



Local Flood Guide

Buchan

Understand, prepare, and respond effectively to your flood risk.

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Victorian State Emergency Service acknowledges Aboriginal Traditional Owners of Country throughout Victoria and pays respect to their cultures and Elders past and present.

Disclaimer: Victoria State Emergency Service assumes no responsibility or liability for any errors or omissions for any of the content in this document.

Cover: Buchan Recreation Reserve, 2012. *Football Netball East Gippsland*.

Content reviewed: November 2025



For more information visit: ses.vic.gov.au/plan-and-stay-safe

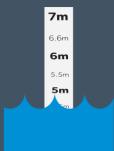


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Local flood information



There have been 7 significant flood events in Buchan between 1971 and 2016.



The largest flood on record was in 1978. More recent major floods occurred in June 2014 and July 2016.



Flooding can happen within hours, giving people little to no time to prepare and take action.

Why does Buchan flood?

Buchan is at risk of both **riverine flooding** and **flash flooding**, which can happen separately or at the same time. Both are usually caused by heavy rainfall.

Riverine flooding

This happens when the Buchan River or Spring Creek rises and overflows its banks, and spills water onto land.

- Buchan is built along the Buchan River, and parts of the town are on the floodplain, the naturally low-lying areas more likely to be impacted in a flood.
- Rainfall from as far away as The Great Dividing Range can end up flowing into the Buchan River potentially causing, or adding to flooding.

Flash flooding

This type of flooding can happen quickly and you may not receive an official warning. Although these floods only last short time, they can cause severe damage.

The Buchan River catchment has steep gullies which influences the water moving down the river and provides only a 6 hour lead time to prepare for flooding.

- The ground may be unable to absorb the amount of rainfall naturally causing the water to pool, and stormwater draining may not be able to drain the amount of rainfall causing them to over flow, or back flow.
- The Buchan River or Spring Creek may quickly rise, causing water to rise and overflow its banks.

How do floods impact communities?



Buildings flooded



Road closures



Drinking water supply and quality affected



Power outages



Mobile and internet network outage

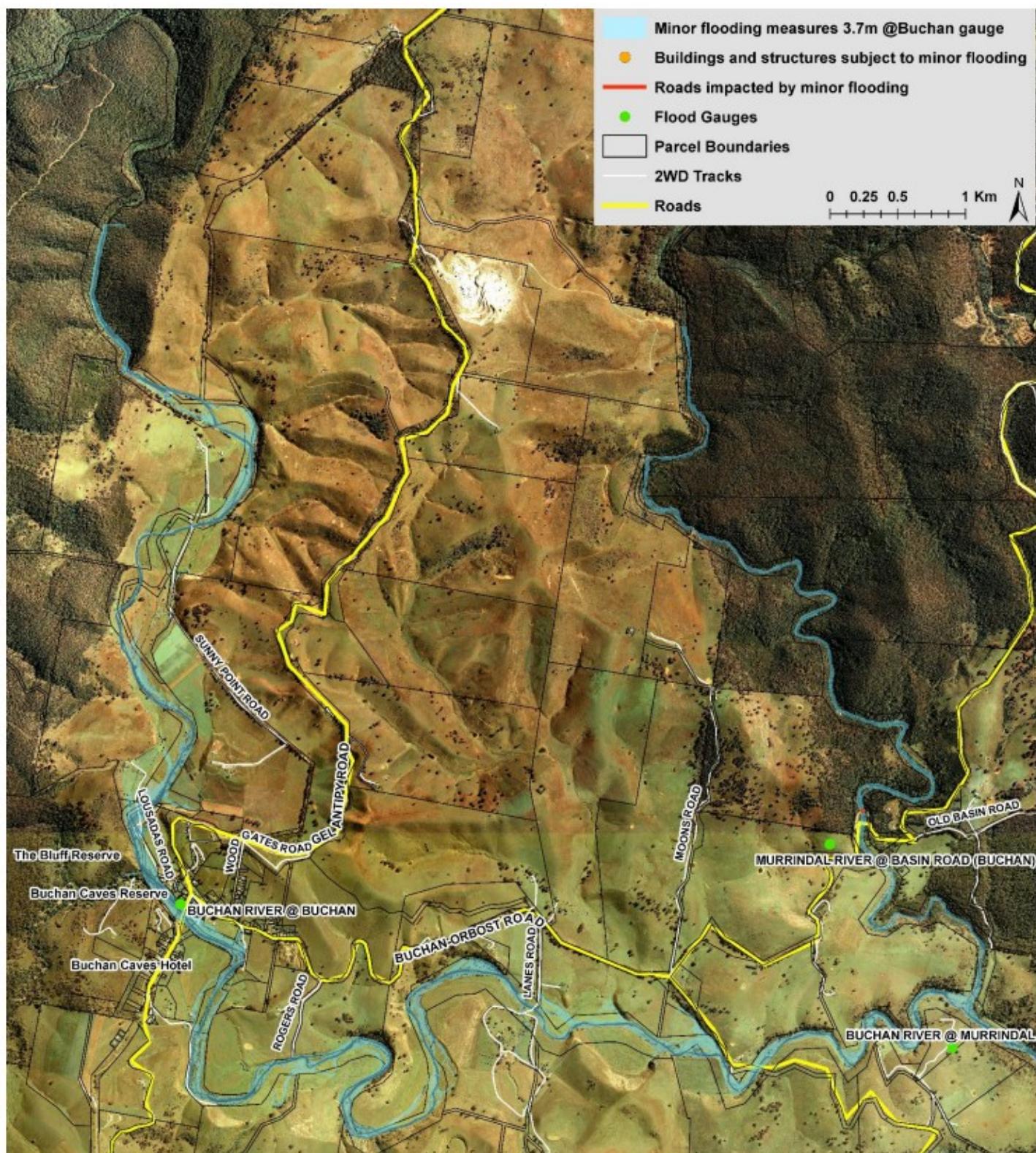


Sewage overflows inside building

Check your home, work, and travel routes for floodwater

If this map shows potential flood risk for you, ensure you take action to **plan and prepare for floods**. See [page 9](#) for more information.

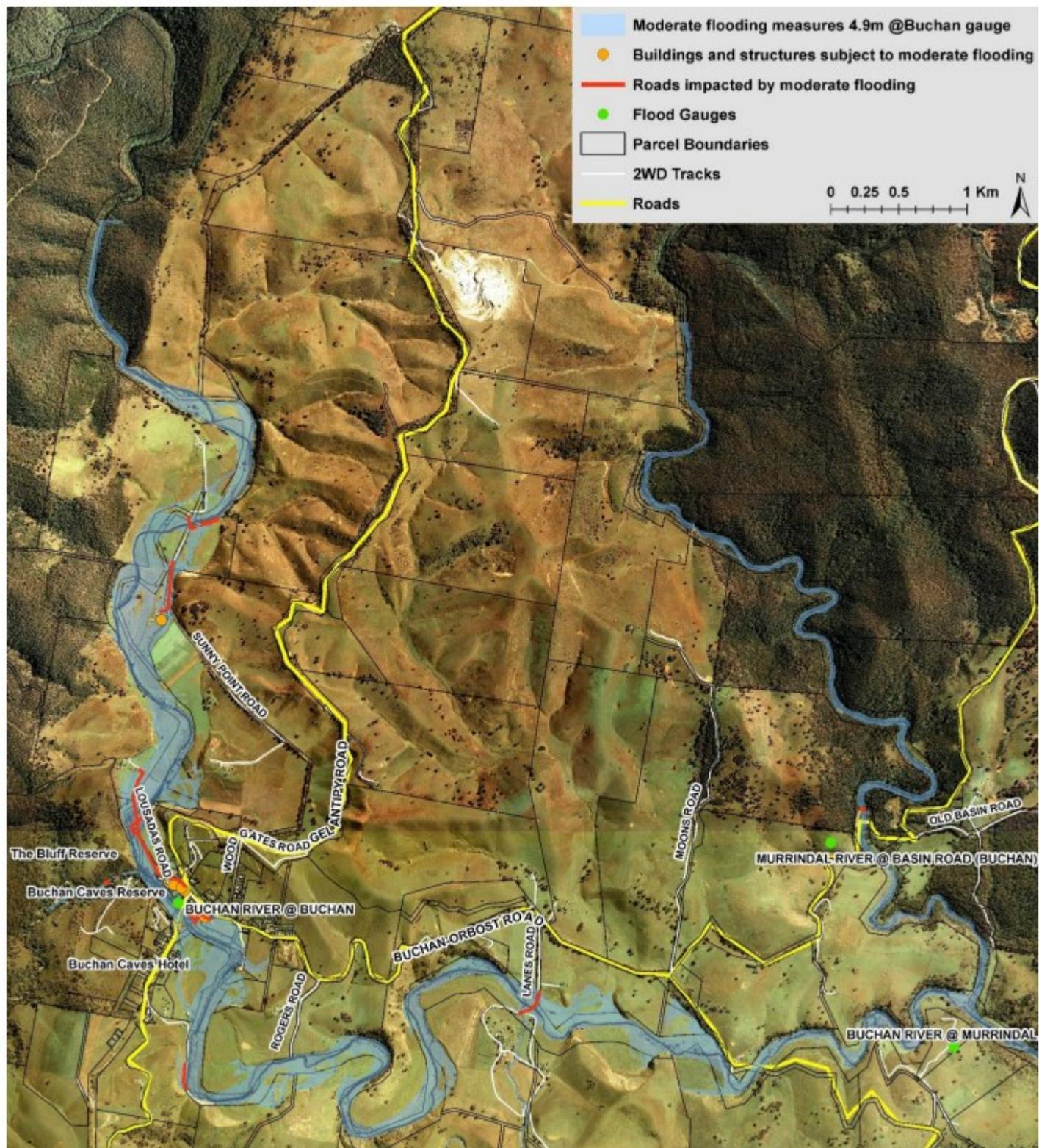
- This map shows the area likely to flood in a **minor flood** (3.7 metres), based on the height of floodwater at the Buchan River gauge in Buchan



Check your home, work, and travel routes for floodwater

If this map shows potential flood risk for you, ensure you take action to **plan and prepare for floods**. See [page 9](#) for more information.

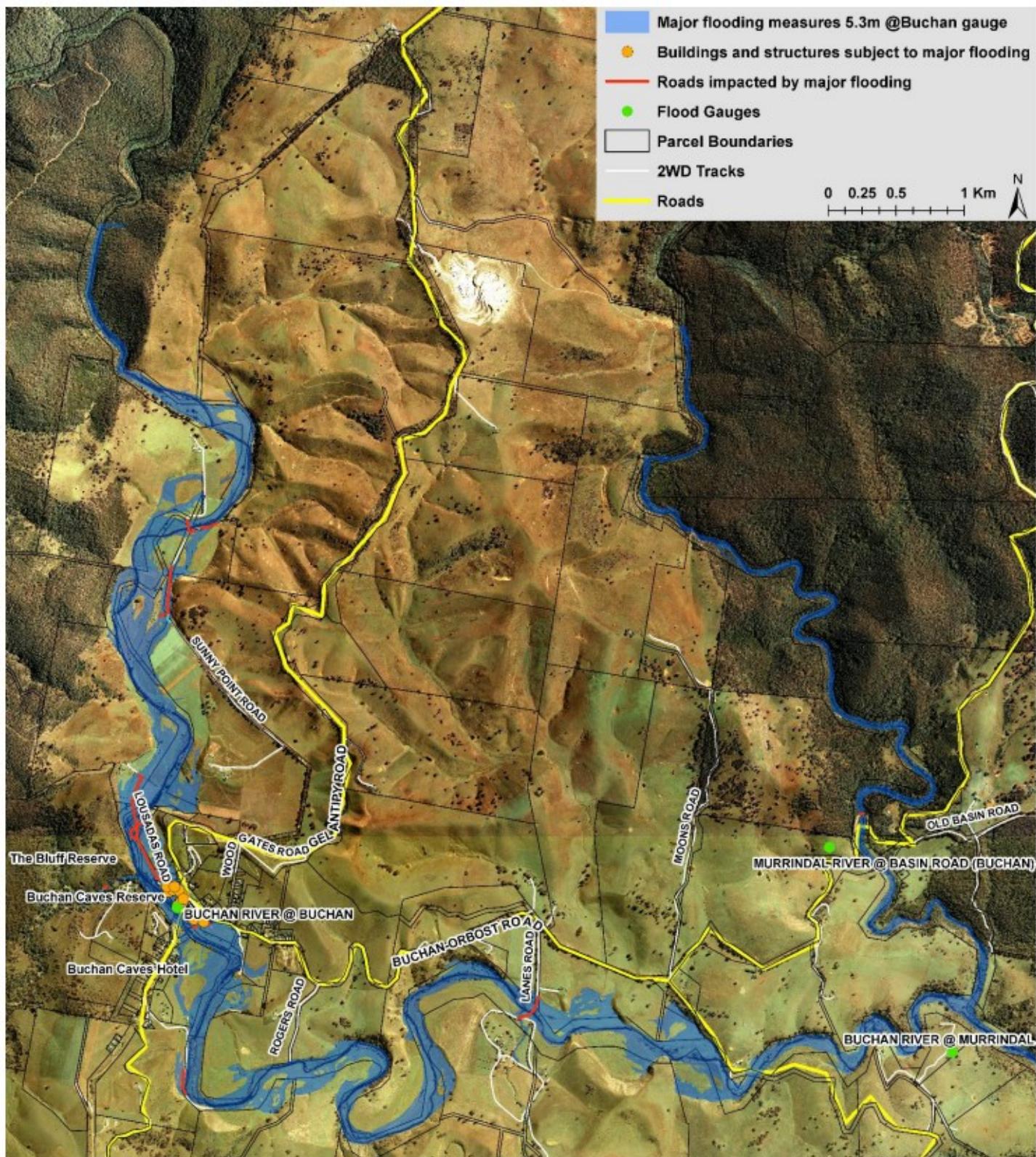
- This map shows the area likely to flood in a **moderate flood** (4.9 metres) based on the height of floodwater at the Buchan River gauge in Buchan.



Check your home, work, and travel routes for floodwater

If this map shows potential flood risk for you, ensure you take action to **plan and prepare for floods**. See [page 9](#) for more information.

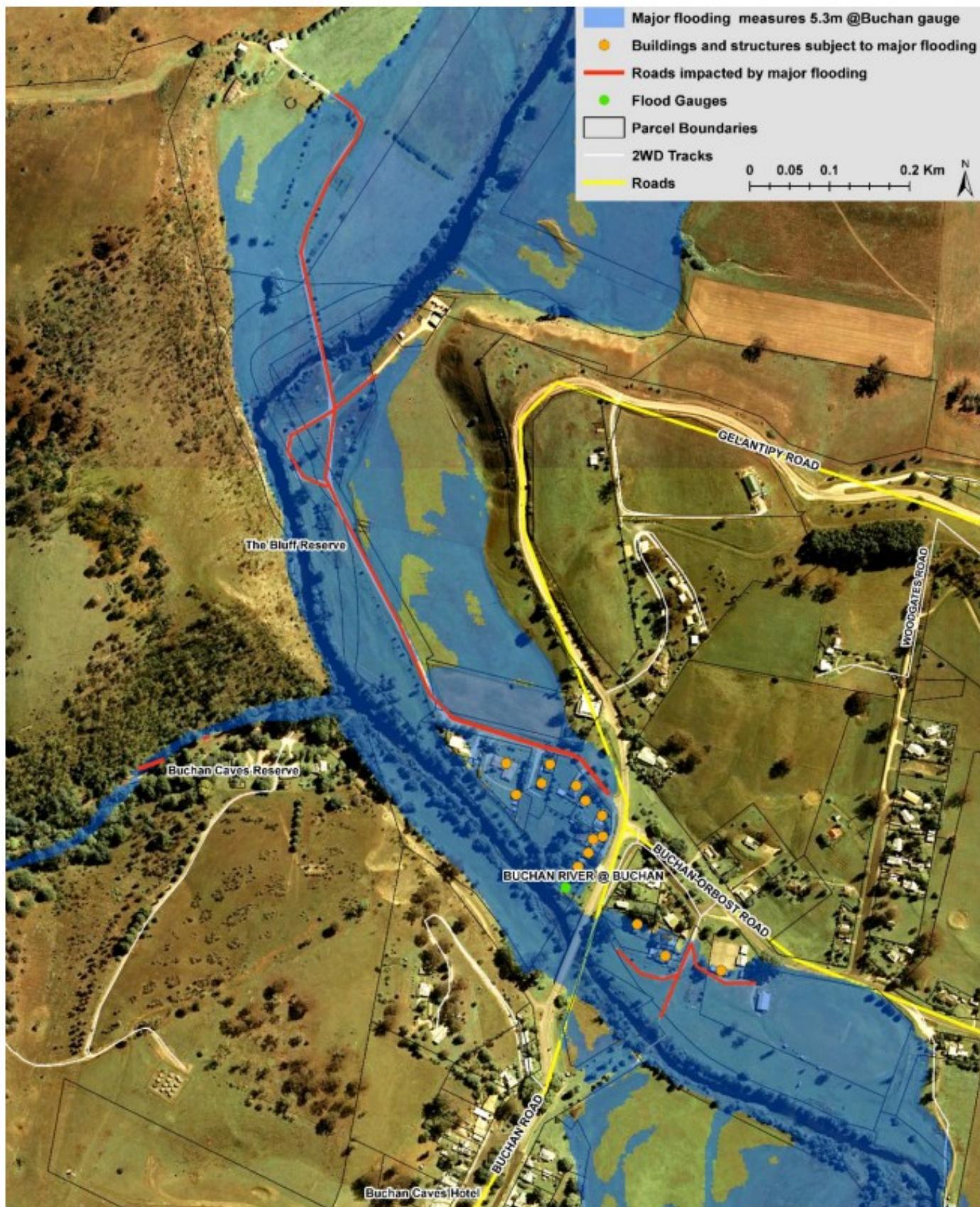
- This map shows the area likely to flood in a **major flood** (5.3 metres) along the Buchan River, based on the height of floodwater at the Buchan River gauge in Buchan.



Check your home, work, and travel routes for floodwater

If this map shows potential flood risk for you, ensure you take action to **plan and prepare for floods**. See page 8 for more information.

- This map shows the area likely to flood in a **major flood** (5.3 metres) in the Buchan Township, based on the height of floodwater at the Buchan River gauge in Buchan.



What might happen in a flood in your area?

Although no two floods are the same and the environment is constantly changing, the below table provides an idea of what to expect at different flood heights.

- **Before a flood:** Use the floodwater heights in the table to help you decide when you will need to act to protect yourself and your property in a flood event.
- **During a flood:** When a warning is issued by [VicEmergency](#), use the predicted floodwater height and warning information to understand what the potential impacts may be for you and your community.

| Floodwater Height (metres)* | Potential impacts [^] |
|-----------------------------|---|
| 3.0m | River conditions may be unsafe for water activities. |
| 3.7m | Minor flood level <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Buchan River channel is full and water is spilling out into some low lying areas of the floodplain.• Lousadas and Saleyard Road are affected by flood water, potentially isolating properties. |
| 3.78m | December 2023 flood event <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Buchan-Orbost Road and Lanes Road bridges at Buchan River are closed.• Basin Road at Murrindal River is unpassable due to flood.• Buchan Recreation Reserve is starting to be impacted by flooding.• Centre Road and the walking track is starting to flood.• Low lying areas downstream of the Sunny Point and the Buchan Recreation reserve are impacted by flood water. |
| 4.45m | June 2012 flood event |
| 4.9m | Moderate flood level <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Large areas of the low lying floodplain and some properties and roads near to the Buchan River are being impacted by flooding, including:• Caves Road is closed due to floodwater at 0.3m deep in some areas.• Buchan-Orbost Road at Back Creek is impacted by flood water.• Low-lying points of Buchan Caves Reserve start to be impacted by floodwater.• Buchan Recreation Reserve is entirely flooded.• Properties at Gelantipy Road and Saleyard Road intersection are beginning to flood.• Sunny Point Road at Slippery Pinch Road are impacted by flood water |
| 5.3 | Major flood level <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Buchan River continues to rise and extend through the Buchan and Gelantipy floodplains creating depths up to 1.5m.• Buchan-Orbost Road at Woodgates Road is closed due to flood water. <p>During events that are larger than a Major flood</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Main Road at Buchan River can flood, isolating properties to the north of Buchan.• The rear of properties between Main Road and Buchan River can be impacted by floodwater.• Properties between the north side of Buchan-Orbost Road and Buchan River can be impacted by floodwater.• Slippery Pinch Road is mostly impacted by floodwater. |

*The height measurement is at the [Buchan River gauge](#), located at the Main Road bridge in the Buchan township.

[^]This table includes information from flood studies, which are scientific models used to predict impacts at different flood heights and flows.

What roads are likely to flood?

During a flood, the roads listed above may flood and could be closed. For current road closures, check [VicTraffic](#). [VicEmergency](#) may include road closures in its warnings, see page 10 for more information.

Buchan Caves Reserve

The Buchan Caves Reserve is one of the main tourist attractions in the area.

In December 2023 the Buchan Caves Reserve was closed when a severe storm bringing almost 70mm of rain in 40 minutes caused the Spring Creek to rise more than 2 meters in less than 30 minutes. The flash flooding event caused extensive damage and 2 fatalities.

Adhere to the Buchan Caves Reserve park signage for safety information.

For more information contact [Parks Victoria at Buchan Caves Reserve](#)



Buchan Recreation Reserve, Caves Road. 2023. Parks Victoria.

East Gippsland Emergency Dashboard

East Gippsland Shire Council's Emergency Dashboard provides community with centralised real-time access to emergency information including weather, emergency warnings, road closures, river heights and power outages.

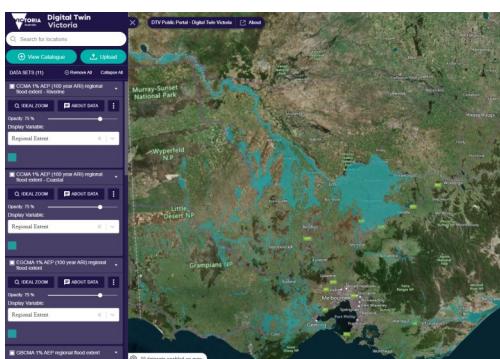
To support community preparedness the East Gippsland Emergency Dashboard provides access to:

- Local Flood Guides, via the Victoria State Emergency Service website, and
- Community Emergency Management Plans and Local Incident Management Plans on the 'Your Community' page.

Go to emergencydashboard.eastgippsland.vic.gov.au



View the interactive flood map on Digital Twin Victoria (DTV)



The [Digital Twin Victoria Public Portal](#) brings together 2D, 3D and live data in a single online place for everyone to use. The portal hosts some flood mapping data.

- Use the map to zoom in on where you live, work and travel to see if it's likely to be affected in a flood event.

Go to digitaltwin.vic.gov.au

Your local services

Catchment Management Authority

For flood advice and information on flood levels or depths when developing your property.

- **East Gippsland Catchment Management Authority**
egcma.com.au | 03 5152 1184

Local Council

For relief and recovery support after a flood event.

- **East Gippsland Shire Council**
eastgippsland.vic.gov.au
03 5153 9500

Plan and prepare for floods

1 How to stay informed

VicEmergency is Victoria's source of emergency information and warnings.

- Set-up a watch zone for your area for alerts when warnings are issued.
- Learn about the three different warning levels.

VicEmergency app
emergency.vic.gov.au
1800 226 226

 vicemergency

 @vicemergency



2 Make an Emergency Plan

Use information from your Local Flood Guide and your Catchment Management Authority, to help you decide;

- What you will do in a flood emergency
- When you will do it
- Who you will inform



Red Cross RediPlan is a free tool that helps you create a simple emergency plan that supports the flood actions you have chosen.

- Visit redcross.org.au/prepare
- Download the [Get Prepared app](#)

3 Prepare an emergency kit



You may need to stay safe for 72 hours in a disaster before help arrives. Make sure you have safe drinking water, food, and any special needs or medications for all family.



There will be extra items to be added to your emergency kit in an emergency like clothes, a phone and charger.



Watch a video on how to get your Emergency kit ready.
youtu.be/XgyLnKDMkNo

4 Reduce impacts to your property

- Keep gutters and drains clear of debris including leaves and any other items.
- Check your building and contents insurance, what kind of flooding does it cover?
- Move your valuable possessions up high.
- Back up important files and documents to a cloud storage or USB kept elsewhere.
- Identify higher ground on or around your property, away from the danger area.
- Consider buying sand and sandbags ahead of time, refer to our Sandbag Guide for more information.

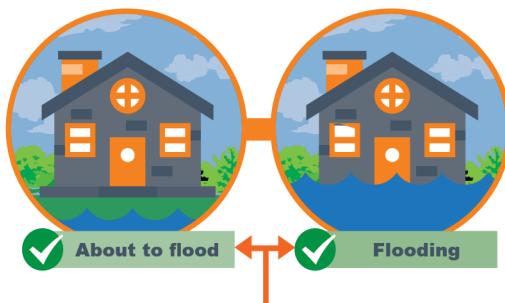


For more details and other tips, visit:
ses.vic.gov.au/flood



What to do in a flood emergency

When to call VICSES



 **Flood emergency assistance call
VICSES 132 500**

 **If life threatening call triple zero 000**

Stay Informed

VicEmergency

Emergency warnings will provide information on what is happening and advice of what you should do.

You may not receive an official warning before a flood.



VicEmergency app
emergency.vic.gov.au



vicemergency @vicemergency



1800 226 226

- Set-up a watch zone for alerts for your area.

Bureau of Meteorology



Monitor rainfall, river levels, weather forecasts/warnings.
bom.gov.au/vic/flood/east_gippsland.shtml

Emergency broadcasters



Radio | ABC 100.7FM or 828AM, REGFM 105.5, TRFM 99.9
TV | Sky News

If you expect floodwater at your property

1



Bag it

Sandbag doorways and low-lying windows to slow floodwater entering your home.

2



Block it

Block toilets, bath and drains using a sandbag ideally placed inside a plastic rubbish bag.

3



Lift it

Put your valuables and electrical items as high as possible. Turn off power, gas, and water at the mains.

4



Leave

- Leave **before** the flood arrives.
- Check warnings from VicEmergency for information like evacuation or relief centres, and road closures.
- Travel to the home of family or friends who are in a safe location, away from the flooded area.

Take your emergency kit and add the items below:



Phone & charger



3 day supply
Prescriptions & medication



3 day supply
Clothes for your family



Strong shoes



Pet needs

Never drive through floodwater

Large



A Large 4WD can be moved by water only 45cm deep.

Small



A small car can be moved by water only 15cm deep.



For more details and
other tips, visit:
ses.vic.gov.au/flood

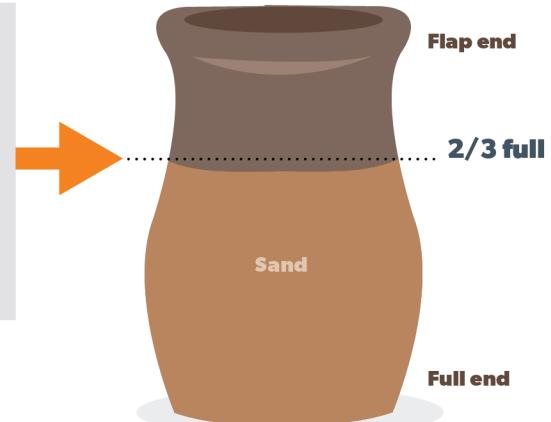


Sandbagging

Sandbags won't stop the water completely, but can reduce the amount of water entering your home.

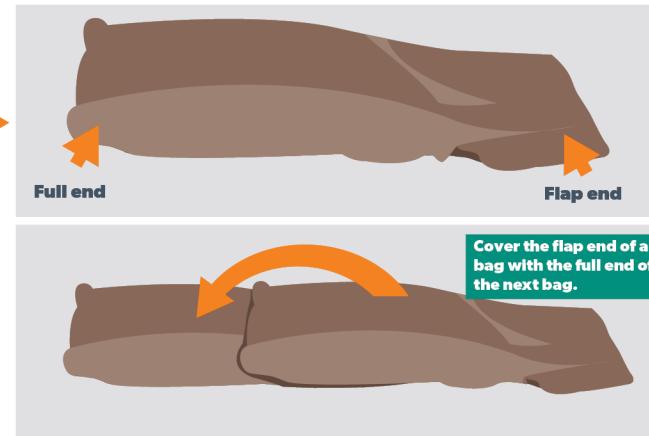
How do I fill a sandbag?

- Only use sand to fill hessian bags. Do not use dirt.
- Only fill sandbag two-thirds full.
- Do not over fill the sandbag as it will be too heavy to carry.
- Do not tie the top of the sandbag.
- Take care when filling and lifting the sandbag, to avoid injury.



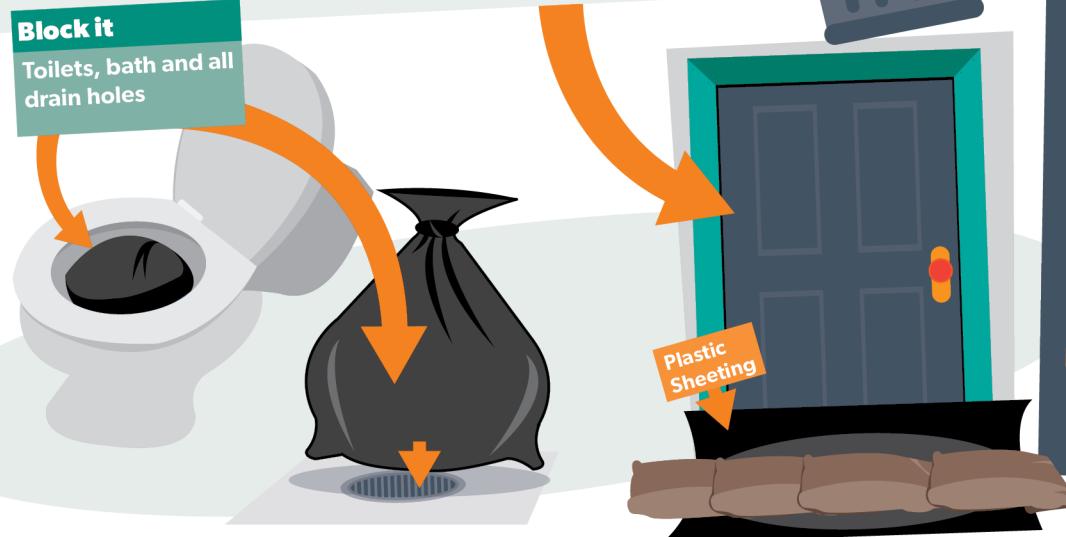
How do I lay sandbags?

- Lay sandbags like brickwork. Stagger rows so that the joins do not line up.
- Start at one end and work to the other end.
- Ensure the unfilled part of the bag is covered by the next bag.
- Tuck flap under the bag at the end of the row.
- If the sandbag wall is going to be more than five (5) bags high, you will need to lay two (2) rows wide.



Where do I place the sandbags?

- Place sandbags in plastic bags to cover drainage holes in home (e.g. showers, toilets, sinks) to stop back flow of water.
- Place a small wall across doorways, at least the height of the expected water level. Be careful not to trap yourself inside.
- If available, plastic sheeting may be used under sandbags to reduce the seepage.



What do I do once I have finished with the sandbags?

- Sturdy gloves should be worn when handling wet sandbags as they can contain chemicals, waste and diseases.
- Sandbags that have been in contact with floodwater need to be thrown away.
- Contact your local council to find out how to dispose of your sandbags safely.



Sandbags and sand

Preparing your home

Having sandbag supplies ready can assist you before a flooding emergency occurs.



What supplies do I need to sandbag my home?

- Sandbags
- Sand
- Plastic sheeting
- Gloves and safety goggles
- Shovel and hand scoop

Where can I purchase these supplies?

- Many sandbag supplies can be purchased from hardware stores or garden centres.
- VICSES do not routinely supply sandbags to households.
- During floods, sandbag distribution points may be established in flood-affected areas.

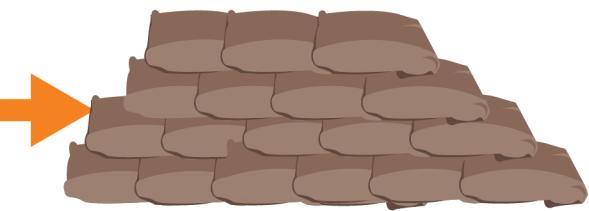


How many sandbags will I need and how much sand?

- Most homes can be protected by less than 25 sandbags.
- The number of sandbags will depend on your local flood risk and availability.
- Sandbags are filled 2/3 full which requires around 15-20kgs of sand per bag.

How do I store my sand and sandbags?

- Filled sandbags only have a short shelf life.
- It is recommended to store sandbags empty.
- Sandbags should be stored in a cool dry area away from UV light.
- Sand should be kept dry and can be stored in water resistant containers or under a tarp.
- Sand is heavy - ensure it is stored so it can be moved safely.



When should I sandbag my home?

- **You** are best placed to decide if there is a need to sandbag your home, based on local knowledge and past flood events.
- Monitor your local conditions. Stay up-to-date with weather forecasts and warnings by downloading the **BOM Weather** and **VicEmergency** apps, or call the VicEmergency Hotline on 1800 226 226.
- If you think you are at risk, do not wait for an official warning to act.