



# Media Release

Victoria State Emergency Service

168 Sturt Street, Southbank Victoria, 3006

## Never enter floodwater: You don't know what you're getting in to

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FloodSafe Week (25-31 May) is an opportunity for Victoria State Emergency Service (VICSES) volunteers to engage with the local community and warn people about the dangers of floodwater.

Victoria has a long history of flooding, however many people are unaware of just how dirty, disgusting and dangerous floodwater can be.

Driving through floodwater is the biggest killer of adults in Australian floods – and it's completely avoidable. Even shallow floodwater can sweep away your vehicle or leave you stranded. Don't ever risk driving through floodwater.

Floodwater can wash out roads to create slips and sinkholes, so even seemingly shallow water across a familiar road can pose danger. Never enter floodwater: you don't know what you are getting into.

It isn't just drowning that kills. By the time floodwater has reached your neighbourhood, it may have picked up all kinds of awful materials including toxic chemicals, animal faeces, decaying animals, garbage, broken glass and rusted metal.

Anyone who comes into contact with floodwater may be exposed to E. Coli infection, diarrhoea, hepatitis, infections and dermatitis.

FloodSafe Week is an annual initiative of VICSES aimed at raising awareness about the risk of floods. VICSES volunteers will hold a range of events throughout the week to explain some of the dangers and give tips on how to prepare for floods.

VICSES Chief Executive Officer Stephen Griffin said this year's focus was on shining a light into the murky contents of floodwater.

"Entering floodwater is extremely dangerous. Drivers, parents and children need to be aware of what's in that water and ensure they never enter floodwater," he said.

"Staying out of floodwater is an important part of keeping you and your family safe. Luckily, there are other ways you can prepare yourself, such as having a home emergency kit, knowing what to do and where to find information in an emergency.

"We encourage everyone to use FloodSafe Week as an opportunity to meet their local SES volunteers and learn how they can be prepared for the threat of flood. A little preparation goes a long way and we all need to take responsibility for our safety and learn the local flood risks."

For more information about FloodSafe Week including instructions on how to put together an emergency kit visit [www.ses.vic.gov.au](http://www.ses.vic.gov.au) or [www.facebook.com/vicses](http://www.facebook.com/vicses)

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