



# Guide for floods in rural areas

## Are you at risk of flood?

Floods can and do happen in Victoria. Floods can affect you if you live, work or visit areas close to creeks, rivers, drains or low-lying land. Every flood is different, but being prepared can help you to stay safe, reduce damage and save money.

Floods can affect your whole property, in ways such as:

- Loss of life
- Loss of crops, livestock, hay and fodder
- Damage to buildings and fences
- Damage to pumps and machinery

Even if your property is not flooded, you may still be isolated by flooded roads or damaged bridges.

Remember, floods do kill people and cause significant damage across Australia. Know your risk and be prepared.

## Flood Warnings

Flood Warnings are sent out by the Bureau of Meteorology. A Flood Watch is early notice that floods may occur in your region over the next 1-2 days if predicted rainfall occurs. A Flood Warning is sent out when flooding is about to happen. A Flood Warning gives a prediction of the size of the flood (minor, moderate or major) and when predicted heights will be reached. Flash floods move very fast and happen so quickly there may not be time to warn you.

It is important to remember that you may not always get a warning. It is important to stay informed and watch the weather conditions around you. In dangerous floods, you may get an Emergency Alert sent to your phone as a recorded message or text message to your mobile.



*Floods can damage roads and bridges leaving areas isolated. If you decide to evacuate, leave early. If you decide to stay, remember that you may become isolated and cut-off for days or even weeks.*

## Prepare now

You can prepare for floods by putting together an emergency plan that outlines what you will do to protect your property.

A good rural flood emergency plan includes:

- Your risk of flood.
- What to do before, during and after a flood.
- Where you will go if you evacuate and the safest route.
- A plan for moving livestock, pumps and machinery to higher ground.
- A list of contact numbers and websites.
- Supplies in case you are isolated such as generator fuel and fodder.
- A backup generator if your farm must have electricity.
- A prioritised list of the most important things on your farm. At some point you might have to choose which things you have time to save.

## Suggested items for your basic emergency kit



## Livestock and pets

Animals should be included in your emergency plan. You should find the highest ground on your farm (or a neighbour's farm) where stock can be safely kept until the floodwater clears. All animals should be clearly identified.

Pets should be put into pet carriers or on leads and kept inside the house during a flood. If you evacuate, take your pets with you.

## Evacuation

Floods are dangerous and can rise quickly. It is not safe to stay in a house with floodwater inside or all around it. You may have no power, sewerage or phone service. During floods, buildings may attract rats, spiders and snakes.

SES crews or other emergency service providers may advise you to prepare for evacuation. Get ready to leave immediately. When you evacuate, report to a relief centre or, if you choose to shelter with a friend or relative, inform authorities of where you are staying. Remember that floods may last for days, or even weeks.

When you leave, remember to:

- Take your emergency kit with you.
- Turn off electricity at the mains and turn off and secure gas bottles.
- Take your pets with you.
- Act early as roads may be cut-off by floodwater.

## How SES can help you

SES volunteers are trained to help in floods, storms, earthquake and tsunami. For SES emergency assistance call 132 500.

SES assistance may include:

- Rescuing people from floodwater
- Advising of an evacuation
- Giving flood advice
- Helping to protect properties

## How the Department of Environment and Primary Industries can help you

During emergencies, the Department of Environment and Primary Industries (DEPI) can:

- Coordinate rural recovery after emergencies.
- Assist with recovery efforts for farm businesses, people and communities such as assessing the loss of rural assets including livestock, crops, pasture and structures.
- Provide advice on animal health and animal disposal, weeds and soil health.

The DEPI website has detailed information about rural recovery after floods at [www.depi.vic.gov.au](http://www.depi.vic.gov.au).



Act early and move livestock and animals to higher ground before conditions worsen

# Flood Checklist

## If you hear a Flood Watch or Flood Warning

- Keep listening to your local emergency broadcaster.
- Check on family and neighbours. Make sure they are aware of the warning.
- Move pumps, machinery, hay and livestock to high ground.
- Move furniture, electrical equipment and important items onto shelves, tables or benches.
- Move oils, chemicals and poisons to high shelves.
- Stock up on essential items in case you become isolated.

## During a flood

- In life-threatening emergencies, call Triple Zero (000). For flood assistance, call SES on **132 500**.
- Never drive, walk or ride through floodwater. This is the main cause of death during floods.
- Never allow children to play in floodwater. This is the number one cause of death for children and teenagers during floods.
- Stay away from drains, culverts and waterways as conditions can change rapidly and floodwater can contain sewage, poisons, dangerous debris.
- If evacuating, take your emergency kit and pets with you and lock all the doors as you leave.

## After a flood

- If your property has been flooded, contact your local council for further information.
- Have damaged electrical and gas equipment professionally tested prior to use.

# Contacts

<b>Life-threatening emergency</b> Police, Fire, Ambulance <b>TTY</b>	<b>Triple Zero (000)</b> <b>106</b>
<b>State Emergency Service (SES)</b> For emergency assistance in floods and storms	<b>132 500</b>
<b>SES information line</b> Operates during major emergencies	<b>1300 842 737</b> <b>1300 VIC SES</b>
<b>SES website</b>	<a href="http://ses.vic.gov.au">ses.vic.gov.au</a>
<b>Bureau of Meteorology</b> Weather forecasts and warnings	<b>1300 659 217</b> <a href="http://bom.gov.au">bom.gov.au</a>
<b>VicRoads</b> Road closures and hazard reporting	<b>13 11 70</b> <a href="http://vicroads.gov.au">vicroads.gov.au</a>
<b>Department of Human Services</b> Relief and recovery advice	<a href="http://dhs.vic.gov.au">dhs.vic.gov.au</a>
<b>Department of Health</b> Health and safety advice	<a href="http://health.vic.gov.au">health.vic.gov.au</a>
<b>Department of Environment and Primary Industries</b> Rural, animal and agricultural recovery as well as catchment information	<a href="http://depi.vic.gov.au">depi.vic.gov.au</a>