith's wife suggested they load up their car and get ready to

evacuate. Within minutes, Keith realised they were trapped by the advancing firefront, so he simply retreated to his neighbours house. Within two minutes of leaving his home, Keith watched in horror as the fireball came across the neighbouring paddock, jumped the road and landed directly on top of his home, demolishing it in one destructive blow.

"I've never seen anything moving so quickly"

"I've never seen anything moving so quickly", Keith says of the advancing firefront. "We couldn't do anything. We didn't even have time to ring 000." With fire surrounding the neighbouring house where Keith was sheltering, and with no water supply, he and his neighbour beat the flames using wet mops and blankets. "We saved his house but mine is gone completely."



Keith tirelessly hits the road early every morning to meet the demands of Studco's customers.



Green trees, virtually untouched by the fire, surround Keith's Glenburn property.

IMAGES FROM 'BLACK SATURDAY'

Eye Witness Photos



A frightening view (above) of the smoke cloud billowing along the fire frontline as it headed south east from Kilmore, advancing on Kinglake West at speeds estimated at more than 100 kmh. Circled is a car fleeing the area, putting the terrifying magnitude of the blaze into perspective.



Studco MD Ben Stevens was trapped in Yarra Glen with his family on 'Black Saturday', as all roads leading out of the town were blocked by fire. With emergency services stretched to a maximum and no fire crews on hand to fight this grass fire (above) that was threatening houses, Ben and some other locals got to and fought this fire themselves with garden hoses, wet blankets and buckets.



Smoke gathers above the Lilydale Airfield from the fires surrounding Yarra Glen (above). Aided by high winds, extreme heat and tinder-dry ground conditions, the fire posed an immediate threat to all the towns in its path. Ember attacks created isolated spot fires ahead of the main front, taking many residents and fire crews trapped between by surprise.

NOBLE & WORTHY EFFORT OF STUDCO EMPLOYEE

Studco Backs CFA Volunteer



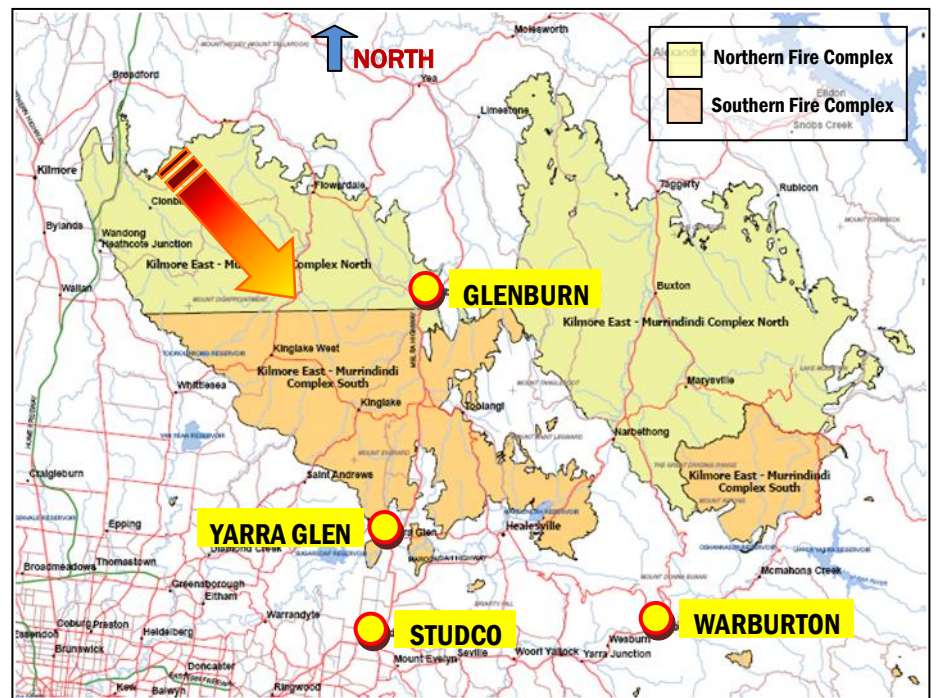
When Lieutenant Tom Allman is not fighting fires and saving lives, he can be found driving a forklift and picking orders at Studco's manufacturing plant.

One of Studco's valued storemen, Tom Allman, is a First Lieutenant with the Wesburn-Millgrove CFA, situated 20 minutes east of Lilydale and directly in the line of the bushfires path on 'Black Saturday'. Tom was on the bushfire frontline during the worst of the fires; from 4:00pm on Black Saturday through to Wednesday 11 February, working 12-16 hours shifts fighting the massive flames and the excruciating heat that made 'Black Saturday's' fires Australia's worst natural disaster. Tom was assigned to a strike team protecting houses in Chums Creek, Dixons Creek and Toolangi. Tom's

22 years experience as a CFA volunteer wasn't enough to prepare him for the scenes of absolute devastation that were to greet him: "It looked like a bomb had hit. There was nothing left on the ground, there was nothing left at all". What Tom saw and heard on that horrifying day continues to haunt him.

"It looked like a bomb had hit – there was nothing left"

"One of the worst experiences was the reaction from residents in the fire zone when I told them that we couldn't stay and defend their properties because headquarters had ordered us to another location", Tom recalls. "It was terrible: they were devastated, and there was nothing we could do." Studco supports Tom's commitment to serve his community by voluntarily keeping him on full pay while he's away fighting fires.



This map reveals the staggering size and the devastating effect of the fires, covering more than 140,000 hectares and destroying 1834 homes. At least 210 people have lost their lives in this tragic event. Studco's manufacturing plant is based in Lilydale, Victoria, less than 10 kilometres south of the Yarra Glen fire zone. By late afternoon on 'Black Saturday', a strong northerly change was threatening to bring the fire right to Studco's doorstep within minutes.