



Emergency Toolkit

A guide to staying safe



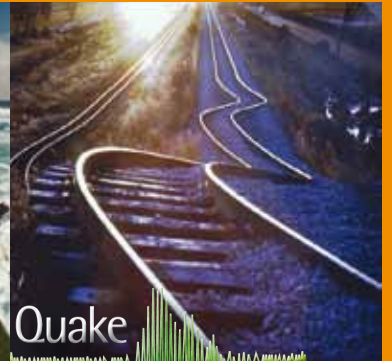
StormSafe



FloodSafe



TsunamiSafe



Quake

Safe

For further information or to download this brochure in other formats, visit the VICSES website : www.ses.vic.gov.au

VICSES Flood & Storm Information Line
1300 VIC SES
1300 842 737

 **FLOOD STORM EMERGENCY**
132 500



Victoria State Emergency Service 2010

If flood warnings are issued, act immediately :

- ✓ Check family and neighbours are safe and aware of what's happening.
- ✓ Listen to a radio for updates and advice.
- ✓ Bring pets inside. Place into cages or tie them up with a lead.
- ✓ If the SES FloodSafe program operates in your area, check your local advice guide.
- ✓ Block toilets and drains to prevent sewage back flow into the house.
- ✓ Carefully stack valuables, furniture, and electrical items onto benches or tables or move them off-site.
- ✓ Place important papers, photos, identification, valuables into your Emergency Kit (see p.5).
- ✓ Tie down objects likely to float and cause damage. Raise poisons, oils and chemicals well above floor level.
- ✓ If being cut-off is likely, have enough non-perishable food, water, medicines, fuel and other essentials to last at least 3 days.



- ✓ **BUSINESS OPERATORS:** Carefully raise business equipment, stock and records onto benches or high shelves or relocate off-site. Back-up copy important records.

- ✓ **ON THE FARM:** Move machinery, pumps, hay and livestock to known higher ground. Raise farm chemicals to high shelves.

Rain can become a flood in a flash.

Warnings and Emergency Advice

SES will provide advice or warnings about emergencies or dangerous weather as soon as is possible. Act on warnings immediately. If you need help to understand warnings, ask a friend, relative or neighbour. Keep watching the weather.

NEVER rely on getting a warning

Play your part, be emergency smart... HAVE A PLAN !

You and your family must be prepared. Know the hazards likely in your area. Have a plan covering what to do before / during / after, where to get information, when to leave, what to take and where you'll go.

- ✓ For the most up-to-date warnings go to: ABC local radio, commercial radio, SKY News TV, Bureau of Meteorology.
- ✓ In major emergencies, "Emergency Alert" the telephone warning system (text message to mobile / recorded voice message to landline phones) may be used to alert high risk communities. Visit www.emergencyalert.gov.au
- ✓ If lives are at risk, the SEWS (Standard Emergency Warning Signal) warning siren may be played on radio or TV before an urgent broadcast.

Flood Warnings are issued by the Bureau of Meteorology and help you be better prepared.

A FLOOD WATCH notifies the community in specific regions of a potential flood threat from a developing weather situation. A Flood Watch means a flood is possible in those areas and is issued 24-36 hours before any likely flooding. People living, camping or working along rivers or streams should regularly check weather forecasts, rainfall totals and river levels and be ready to take action.

FLOOD WARNINGS are issued when flooding is about to, or is already happening. They predict the flood size (minor, moderate or major) and estimate the time that the river height will reach certain river gauges. When flood warnings are issued, people in low-lying areas prone to flooding need to activate their flood emergency plan immediately.

Flash Flood Danger

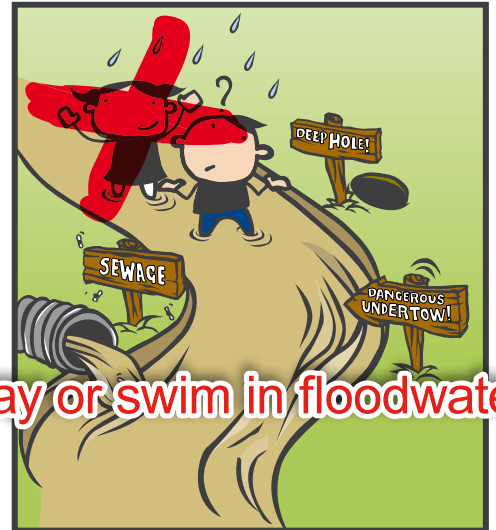
Flash floods can happen after very heavy rain that sees a rapid rise of water over a short period of time, sometimes just minutes. There may be little or no warning time, so watch the weather, be prepared to act quickly. They can easily happen after bushfires.

Never walk, play, ride or drive in floodwater. You can't always see what is under the water or how deep, or fast the water is moving. It is easy to be swept away and drown in as little as 20cm of fast moving water.

- ✓ Stay away from fallen powerlines. Electricity travels through water easily.
- ✓ Be aware: spiders and snakes may seek shelter in your house or sheds.
- ✓ Wear strong boots and gloves.
- ✓ Keep in contact with neighbours.
- ✓ Floodwaters can contain sewage, chemicals and pollution.
- ✓ Keep listening to local radio for updated warnings, information and advice.
- ✓ If your car stalls in rising water, seek immediate shelter above the floodwaters.



Do not play or swim in floodwater



EVACUATION : your life could be at risk

SES may advise at-risk areas to prepare for evacuation (eg. by radio broadcast, telephone message). SES aims to keep you safe, so it is important to follow SES advice. Act early as conditions can change rapidly, roads or escape routes can close.



When you leave...What to take...Where to go

- ✓ Turn off the electricity, gas and water at the mains.
- ✓ Take your Emergency Kit, including important papers, identification, photos, medicines, reading glasses, aids or other specialneeds.
- ✓ Take your pets with you, never leave them behind.
- ✓ Move to friends or family in safer areas or to a Relief Centre if advised by authorities.
- ✓ Wherever you go, let others know. Also consider registering with Red Cross or any 24 hour police station so others can check you are safe.

If you are isolated or cut-off

VICSES and other emergency agencies will manage the re-supply of essential items to those cut-off by floodwaters. To be well prepared, SES recommends you keep enough non-perishable food and drinking water in your pantry or Emergency Kit for 3 days. Call 132 500 if you need emergency flood or storm assistance.



Department of Human Services and Department of Health provides recovery advice, fact sheets and information on how to safely clean up and recover from floods and other emergencies.

If you are flood affected:

- ✓ Keep listening for radio updates, road re-openings, community meetings etc.
- ✓ Do not return home until authorities tell you it is safe. Be aware of road hazards such as mud or debris on the road, damaged roads / bridges or crews working on clean-up and repairs.
- ✓ Boil all drinking water until authorities say the water supply is safe.
- ✓ Keep electricity / gas off at the mains until advised. Have all wiring, gas and electrical equipment tested by an electrician. If entering flood-affected buildings, use a torch, never matches or candles.
- ✓ Floodwaters pick up sewage and chemicals so wear strong boots, gloves and other protective clothing during the clean up. Wash hands and clothing regularly and dispose of food or medicines that were in contact with floodwater.
- ✓ Visit www.dpi.vic.gov.au for advice about flood recovery on farms or rural properties.

After the flood... the clean up begins



- ✓ Dry-out and clean buildings straight away. Follow DHS advice to reduce mould growth and the breeding of mosquitoes.



Floods and Insurance



If your insurance policy covers flood damage, contact your insurance company immediately.

Take photos of all damage.

Your local Council can advise if your home / business is in a flood-prone area.

Looking after animals is an important part of your emergency plan. Sometimes humans risk their life trying to find, rescue or protect their pets or farm animals. For the safety of people and animals, be organised, act early. Late action can be deadly.

- ✓ Have animals / pets identified (name tag, microchip).
- ✓ Add your vet's phone number to your contact list. (p.4)
- ✓ Bring pets indoors. Tie up with a lead or put in a cage so they can't escape outdoors or cause chaos indoors.
- ✓ **If you leave**, take your pets with you, never leave them behind. Take pet food, pet medicine, leads and cages.

If moving animals to higher ground or safer areas, act early before animals become stressed or conditions deteriorate.

- ✓ Be aware that some relief centres do not take pets (guide dogs are OK) so organise a place for animals to go now. Identify higher ground on your farm, discuss options with kennels / cattery, friends or family.



Act early, late action can be deadly.



For more about animals in emergencies:
www.dpi.vic.gov.au www.rspca.org.au
www.ema.gov.au or www.ses.vic.gov.au



Emergency and Useful Contacts

Life threatening Emergency

police fire ambulance

106 TTY Emergency Service

SES State Emergency Service

for Emergency assistance call:

SES website

000 Triple Zero

132 500

www.ses.vic.gov.au

SES Flood & Storm Information Line

(Only operates during major floods or storms)

VICSES Flood & Storm Information Line
1300 VIC SES
1300 842 737

National Relay Service NRS

The deaf / hearing / speech impaired can call SES (or 000) using NRS:

Speak and Listen (SSR) users phone:

TTY / Voice users phone

Internet relay users connect via

see www.relayservice.com.au

dial then ask for:
 1300 555 727 132 500 or 000
 133 677 132 500
<http://www.iprelay.com.au/call/index.aspx>
 enter: 132 500 or 000

Emergency Broadcasts:

Your Local ABC radio

find your station at: www.abc.net.au

Other local radio

Sky News TV

..... FM AM

..... FM AM

Other numbers: Local Council

.....

Vet Water

.....

Electricity



.....

Gas



.....

Australian Tsunami Warning Centre for current warnings

1300 878 6264
www.bom.gov.au

Bureau of Meteorology BoM weather forecasts, warnings, maps, storm radar etc

1300 659 217
www.bom.gov.au

Department of Health recovery health & safety advice

www.health.vic.gov.au

Department of Human Services DHS relief, recovery & health advice

www.dhs.vic.gov.au

Department of Sustainability & Environment DSE Catchment information

www.dse.vic.gov.au

Department of Primary Industries DPI Recovery: rural / agriculture

www.dpi.vic.gov.au

Emergency Management Australia Australian Government

www.ema.gov.au

Geoscience Australia Natural Hazards facts & information

www.ga.gov.au/hazards

VicRoads Traffic Hazard Reporting & Advisory Service

13 11 70
www.vicroads.vic.gov.au



EARTHQUAKES

are a sudden shaking of the earth's surface that happen without warning. There may be several before and / or after the strongest.

During an earthquake.....

- If indoors, stay there. Keep clear of windows and overhead fittings. Take shelter under a door frame, table or desk and hold on. Do not use elevators or lifts.
- If outdoors, keep clear of trees, powerlines and buildings. If in a vehicle, park in a clear area. Listen to car radio for updates.

For more about tsunamis or earthquakes visit:

www.ses.vic.gov.au
or www.bom.gov.au

TSUNAMI

are a series of ocean waves usually caused by earthquakes. There are 2 types of tsunami warnings issued (depending on the level of threat) by the Australian Tsunami Warning Centre:

Marine and immediate foreshore warnings

 advise for your safety :

- If on the beach, swimming, surfing or boating close to shore: get out of the water and move away from the water's edge of any beach, harbour, coastal river or rocky outcrop.
- Listen to the radio and follow emergency advice
- Move vessels at sea to deeper water, well off-shore. Stay there until the "all clear" is given.
- Check neighbours and others around you know about the warning. Don't go to the coast to watch the tsunami.

Land inundation warnings

 are issued if land inundation (flooding) is possible. For your safety :

- Go to higher ground or inland, well away from beaches and the water's edge of harbours and coastal rivers.
- If possible, walk to safety to avoid traffic jams.
- If you cannot leave the area, take shelter in upper stories of a sturdy brick or concrete building
- Take only essential items you can carry: medical needs, important papers, family photos.

After an Earthquake or Tsunami in your area

- Listen to local radio and follow emergency advice.
- Be alert for hazards, attend to injuries. Stay calm, help others.
- If safe, check damage to walls, chimneys and roof. If damage is found, turn off electricity, gas, water at the mains and evacuate. Stay clear of debris, fallen powerlines, other damaged buildings.
- Don't return to "normal life" until officially told the threat is over. Aftershocks or further waves are possible.
- Avoid driving unless for an emergency. Don't go sightseeing.
- Avoid using the telephone. Only call 000 if it is a life-threatening emergency.

How can I be prepared for storms ?

Calls for assistance to SES and costly repairs can be reduced when people carry out regular basic maintenance around homes or businesses, before any storm appears on the horizon.

Things you can do now to reduce the impact of storms include:

- ✓ Listen to weather reports for Severe Weather or Thunderstorm warnings.
- ✓ Put together an Emergency Kit. See p.5 to get started.
- ✓ Clean gutters, spouting and downpipes regularly. Keep the roof in good repair. Fix loose tiles, roofing iron and ridge capping.
- ✓ Inspect and fix fences.
- ✓ Power blackouts can happen when storms damage powerlines. Have a torch and battery-operated radio. Keep mobile phone fully charged.
- ✓ Trim or remove trees or branches overhanging your home, business or powerlines on your property.
- ✓ Keep your yard or porch free of clutter. If weather warnings are issued, move outdoor furniture and play equipment into the garage or shed.
- ✓ Check that you have adequate building and contents insurance for your home or business.
- ✓ Keep an up to date list of emergency numbers near the telephone (see p.4)
- ✓ Help your neighbours get prepared.



Develop your own Home or Business Emergency Plan
www.ses.vic.gov.au



Home or Business Emergency Kit ... for any emergency

Your Emergency Kit includes items you, your family or workmates will need during and after most emergencies.

It should contain at least these basic items, but make it fit your needs.

1. A battery or wind-up radio
2. A battery or wind-up torch
3. Spare batteries to fit radio and torch
4. A first aid kit
5. Rubber gloves and strong leather work or garden gloves
6. Mobile phone and charger
7. A waterproof bag or container for: valuables, important papers, identification I.D., wills, photographs, phone numbers (family, friends), back-up copy of computer files etc
8. A good supply of everyone's medicines and prescriptions
9. Strong shoes or boots
10. A copy of your Home or Business Emergency Plan
11. Special needs for babies, the disabled, infirm or elderly
12. Enough non-perishable food and drinking water for every person (and pets) for 3 days

**Basic
Emergency
Kit**





"Avoid using telephones during electrical storms"

During the Storm Caught on the Road



When a storm warning is broadcast

Storm warnings are advised over radio, news bulletins and the Bureau of Meteorology website. Storm warnings cover a range of dangers : thunderstorms, lightning, hail, damaging winds, tornadoes, heavy rain or flash flooding.

If a storm warning is issued for your area:

- ✓ Listen to radio or news bulletins for updated warnings.
- ✓ Get your Emergency Kit ready. Test batteries in radio and torches. Swap to your fixed landline phone, cordless phones need power to work.
- ✓ Bring children and pets indoors. Secure pets so they can't escape outdoors or create havoc indoors.
- ✓ Check neighbours know about the warnings and are prepared.
- ✓ Move outdoor furniture or toys to a secure place. Turn trampoline mat side down or tie to a fixed object. They are easily carried off by the wind.



During the Storm

- ✓ While the storm passes, shelter indoors if possible. Stay clear of windows in case they break.
- ✓ Use a torch instead of candles.
- ✓ Lightning can be deadly. If outdoors seek shelter immediately in a building or vehicle. Avoid using the telephone.

- ✓ Power blackouts can happen during storms. Turn off and unplug all non-essential electrical items eg. TV, air conditioner. Connecting generators to your house is dangerous unless done by an electrician.

NEVER shelter under a tree

What about my car ?

- ✓ Make sure your car is always roadworthy: good tyre tread, working brakes and windscreen wipers.
- ✓ Park your car under solid cover, well away from trees, powerlines, drains and streams.
- ✓ Keep a basic Emergency Kit (see p.5) in your car including: a torch, first aid kit, mobile phone.



What if I am in my car during a storm ?

- ✓ Listen to the car radio for updates on warnings, information or safety advice.
- ✓ Be alert and watch for hazards: powerlines, fast flowing water, washed away roads or bridges, tree branches or roofing iron.

- ✓ Slow down, drive to suit the conditions and turn your car headlights on.

Storms can be deadly, so drive to survive.

If it is hard to see:

It is safer to pull over, well off the side of the road in an area clear of streams, drains, trees and powerlines. Turn on car headlights and hazard lights and wait for the storm to pass. Better StormSafe than sorry.



"Lightning can, and often does, strike more than once in the same place"

After the Storm How SES can help



Now that the Storm has passed, what do I do?

- For updated information and advice, keep listening to the radio. In major emergencies, call the SES Flood and Storm Information line:
- Check your house for damage from the ground. If you need help from VICSES, call 132 500
- Stay well clear of swollen creeks, drains, fallen trees, powerlines and damaged buildings. Always assume fallen powerlines are dangerous.
- Make sure children are ALWAYS well supervised and pets secured.
- Check trees for damage.
- Check neighbours are OK, especially the elderly or those new to the area.
- Do not go sight seeing. Sightseers delay emergency services and cause accidents.

VICSES Flood & Storm Information Line
1300 VIC SES
1300 842 737

SES FLOOD STORM EMERGENCY
132 500

For life-threatening emergencies, call 000 immediately



If your home or property is damaged

- Check for damage from the ground. Watch for broken glass, loose tiles or roofing iron, damaged powerlines, other debris.
- For emergency assistance due to flood or storm damage (eg. roof blown off) call 132 500 for help from SES. If your home is badly damaged and you need to relocate, take your emergency kit and pets with you.
- Contact your insurance company immediately. Take photos of damage.
- If trees or branches have fallen around your yard and are not dangerous (eg. over the driveway) contact your local tree service. Your insurance may cover these costs.
- Have storm or wind damaged wiring or other electrical equipment checked by an electrician.



How VICSES can help

SES volunteers help Victorians during storms, floods, earthquakes, tsunamis, searches and rescues. SES also works with other emergency services: police, ambulance and fire brigade.

SES volunteers are not paid and give up their time, often braving drenching rain and strong winds to help others.

SES crews are trained to respond to flood and storm emergencies, including rescuing people trapped or injured in damaged buildings. Where suitable, SES may carry out temporary repairs to reduce further storm or water damage eg. placing tarps over damaged roofs. It is the owner's responsibility to organise permanent repairs.

To find out more about how StormSafe and FloodSafe can help you, your family and your business visit the SES website:

www.ses.vic.gov.au



SES FLOOD STORM EMERGENCY
132 500

During a major emergency, SES will prioritise calls for help.

People and businesses need to be prepared, ready and able to look after themselves and help their neighbours.