

The Giant Koala, 2011



Local Flood Guide

Dadswells Bridge

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.

Content reviewed: July 2025



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

Local flood information



There have been 11 significant flood events in Dadswells Bridge between 1911 and 2021.



The largest flood on record was in 2011 when the floodwater reached 2.65 metres at the Lake Lonsdale gauge.



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

Why does Dadswells Bridge flood?

When the Mount William Creek rises and overflows its banks, spilling water onto land, it causes **riverine flooding**. The most common cause of this is prolonged heavy rainfall.



- Water from the eastern ranges of Grampians National Park drains into Mount William Creek, potentially adding to flooding.
- Flooding can take 1 to 3 days to arrive in Dadswells Bridge from the start of heavy rainfall in the upper Mount William catchment. A catchment is an area where water is collected by the natural landscape.

Lake Lonsdale

- Lake Lonsdale is located 20km upstream of Dadswells Bridge and frequently overflows into Mount William Creek, causing flooding at Dadswells Bridge.
- The size of a flood is often impacted by the water level of Lake Lonsdale before the flood event.
- It may take 8 to 12 hours for flooding from Lake Lonsdale to reach Dadswells Bridge.

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

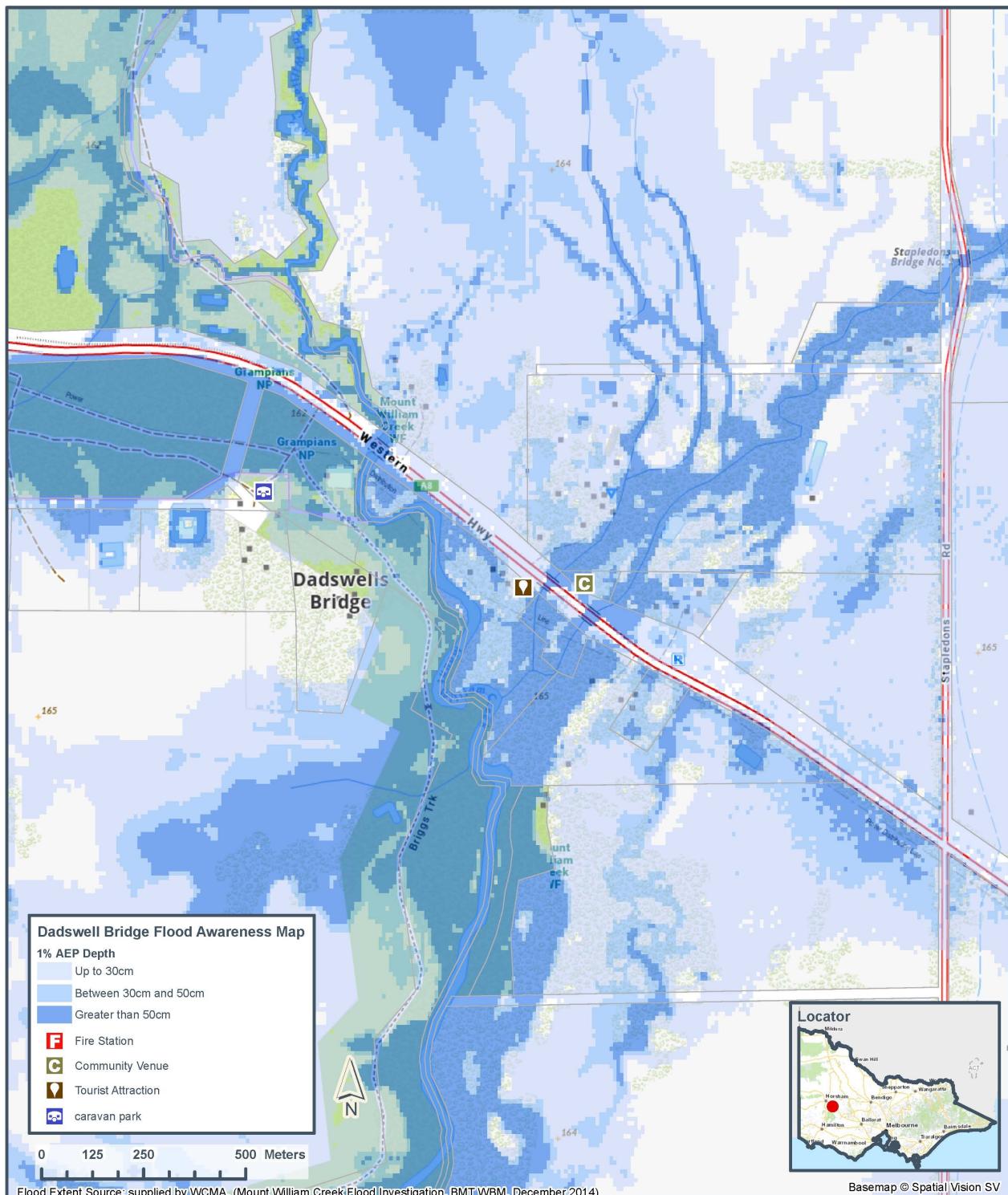
Check your home, work, and travel routes for floodwater

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 2.54m metres high at the Mt William Creek at Lake Lonsdale Downstream guage.
- This is referred to as a 1% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP), which means there is a 1% chance of this size flood (or greater) happening in any year.



View an interactive version of this map through the [Wimmera Catchment Management Authority](#), see [page 6](#) more for information.



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.

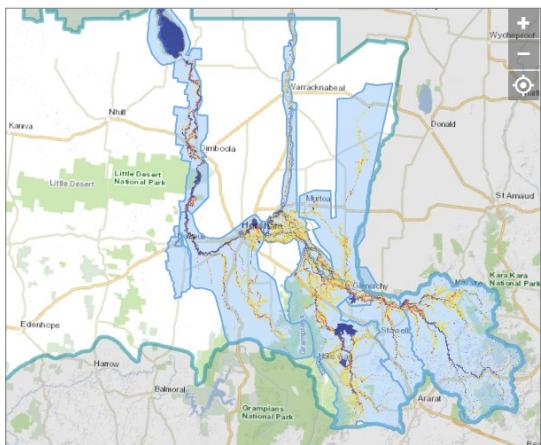
- **Before a flood:** Use the floodwater heights in the table to help you decide when you will need to act to protect yourself and your property in a flood event.
- **During a flood:** When a warning is issued by [VicEmergency](#), use the predicted floodwater height and warning information to understand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



Floodwater height (metres)*	Potential impacts and previous flood events
2.70m	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Flooding along the Western Highway may be greater than 0.35m.
2.65m	<p>January 2011 flood event</p> <p>Flood height shown on map, see page 4.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Floodwater took two days to reach Dadswells Bridge from Mount William.■ Lake Lonsdale flooded, causing significant flooding in Dadswells Bridge.■ Dadswells Bridge was evacuated.■ The Western Highway was closed for more than two days.■ More than nine buildings were inundated above floor level, including the Town Hall, Indian Restaurant, the Giant Koala, Koala Motel, Dadswells Bridge Caravan Park, Turkey Farm buildings and several houses.
2.54m	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Flooding along the Western Highway may be greater than 0.3m.
2.38m	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Seven buildings are flooded above floor level on the Western Highway.■ The Western Highway is impassable to traffic, flood depth up to 0.2m.■ Flooding may cut access to houses and businesses along the Western Highway, isolating houses in Dadswells Bridge and surrounding areas.
2.00m	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Four buildings are flooded above floor along the Western Highway including the Indian Restaurant, the nearby Motel and two houses.■ Most properties in Dadswells Bridge are impacted by flooding.■ Shallow flooding on Stapledons Road (up to 0.13m deep) and Crutes South Road (up to 0.28m deep).
1.40m	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Shallow flooding impacts many farms surrounding Dadswells Bridge and may cut access to minor roads and tracks.
0.85m	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Flooding starts to overflow out of Mt William Creek onto nearby farmland.

*The floodwater height measurement is at the Mt William Creek at Lake Lonsdale Downstream gauge. The current river height can be viewed [here](#).

Download your free Property Flood Report



Wimmera Catchment Management Authority offers tools for residents and businesses to assess their flood risk.

- Use the map to zoom in on your property and see if it's likely to be affected in a large flood event.
- Download a free Planning Property Report which will tell you if your property has a flooding overlay.



Go to wcma.vic.gov.au/advice-and-services/flood-advice.



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.

- **Wimmera Catchment Management Authority**
wcma.vic.gov.au | 03 5382 1544

Local Council

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

- **Horsham Rural City Council**
hrcc.vic.gov.au | 03 5382 9777



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



3 Prepare an emergency kit



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

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](#)



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.

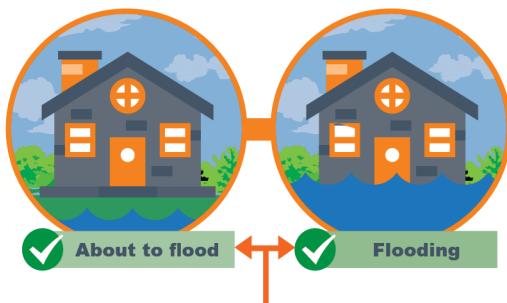


Watch a video on how to get your Emergency kit ready.
youtu.be/XgyLnKDMkNo



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/wimmera_mallee.shtml

Emergency broadcasters



Radio | ABC 594 AM, Mixx 101.3 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



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

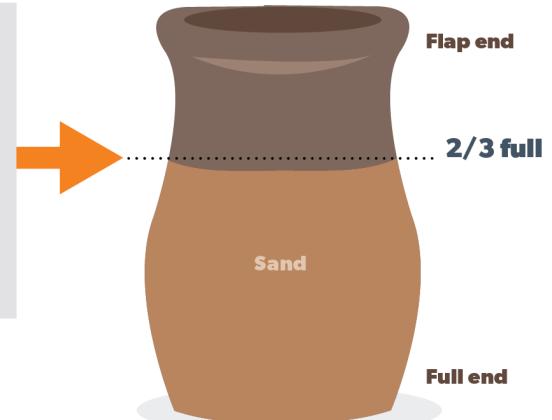


Sandbagging

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

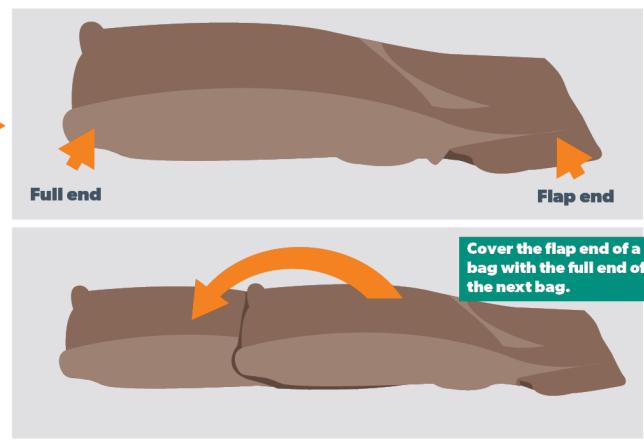
How do I fill a sandbag?

- 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?

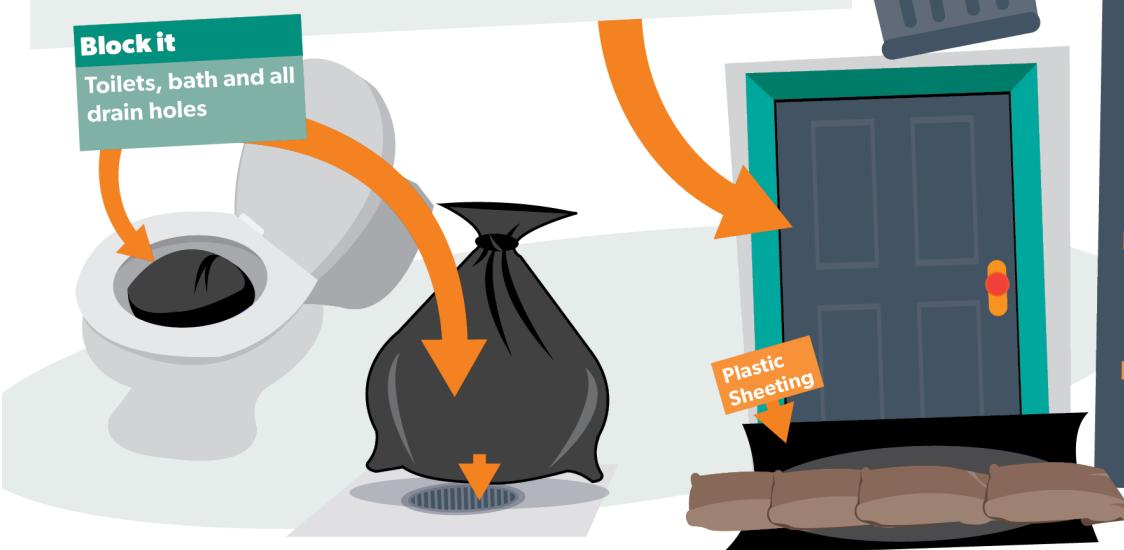
- Lay sandbags like brickwork. Stagger rows so that the joins do not line up.
- Start at one end and work to the other end.
- Ensure the unfilled part of the bag is covered by the next bag.
- Tuck flap under the bag at the end of the row.
- If the sandbag wall is going to be more than five (5) bags high,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

Block it
Toilets, bath and all drain holes



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.

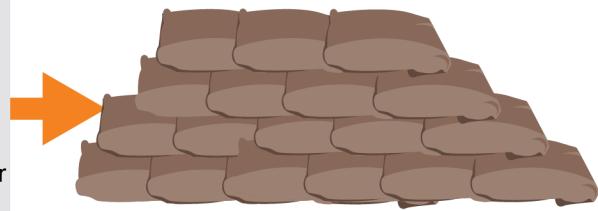


How many sandbags will I need and how much sand?

- 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.