

CYCLONE: READINESS & SAFETY

With Cyclone season approaching you should make sure you and your family are cyclone ready. With these few simple steps you may mitigate the damage and make sure you and your family get through this season safely.

BEFORE, PREPARE YOUR HOME

- Check the condition of your roof and repair any loose tiles, eaves, screws and seal any leaks.
- Trim trees and overhanging branches.
- Clear gutters and downpipes to ensure water can drain away freely.
- Clear your property of loose material that could blow around and possibly cause injury or damage during extreme winds. Secure or store all garden furniture.
- Fit windows with shutters or metal screens.
- In case of a storm surge or other flooding:
 - Know your nearest safe high ground and the safest access route to it.
 - Identify which items you need to raise or empty if flooding threatens your home.
 - Consider alternatives to carpet floor coverings.
 - Consider relocating electrical sockets and power points well above floor level.

BEFORE, PREPARE AN EMERGENCY KIT

Having an emergency kit is an important step to prepare for, survive and cope with emergencies. All householders should know where the Emergency kit is kept and update the contents of your kit regularly.

- 3 days supply of bottled water, non-perishable food items like dried or canned food and a can opener including pet food and water for animals;
- Mobile phone/ charger & additional power batteries;
- Portable battery radio, torch and spare batteries;
- Matches, lamps, portable stove, cooking & eating utensils;
- First aid kit and manual, essential medications, prescriptions and adequate supply/ dosage; Insect repellent;
- Toiletries including toilet paper;
- Masking tape for windows and waterproof bags;
- Waterproof jacket, hat and gloves for everyone;
- Keep a list of emergency phone numbers on display;
- Important documents, in sealed bags, including some cash;
- Special items for infants & elderly or people with special needs.

CYCLONE WATCH IS ISSUED

- Listen to your local radio/TV for further information and warnings.
- Check your emergency kit and fill water containers.
- Re-check your property for any outdoor furniture or loose material and tie down (fill boats and rubbish bins with water).
- Secure boats in safe anchorage.
- Ensure all household members know what the strongest part of the house is and what to do in the event of a cyclone warning or an evacuation.
- Check that neighbours are aware of the situation and are preparing.

CYCLONE WARNING IS ISSUED

Local authorities may issue cyclone warnings as the event evolves; the following actions may be warranted.

- If requested by authorities, collect children from school or childcare centre and go home.
- Close shutters or apply board-ups and heavily tape all windows. Draw curtains and lock doors.
- Sandbag your property, the toilet bowl and indoor drains to prevent back-flow.
- Fill bath with clean water in case of interruptions to supply.
- Park vehicles under solid shelter, handbrake on and in gear.
- Remain indoors (with your pets) unless advised to evacuate. Move to the strongest part of the house, usually a stairwell or small room like a bathroom or basement.
- Stay tuned to your local radio/TV for further information.
- Pack an evacuation kit.
- If driving, make sure you stop somewhere away from power lines and trees.

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

In an emergency always call 000 for Police, Ambulance or Fire brigade.

State Emergency Service (SES) - Call 132 500 for assistance following events like severe storms and floods.



PREPARE AN EVACUATION KIT

- Your emergency kit, including emergency numbers, plus:
- Multiple changes of clothes for all household members, stored in watertight bags. Long sleeve shirts, long pants, strong shoes and hats are recommended.
- Pillows and sleeping bags and or blankets for each household member.
- Important documents, such as passports, visas, birth and marriage certificates, bank account cards and details, stock bonds, Medicare cards, health records, insurance records, house mortgage/ deeds, wills and life insurance details.
- Laptop computers and back-ups of important files.
- Valuables, photos, mementos in waterproof bags.
- Inventory of household goods.

WHEN LOCAL EVACUATION IS ISSUED

Depending on the nature of the event, official advice may be given to evacuate on local radio/TV regarding safe routes and when to move.

- Has official advice been given to evacuate?
- Have you planned where you will be evacuating to? Is it further inland, on higher ground and secure?
- Do you have a preferred route and alternative in case roads are blocked?
- If evacuating out of town, leave early to avoid heavy traffic, flooding and wind hazards.
- Do you have enough petrol in your vehicle?
- Are you dressed appropriately, strong shoes (not thongs) and tough clothing for protection?
- Place sandbag in the toilet bowl and internal drains to avoid sewage back-flow.
- Lock doors; turn off electricity, gas, and water; take your evacuation and emergency kits.
- If going to a public shelter, take bedding needs and books or games for children.
- Have you packed your emergency water supplies?
- Are your pets safe and secure?
- Have you checked on neighbours who are elderly or disabled?
- Follow police and State/Territory Emergency Services directions



WHEN THE CYCLONE STRIKES

Listen out for the Standard Emergency Warning Signal (SEWS). SEWS is a wailing siren sound used through Australia for serious emergency events such as severe cyclone, bushfire, flood and storm.

Pay careful attention to the information that follows and act immediately on the advice given.

- Disconnect all electrical appliances, turn off your electricity, gas and water.
- Tune to your battery local radio for further information on the event and further warnings and safety messages.
- Check all household members are safe. Remain indoors (with your pets) unless advised to evacuate. Move to the strongest part of the house, usually a stairwell or small room like a bathroom or basement.
- Keep Evacuation and Emergency Kits with you.
- If the building starts to break up, protect yourself with mattresses, rugs or blankets under a strong table or bench or hold onto a solid fixture, e.g. a water pipe.
- Beware of the calm 'eye'. If the wind drops, don't assume the cyclone is over; violent winds will soon resume from another direction. Wait for the official 'all clear'.
- If driving, stop (handbrake on and in gear) - but well away from the sea and clear of trees, power lines and streams. Stay in the vehicle.

AFTER THE CYCLONE

- Beware of the calm 'eye'. If the wind drops, don't assume the cyclone is over; violent winds will soon resume from another direction. Wait for the official 'all clear'.
- Don't go outside until officially advised it is safe.
- Continue to listen to your battery local radio for further information on the event and further warnings and safety messages.
- Check for gas leaks and don't use electric appliances that have been wet.
- If you have evacuated, or did so earlier, don't return until advised. Use a recommended route and don't rush. Beware of damaged power lines, bridges, buildings, trees, and don't enter floodwaters.
- Heed all warnings and don't go sightseeing.
- Take photos of any items which could become a health and safety hazard and throw them out. Keep your home well ventilated to help it dry, but do not leave your home open when unattended.
- Don't make unnecessary phone calls.
- Check and help neighbours.