

Ocean Grove, 2023



Local Flood Guide

Barwon Heads and Ocean Grove

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

Contents

■ Local flood information	<u>Page 3</u>
Why does Barwon Heads and Ocean Grove flood?	<u>Page 3</u>
How do floods impact communities?	<u>Page 3</u>
Check your home, work, and travel routes for floodwater	<u>Page 4</u>
What might happen in a flood in your area?	<u>Page 5</u>
Download your free Property Flood Report	<u>Page 6</u>
Your local services	<u>Page 6</u>
■ Plan and prepare for floods	<u>Page 7</u>
■ What to do in a flood emergency	<u>Page 8</u>
■ Sandbag Guide	<u>Page 9</u>



Victoria 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.

Content reviewed: June 2025

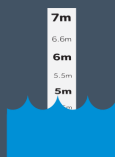


For more information visit: ses.vic.gov.au/plan-and-stay-safe

Local flood information



There have been seven significant flood events in Barwon Heads and Ocean Grove between 1909 and 2002.



The largest flood on record was in 1952 when the floodwater reached 1.9 metres at Sheepwash Road Gauge.



When the Barwon River peaks at Geelong, it usually takes 20 to 36 hours to reach Barwon Heads and Ocean Grove.

Why does Barwon Heads and Ocean Grove flood?

Barwon Heads and Ocean Grove are 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 is when the Barwon River and/or Murnaghurt Lagoon rises and overflow their banks spilling water out onto land. The most common cause of this is prolonged heavy rainfall.

- Low-lying coastal areas may flood due to storm surges, caused by strong winds and low pressure during storms, resulting in an abnormal rise in sea level and the formation of large waves.
- Barwon River rises can occur within 1 to 1.5 days of the flood peak at the McIntyre Bridge gauge, Geelong.



Flash flooding

This kind of flooding can happen quickly across Barwon Heads and Ocean Grove, and you may not receive an official warning. Although these floods only last short time, they can cause severe damage.

- Stormwater drainage may not be able to drain the amount of rainfall causing them to overflow.

How do floods impact communities?

Even if your home or workplace stays dry, floods can impact you in many ways.



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 7](#) for more information.

- This map shows the area likely to flood in a significant flood event that would measure at least 6 metres high at the [Barwon River at Geelong](#) gauge located at the McIntyre Bridge in Geelong.
- This floodwater level is 1.7 metres above the major flood level at Geelong and exceeds 2 metres at the Sheepwash Road gauge (see [page 5](#) for more information).



You can view an interactive version of this map using the Victorian Government's Digital Twin Victoria Portal (see [page 6](#) for details).



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.



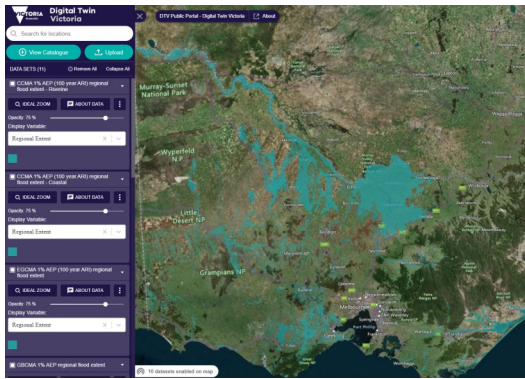
Floodwater height at McIntyre Bridge gauge—Geelong (metres)*	Floodwater height at Sheepwash Road gauge (metres)^	Potential impacts and previous flood events
6.00m	2.30m	Flood height shown on map, see page 4 .
	2.00m	Two buildings at Riverview Caravan Park may be flooded above floor. Floodwater may cut access to Riverside Avenue, Whitton Street, Hurst Street, Beaver Street, Peers Crescent and Parker Street.
5.47m	1.90m	June 1952 flood event. Floodwater broke through a 1.5m high sandbag wall. 400 people were rescued and evacuated from houses. Floodwater remained in some areas for nearly six weeks. <i>This flood occurred prior to the Plummer levee's construction, however no levee is flood proof and no two floods are the same.</i>
	1.88m	Sheepwash Road and River Parade in Barwon Heads start to flood.
5.23m	1.84m	November 1995 flood event.
	1.40m	Peers Crescent, Guthridge Street and River Parade begin to flood from the Barwon River.

*The height measurement is at the [Barwon River at Geelong](#) gauge located at the McIntyre Bridge in Geelong.

^The Sheepwash Road gauge in Barwon Heads is not monitored by the Bureau of Meteorology but can provide some useful information about flooding in the area.



View the interactive flood map on Digital Twin Victoria



The [Digital Twin Victoria 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 portal to zoom in on where you live, work and travel to see if these locations are likely to be affected in a large flood event.

Go to digitaltwin.vic.gov.au.



In a flood emergency, stay informed through [VicEmergency](#), see [page 8](#) for more information.

Your local services

Catchment Management Authority

For general advice about flooding and controls on planning scheme amendments.

- **Corangamite Catchment Management Authority**
ccma.vic.gov.au | 1800 002 262

Local Council

For relief support after a flood event and general land use planning.

- **City of Greater Geelong**
geelongaustralia.com.au | 03 5272 5272

Floodwater can be very deep, rise quickly and move fast.
Stay safe by avoiding flooded areas.



Guthridge Street, Ocean Grove, 2023

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

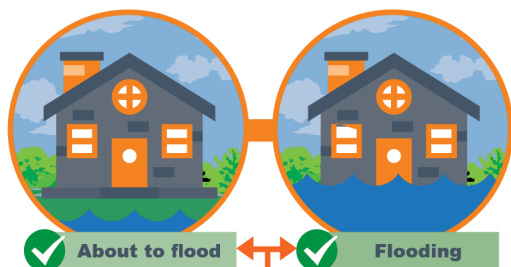
- ☐ Keep gutters and drains clear of debris including leaves and any other items.
- ☐ Check your building and contents insurance, what kind of flooding does it cover?
- ☐ Move your valuable possessions up high.
- ☐ Back up important files and documents to a cloud storage or USB kept elsewhere.
- ☐ Identify 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

1800 226 226



vicemergency @vicemergency



■ 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/corangamite.shtml

Emergency broadcasters



Radio | ABC 774 AM, Bay FM 93.9, K-Rock 95.5 FM

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.

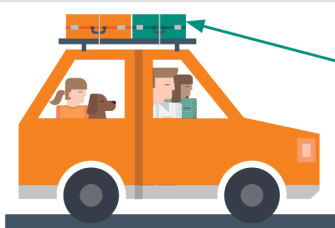
3



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:



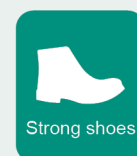
Phone & charger



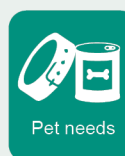
Prescriptions & medication



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

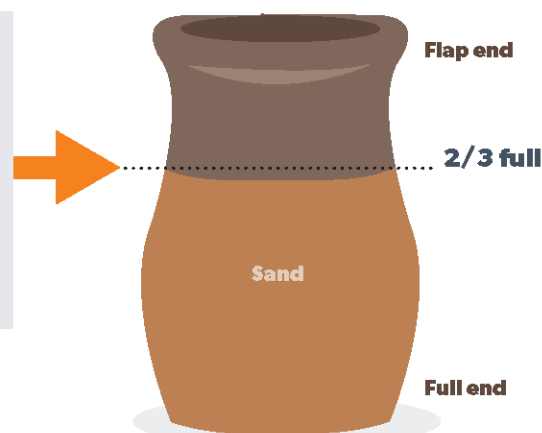
Sandbagging

Protecting your home

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?

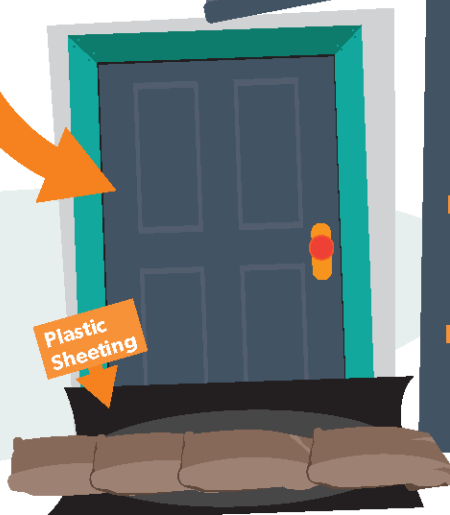
- Place sandbags in plastic bags to cover drainage holes in home (e.g. showers, toilets, sinks) to stop back flow of water.
- Place a small wall across doorways, at least the height of the expected water level. Be careful not to trap yourself inside.
- If available, plastic sheeting may be used under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

Block it

Toilets, bath and all drain holes



Plastic Sheetting



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 or hand scoop

Where can I purchase these supplies?

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

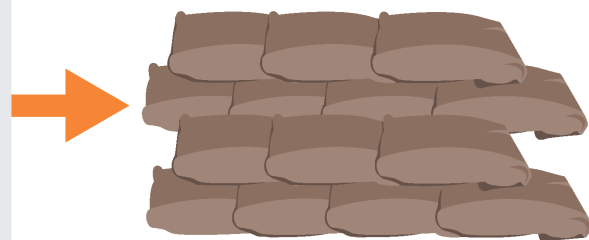


How many sandbags will I need and how much sand?

- 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.

