

NATURAL DISASTERS AND EMERGENCY ACTION GUIDE

BE PREPARED. STAY SAFE.



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REGIONAL COUNCIL

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TYPES OF DISASTERS THAT CAN IMPACT OUR REGION

To minimise danger to yourself, your family and your property, always be prepared for the following events:

- Bushfires
- Severe storms
- Floods
- Heatwaves
- Earthquakes
- Health epidemics



STEP 1 PREPARING YOUR HOUSEHOLD AND BUSINESS

PREPARING YOUR HOUSEHOLD

1. IDENTIFY RISKS

Read this booklet for information on potential emergencies and disaster management arrangements in the Somerset Region.

2. CREATE A HOUSEHOLD EMERGENCY PLAN

Sit down with all members of your household and decide how you will contact each other, where you will go and what you will do in an emergency, taking all family members into consideration. Record this information in a Household Emergency Plan and keep copies in your Emergency and Evacuation Kits (see page 7) and another safe place for easy access in the event of a disaster. Review and practice your Emergency Plan regularly (recommended three times per year)

3. LIST EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Create an emergency contacts list and keep it in a safe place where all household members can find and read it. Use the emergency contacts list on page 17 of this booklet as a starting point and add other relevant contacts to it.

HANDY TIPS

Download a Household Emergency Plan form here getready.qld.gov.au

Get natural disaster preparation checklists for your business here business.qld.gov.au/business



PREPARING YOUR BUSINESS

1. DEVELOP A BUSINESS CONTINUITY PLAN

This plan should include the following tasks:

- Organising insurance
- Training staff in first aid
- Establishing evacuation procedures
- Backing up business data
- Identifying risks to staffing and information systems
- Preparing your business premises.

2. DEVELOP A BUSINESS EMERGENCY PLAN

List the actions staff should take when an emergency occurs, including putting down sandbags and boarding up glass doors and windows, then train staff in their responsibilities.

STEP 2 PREPARING YOUR PETS

1. EVACUATING WITH YOUR PET

Create a Pet Emergency Kit including:

- Medications for up to two weeks, medical and vaccination records and vet details
- Food and bottled water for each pet for up to two weeks, plus a can opener
- Familiar bedding, toys and grooming equipment
- Secure pet carrier and leash
- Sanitation items such as newspaper, paper towel, disinfectant and rubbish bags
- Details of identification methods
- A current photograph for identification purposes
- Contact details for your vet, pet information and advisory services.

2. EVACUATING WITHOUT YOUR PET

Leave your pet in the strongest part of your home (see page 7) and:

- Leave plenty of food and water in sturdy, non-spill accessible containers
- Fill the bathtub with water and disinfect the toilet bowl, flush well, fill and leave the lid open
- Provide comfortable and familiar bedding
- Never leave a cat in the same room with a dog even if they get along
- Provide fish with long-term food blocks and install back-up power for fish tank filters
- Put water and a special food dispenser in bird cages as birds need food daily.

HANDY TIP

Download the Pet Emergency Plan here getready.qld.gov.au

MAKE A PLAN

Decide on the best plan for your circumstances and take the following steps:

- Ensure pets are properly identified
- Secure animals inside before an emergency event
- Use a secure carrier or leash when transporting animals
- Investigate boarding options away from the emergency zone
- If housing your animal away from home temporarily, ensure it has necessary food and medication for its stay.



STEP 3 EMERGENCY AND EVACUATION KITS



Prepare your Emergency and Evacuation kits in a sturdy, easy to carry bag or waterproof storage box and store in a safe place that is easy to access.

ITEMS TO INCLUDE IN YOUR EMERGENCY KIT

- Important documents in sealed bags or scanned to a USB
- Torch and batteries
- Baby formula and nappies
- Sturdy gloves
- Fresh water for three days
- Non-perishable food for three days and can opener
- Toiletries
- Waterproof bags
- Portable radio
- Essential medication
- First aid kit
- Spare batteries for radio, torch and mobile phone.

ITEMS TO INCLUDE IN YOUR EVACUATION KIT

- Emergency Plans (see page 5)
- Emergency Kit (as above)
- Cash (ATMs and banks may not be available)
- Valuables and mementos
- Sleeping bags
- Pillows
- Warm clothes
- Towels
- Kids toys and entertainment.

HANDY TIP

Download the Prepare for Evacuation checklist here getready.qld.gov.au

STEP 4 PREPARE YOUR HOME

1. GENERAL MAINTENANCE

- Check roof condition and repair loose tiles, eaves and screws
- Clean gutters and downpipes so water can drain away quickly
- Trim trees and overhanging branches
- Secure loose items that could cause damage if blown around.

2. GENERAL PREPARATIONS

- Ensure your home, contents and car insurance is current, adequate and includes debris clean up and removal
- Identify the strongest part of your home to take shelter in during a severe storm – this is usually the smallest room in the house with the fewest windows
- Know where and how to turn off the main supply for water, power and gas
- Consider purchasing or hiring a generator to assist during extended power outages
- Buy emergency essentials including:
 - › Drinking water containers
 - › Spare fuel
 - › Wide masking tape for windows
 - › Hessian bags and sand for sandbagging.

HANDY TIP

Visit getready.qld.gov.au for more tips to prepare your home



STEP 5

STAY INFORMED

During an emergency you need to tune in, log on, listen and act. Assume all warnings are urgent and you need to act immediately on the information provided.

1. TUNE IN

- Tune your radio to your local ABC or commercial radio station frequency to listen
- Activate your Emergency Plan for weather and warning updates – see page 17 for frequencies
- Turn your television on to your local station to watch and listen for warning updates.

2. LOG ON

- Check the Bureau of Meteorology website for weather updates and warnings - see page 17 for website addresses
- Check the Queensland Disasters and Alerts website for emergency alert messages issued and current disaster events
- Visit the Somerset Regional Council's Disaster Dashboard to be kept up to date on road closures, evacuation centres, flood cameras and other important information
- Check ABC online for warnings, updates and information.

3. LISTEN OUT

- For emergency alert voice messages to your landline and text messages to your mobile phone
- For local community safety announcements on radio and television
- For sirens and loud hailer announcements from emergency services
- For emergency services personnel who may door-knock your area.

4. ACT

- Ensure all household members are aware of emergency warnings and advice
- Check on family, neighbours and friends who may need assistance
- Locate and collect your Emergency Plan, Emergency Kit and Evacuation Kit
- If you are visiting the region, contact your accommodation manager for evacuation options.



HANDY TIPS

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Visit getready.qld.gov.au for updates, alerts and warnings
.....

Download the Bureau of Meteorology Weather App at
bom.gov.au/bom-weather-app

COPING AFTER AN EMERGENCY

It is important to take steps to ensure physical and mental health and safety after an emergency situation.

1. ENSURE SAFETY

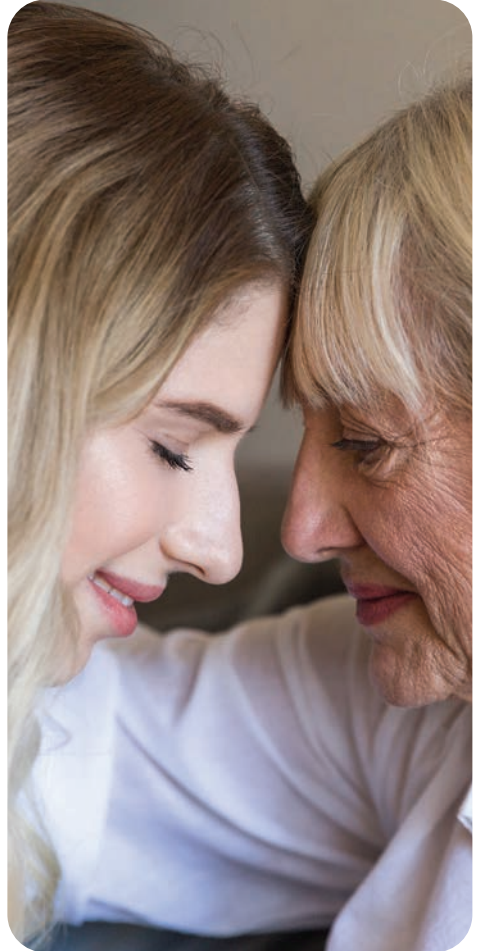
Make sure you and the people with you are safe by following these guidelines:

- Do not return home until advised by authorities and use the recommended route
- Be cautious when going outside
- Watch for displaced wildlife such as snakes
- Watch for downed powerlines, which may be hidden in debris
- If you find downed powerlines treat them as live, keep people clear and notify Energex – see page 17 for contact details
- If your house has been damaged, ensure everyone is safe, stay clear and call for emergency services assistance – see page 17 for contact details.

2. REMAIN CALM

Take the following steps to control your fears, emotions and actions:

- Stop what you are doing and take some slow, deep breaths
- Talk about your feelings calmly with family
- Focus on the practical tasks you can do to be prepared and stay safe
- Explain events to children, reassure them and let them help
- Talk about the experience with others after danger has passed
- If feelings of distress continue for an extended period contact your doctor or the Medicare Mental Health Service - see page 17 for contact details.



LOCAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT



SOMERSET REGIONAL COUNCIL LOCAL DISASTER MANAGEMENT GROUP

The Somerset Regional Council Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG) ensures where possible, appropriate disaster management arrangements are in place for any disaster. These arrangements include plans, committees, response capabilities and a program to tie all of these elements together.

During a local disaster event, the LDMG facilitates cooperation between all agencies and emergency services involved, including:

- Somerset Regional Council
- State Emergency Service
- Queensland Police Service
- Queensland Fire and Emergency Service
- Queensland Ambulance Service
- Queensland Health Service
- Department of Queensland Transport & Main Roads
- Energex
- NBN and Telstra
- ABC Radio.

During a Disaster, the Somerset Regional Council will activate its Local Disaster Coordination Centre (LDCC) to help manage the event. The LDCC is comprised of Council staff and liaison offers from other key response agencies and organisations that are members/ advisors to the Somerset LDMG.

HANDY TIP

Visit Somerset's Disaster Dashboard to find out more information during a disaster disaster.somerset.qld.gov.au

BUSHFIRE

WHAT IS A BUSHFIRE?

Bushfires are fuelled by vegetation, unpredictable in nature and can quickly change direction with wind conditions. Any areas that are close enough to be affected by burning material, embers and smoke can be threatened by bushfires, potentially causing major damage to property, injury and loss of life.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

It is your responsibility to be familiar with official bushfire warning levels and have a Bushfire Survival Plan in place. When there is a bushfire in your area, seek information about the event, make decisions and act.

BUSHFIRE PREPARATION

- Reduce bushfire fuel around your property by grading or burning a fire-break and keeping grass and leaf litter at a minimum
- Plant a wind break
- Implement fire mitigation measures such as enclosing eaves, fitting wire screens to doors, windows and vents, enclosing under-floor areas and moving wood and fuel away from buildings
- Fit outdoor taps and long hoses in strategic places and install roof sprinklers
- Ensure LPG safety valves face away from buildings
- Ensure easy and safe access for fire fighting vehicles
- Identify safe places of refuge if you need to leave your home.

HANDY TIP

Download a bushfire survival plan at bushfire-survival-plan.qfes.qld.gov.au



SEVERE STORM



WHAT IS A SEVERE STORM?

Severe storms are often unpredictable and can occur at any time, involving lightning, thunder, hail, wind gusts and flash flooding. These storms can cause major damage to property, injury and loss of life.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

Pay attention to severe storm warnings issued by the Bureau of Meteorology and visit bom.gov.au to find out if your area may be impacted. Always wait for storm activity to pass completely before going outdoors.

WHAT TO DO IN A STORM

If you are outside you can:

- Avoid taking shelter under trees or in open structures such as gazebos
- Take shelter in an enclosed vehicle or solid building
- If there is no shelter available, crouch on your own with your feet together and avoid being the tallest object in the area
- Stay out of water including creeks and swimming pools
- Do not travel in open vehicles, ride bicycles or horses
- If you are travelling in a vehicle, slow down and park undercover away from trees and powerlines

If you are inside you can:

- Disconnect external aerials and electrical appliances
- Draw all curtains and keep clear of metal and electrical fixtures like pipes or landline telephones
- Avoid touching brick and concrete or standing barefoot on concrete or tiled floors.

HANDY TIP

You can check for Queensland weather warnings here bom.gov.au

FLOOD

WHAT IS A FLOOD?

Localised or flash flooding can occur after torrential rain causing drainage systems to reach capacity and overflow quickly.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

Pay attention to flood warnings issued by the Bureau of Meteorology and visit bom.gov.au to find out if your area may be impacted. Never drive through flood water. Remember: If it's flooded, forget it.

FLOOD PREPARATION

If flooding may impact your home:

- Understand your flood risk by visiting Council's Flood Information page on the Disaster Dashboard disaster.somerset.qld.gov.au
- Tie down or remove loose items in your yard or under your house
- Identify household items that need to be raised or emptied, e.g. electrical appliances and cupboards
- Protect items of value by enclosing them in waterproof covers
- Ensure all chemicals that may react with water are stored in waterproof containers and moved to a higher level
- Disconnect gas cylinders and gas bottles and tie them down or move them to a higher level.

HANDY TIPS

You can view a property specific flood certificate by visiting Council's Disaster Dashboard at disaster.somerset.qld.gov.au and accessing the Flood Information Page

For assistance during a flood emergency, call **QLD SES on 132 500**



HEATWAVE



WHAT IS A HEATWAVE?

A heatwave is a long period of very hot weather, with temperatures ranging from 37°C to 42°C.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

Pay attention to heatwave warnings issued by the Bureau of Meteorology and visit www.bom.gov.au to find out if your area may be impacted.

PREPARE

Follow the Be Prepared steps on pages 5-9 to make sure you are always prepared for an emergency situation.

HEATWAVE PREPARATION

You can:

- Check that your air conditioning and ceiling fans are working
- Keep cool and stay out of the heat
- Drink lots of water
- Dress in loose fitting cool clothing
- Check on the elderly and neighbours who could be at risk in the heat
- Spend time in cool places like a shopping centre, library or cinema
- If someone falls ill due to extreme heat phone 000 (Triple Zero) for help.

HANDY TIP

Learn more about what to do in a heatwave here health.qld.gov.au

EARTHQUAKE



WHAT IS AN EARTHQUAKE?

An earthquake is a shaking of the earth's crust, striking without warning and varying greatly in severity. Earthquakes can be caused by underground volcanic forces, breaking of rocks underneath the earth's surface, and sudden movement along an existing fault line.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

Warning signs that may indicate an earthquake is imminent can include:

- Erratic animal behaviour such as scared or confused pets or birdcalls not usually heard during the night
- Sudden water level changes in wells or artesian bores.

PREPARE

Follow the Be Prepared steps on pages 5-9 to make sure you are always prepared for an emergency situation.

HANDY TIP

Learn more about what you can do before, during and after an earthquake here qld.gov.au/emergency

WHAT TO DO IN AN EARTHQUAKE?

If you are inside during an earthquake:

- Keep clear of windows, chimneys and overhead fittings
- Shelter under and hold onto a strong door frame, table or bench
- In high rise buildings, keep clear of windows and outer walls and shelter under a desk near a pillar or internal wall
- Do not use elevators
- In crowded buildings, do not rush for doors, but move clear of overhead fittings and shelves

If you are outside during an earthquake:

- Keep clear of buildings, overhead structures, bridges, powerlines and trees
- If you are on a city street, shelter from falling debris under strong archways or building doorways
- Do not go under awnings as they may collapse

If you are in a vehicle during an earthquake:

- Stop in an open area until the shaking stops
- Beware of downed powerlines and road damage, including overpasses and bridges
- Listen to your car radio for warnings before moving.

HEALTH EPIDEMIC

WHAT IS A HEALTH EPIDEMIC?

A health epidemic occurs when an infectious disease spreads rapidly to many people in a given population within a short period of time.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

If a health epidemic occurs and you suspect you may be ill, phone 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84) or your doctor before visiting a health facility, to discuss your symptoms and get advice on whether a medical examination or further actions may be necessary.

PREPARE

Follow the Be Prepared steps on pages 5-9 to make sure you are always prepared for an emergency situation.

TO REDUCE THE RISK OF A HEALTH EPIDEMIC

- Stay home when you are sick
- Wash your hands and bathe regularly with soap and water
- Wash your hands prior to touching your eyes, nose and mouth
- Properly dispose of garbage and food items
- Keep your house clean
- Ensure pets are kept away from your house and living areas
- Keep up-to-date with vaccinations
- Determine whether you are in the 'at risk' category, which includes children, aged individuals, those who have a low immune system or those who work in close proximity with others such as a nurse or childcare worker.



EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Below is a list of emergency contact numbers to add to your Household Emergency Plan, your Emergency Kit and your Evacuation Kit.

PHONE NUMBERS

Police/Fire/Ambulance – life threatening or emergency situations	000 (triple zero)
Somerset Regional Council	(07) 5424 4000
Energex – life threatening emergencies only	13 16 70 or 000
State Emergency Service (SES) – storm and flood emergencies	13 25 00
Queensland Health	13HEALTH (13 43 25 84)
Medicare Mental Health Service	1800 595 212
Queensland Transport & Main Roads – traffic and travel information	13 19 40

WEBSITES

Somerset Regional Council	somerset.qld.gov.au
Get Ready Queensland	getready.qld.gov.au
Bureau of Meteorology	bom.gov.au
Queensland Transport & Main Roads – road closures and conditions	qldtraffiqlld.gov.au
ABC News	abc.net.au/news
Queensland Disasters and Alerts	disaster.qld.gov.au

RADIO STATIONS

ABC Southern Queensland – local radio – 612AM	(07) 4631 3811
River 94.9FM	
Valley FM 95.9FM	
4BC 882	

Somerset Regional Council	facebook.com/SomersetRegionalCouncil
Queensland Police	facebook.com/QueenslandPolice
Queensland Fire Department	facebook.com/QldFireDepartment
Queensland Ambulance Service	facebook.com/qldambulanceservice
Energex	facebook.com/ErgonEnergy
Queensland Transport & Main Roads	facebook.com/TMRQld
Bureau of Meteorology	facebook.com/bureauofmeteorology

BILINGUAL INTERPRETATION

qld.gov.au/emergency to browse available resources
disaster.somerset.qld.gov.au/ and select language options

This booklet is correct at time of printing, some details may be subject to change.

For more information
(07) 5424 4000
mail@somerset.qld.gov.au
somerset.qld.gov.au
2 Redbank Street, Esk QLD 4312

 @SomersetRegionalCouncil

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SCAN HERE

Visit Somerset's Disaster Dashboard
to find out more information during a
disaster disaster.somerset.qld.gov.au



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