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## Thanks to last of the big spenders

Lindsey Jackson | 6th July 2011

IT might be six months on, but the Central Highlands Flood Appeal shows no signs of slowing down as the Neighbourhood Centre continues to collect four to five applications from Central Highlands residents each week.

While applications kept rolling in, the funds were starting to slow down and the last of the big contributions was made on Monday by Mark Turner, the chief operating officer of Queensland coal explorer Guildford Coal, who donated \$20,000.

Lorna Hicks and Paul Bell couldn't be more elated with the donation and said it would help the appeal "tremendously".

"We thought it was going to start tapering but it's just not," Cr Bell said.

Companies, organisations and individuals from local, far and wide have contributed, with the latest tally standing at \$1,241,523, with \$1,129,000 already distributed to 350 people around the Highlands.

Lorna said one of the most amazing things was that \$500,000 was donated in the first five days of the appeal.

The pair thanked Guildford Coal for the generous donation.

They also said the appeal would remain until at least the end of August and they were still urging the community to dig deep and remember the fund.

"We just want to thank Guildford for the contribution, it's the last of the big contributions," Cr Bell said. "It's really back to us as locals to remember the fund now and it's a good reminder to everyone that it's still open."

The Guildford Coal donation was part of a statewide commitment of \$100,000 the company announced earlier this year.

Mr Turner paid tribute to the efforts of the Neighbourhood Centre and the Central Highlands Regional Council for the fantastic work done to help the region get back on its feet after such a tough start to the year.

"We are very impressed that the strong community spirit in the area is helping the recovery," he said.

Mr Turner said Guildford Coal's focus was on funding local recovery programs with not-for-profit organisations.

"Our contribution acknowledges the extraordinary nature of the floods and the damage across Queensland," he said. "Our thoughts continue to be with families who have suffered in then 2011 floods which may take many more months to recover."



Mark Turner presents a cheque for \$20,000 to the Neighbourhood Centre's Lorna Hicks and councillor Paul Bell.

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