



Media Release

Victoria State Emergency Service

29 September 2020

La Nina confirmed in Victoria: what it means for you

VICSES is urging Victorians to prepare for wet and wild weather, with the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) confirming today that a La Nina system will affect Australia this spring.

A La Nina is a weather pattern that brings high rainfall, that increases the risk of **flash** and **riverine flooding**. These flood events have occurred in 12 out of 18 similar La Nina weather events since 1900 - somewhere around Australia.

In 2010/2011, 140 townships, 68,000 properties and 7,500 people were impacted by flooding across Victoria, with now the time to prepare for potentially similar outcomes.

VICES has developed 120 easy-to-read [local flood guides](#), in a bid to raise flood awareness for community's on their local risk profile and save lives.

Many of us don't know that floods are the **second deadliest** natural disaster in Australia, with the majority of fatalities due to people being washed away in vehicles. It takes only 15cm of water to float a small car, with Victorians urged to never take the risk of driving or walking through it.

Before the impacts of La Nina take hold, VICSES also wants Victorians in low laying areas to know the basic steps of **sandbagging** and what to do when impacted by a major flood.

This entails 1.) Sourcing sandbags prior to a flooding event and knowing how to bag doors and water entry points 2.) blocking drains and toilets to prevent back-flow with sandbags inside a garbage bag 3.) lifting valuable items onto tables or benches and 4.) leaving your home for somewhere safer such as the home of family or friends on higher ground.

It comes as VICSES volunteers return to critical small group face-to-face training and skill maintenance in preparation for spring. Training was conducted exclusively online during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, while operational response continued as usual – and included several storm events, searches (supporting Victoria Police) and road rescues.

You can read more on BOM's La Nina outlook [here](#), and VICSES sandbagging guides [here](#).

Quotes from Tim Wiebusch, Chief Officer VICSES:

"The confirmation of a La Niña this Spring and above average rainfall means the Victorian community needs to be prepared for the possibility of riverine and flash flooding over the coming months."

"From a flooding perspective, there are similarities in the climate outlook to what we experienced in 2016 and at its worst we could even see similar to what occurred in 2010 and 2011. That was the last significant La Niña event and the flood impacts had devastating consequences right across Victoria."

"We know a protracted flood event is the last thing Victorian's need in 2020, we're preparing for it with our partner emergency services, and we need the community to be prepare for it too".

For more information, contact:

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