



**SES**

# Port Fairy

## Local Flood Guide

Flood information for the Moyne River, Murray Brook, Reedy Creek and Belfast Lough at Port Fairy.



For flood emergency assistance call  
**VICSES on 132 500**

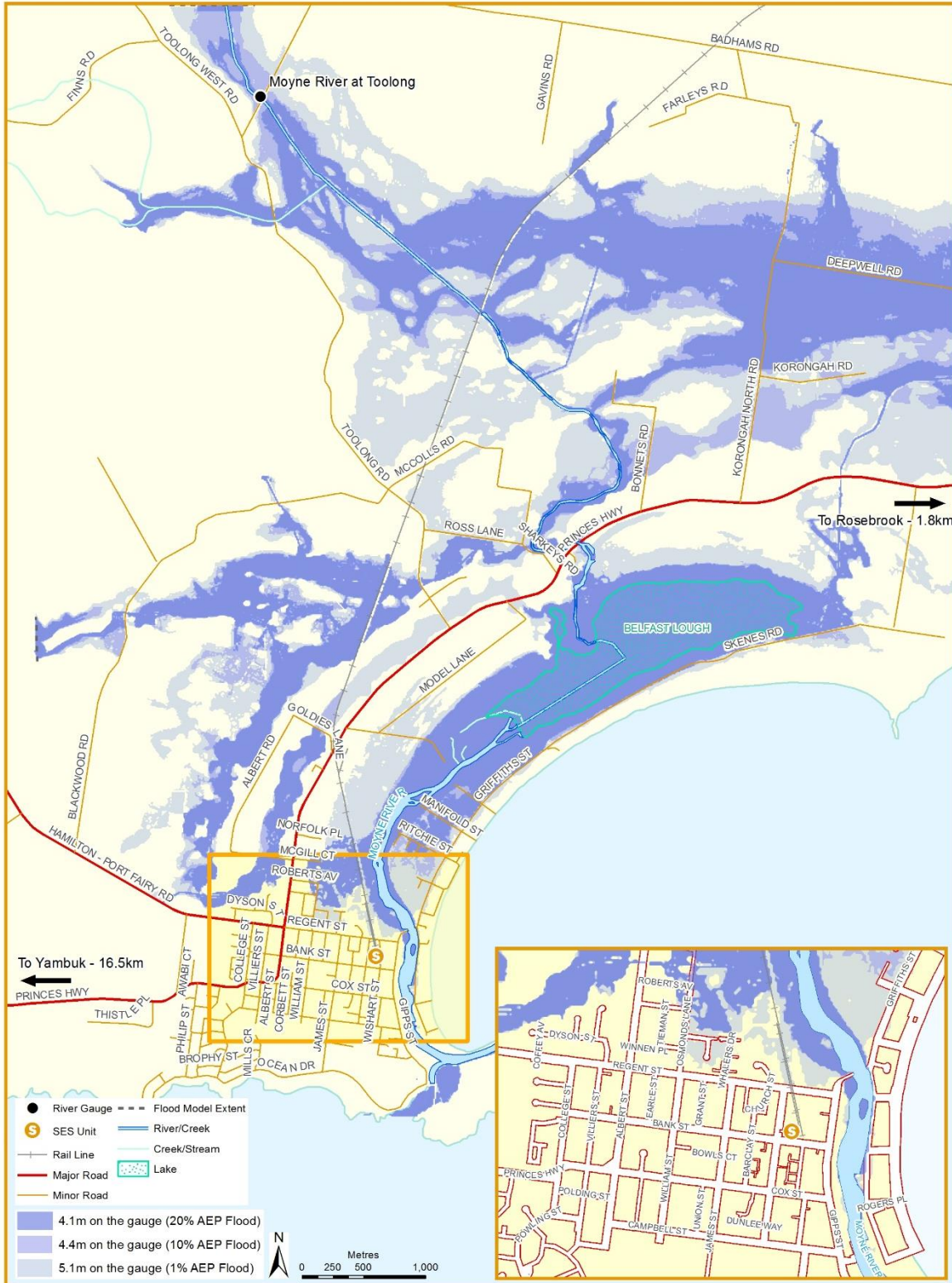




### Port Fairy

Port Fairy is located on the South-Western Victorian coastline along the Princes Highway where the Moyne River meets the Southern Ocean. The main waterways in and around the town are the Moyne River, Murray Brook, Reedy Creek and Belfast Lough.

The map below shows the predicted extent of flooding at three different heights on the Toolong River Gauge on the Moyne River; 4.1 metres, 4.4 metres and 5.1 metres:



**Disclaimer:** This map publication is presented by Victoria State Emergency Service for the purpose of disseminating emergency management information. The contents of the information have not been independently verified by Victoria State Emergency Service. No liability is accepted for any damage, loss or injury caused by errors or omissions in this information or for any action taken by any person in reliance upon it.



## Are you at risk of flood?

Port Fairy is vulnerable to riverine, stormwater and storm surge flooding, due to its location on the Moyne River and the nearby estuary and ocean. There are four gauges along the Moyne River that can provide flood warnings for Port Fairy, these include Gerrigerrup, Willatook, Toolong and Port Fairy.

Flood events in Port Fairy can:

- Impact the airfield and caravan parks in low-lying areas, in particular, Gardens Caravan Park
- Close the Princes Highway at Yambuk and Rosebrook
- Isolate areas along the sand dunes including the Life Saving Club and the ocean side of Griffiths Street



More serious flood events can flood properties above floor height, flood key infrastructure and facilities and isolate the town and surrounding areas, cutting off roads in and out of the area.

Port Fairy can also be affected by flash flooding, where heavy localised rainfall falls in a short amount of time.

## Did you know?

Port Fairy has a history of flooding in and around the town. Although local knowledge indicates that the largest flood occurred in 1894, this was before records began and was not officially recorded.

In 1946, 205.5 mm of rain fell over the area along with a peak tide, causing a flood that measured 5.7 metres on the Toolong Gauge resulting in:

- Widespread evacuations.
- The bridge over the Moyne River at Gipps Street was blocked due to hay and debris floating in the river.
- Isolation and inundation of properties.
- Damage to infrastructure including roads.

Port Fairy has experienced flooding in 1978, 2001, 2010, 2016 and most recently in 2020. The October 2020 flood event was the largest recent flood event recorded in Port Fairy and referred to as a 1 in 20-year flood.

If you live or work close to a creek, river, or low-lying area you may be at risk from floods. If you are not directly affected, you may still have to detour around flooded areas. It is important for families, business and locals to be aware of the risks, be prepared and have their emergency plans ready when flooding occurs.



**No two floods are the same. Floods like this or worse could occur again.**

**If you live in a low-lying area you may be at risk of flooding or need to detour around flooded areas.**

**Knowing what to do can save your life and help protect your property.**



Left: Aerial photo of Port Fairy and Caledonian Inn in Bank Street during flood event. Right: Port Fairy 2020 flood event.





## Storm Surge

Storm surge occurs when sea levels are elevated above the usual tidal limit due to the action of intense low-pressure systems over the open ocean. The low-pressure causes sea level to rise as there is less air pressing down on the sea. Combined with gale force onshore winds, this can lead to flooding of low-lying coastal land.

Storm surge flooding in Port Fairy occurs at:

- Griffith Island walkway (the walkway that connects Griffiths Island, starting at Ocean Drive, adjacent to the Martins Point Playground)
- Ocean Drive (the road between Martins Point Playground and Pea Soup), flooding across Ocean Drive has pushed large rocks onto the road cutting access
- Properties along Ocean Drive (the corner of Ocean Drive and Anna Catherine Drive)

In recent times, there have been two storm surge flood events in Port Fairy. The first was on the 29<sup>th</sup> of May 2009 and the other was on the 24<sup>th</sup> of June 2014. The 2014 event impacted three properties along Ocean Drive. While there were no buildings recorded to be flooded above floor, the peak flood level was close to flooding these buildings above floor.



Storm surge flooding along the Moyne River Estuary during the June 2014 event.



## Moyne River Flood Levels at the Toolong Gauge

While no two floods are the same, the following table can give you an indication of what you can expect at certain heights, on the Toolong Gauge on the Moyne River, including when your access may be cut off and when your property may be affected. There are no flood class levels (minor, moderate or major) for Port Fairy and the Toolong Gauge is not monitored by the Bureau of Meteorology.

The Toolong Gauge can still provide you with an indication of what you might experience during a flood as some warnings will give a comparison of a previous flood event in the area:

Height (metres)	Impact/level
Unknown	<p><b>1894 flood level</b></p> <p>According to local history, this was the highest flood ever in Port Fairy but it was before gauges so the height was not officially recorded. This flood caused extensive stock losses in the area.</p>
5.7m	<p><b>1946 flood level</b></p> <p>Largest flood on record, causing significant damage to buildings and infrastructure, washing away several bridges, including the Rosebrook bridge on the Princes Highway.</p>
5.1m	<p>If a flood occurred at this level today, 191 properties in Port Fairy may be flooded, 50 above floor level and 141 below floor level. Height shown on map on page 2.</p>
4.47	<p><b>October 2020 flood level</b></p> <p>47 buildings were impacted above and below floor at the Gardens Caravan Park. 16 buildings were impacted by flooding in Port Fairy. 12 buildings were impacted by flooding north of Port Fairy in Kirkstall, Killarney, Koroit, Crossley and Rosebrook.</p>
4.5m	<p><b>August 1978 flood level</b></p>
4.4m	<p>If a flood occurred at 4.4m today, a total of 43 properties may flood, four above the floor and 39 below floor level. Shallow flooding overtops Koroit-Port Fairy Road and the Peshurst-Port Fairy Road. Flooding cuts access to Korongah North Road, Ritchie Street and Skenes Road. Height shown on map on page 2.</p>
4.35m	<p><b>August 2010 flood level</b></p>
4.3m	<p>At this height, the Sewage station, West of the township would be affected. Many roads and bridges closed including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Princes Highway (at Yambuk and Rosebrook), Toolong North</li> <li>■ Road, Port Fairy to Hamilton Road, Peshurst to Warrnambool Road,</li> <li>■ Woolsthorpe to Heywood Road, Griffiths Street near the golf course.</li> </ul>
4.1m	<p>At this height, there would be widespread rural farmland flooding, especially north of Princes Highway. Flooding cuts access to Manifold Street, Deepwell Road and Daltons Road. Height shown on map on page 2.</p>
3.7m	<p><b>August 2001 flood level</b></p> <p>The Port Fairy Airport that is located on Skenes Road (Golf Links Road) would flood at this level.</p>
3.45	<p>Minor inundation of the Moyne River, Murray Brook, Reedy Creek and Belfast Lough areas. Low lying farmland and minor road crossings begin to be impacted by flooding.</p>



# Flood warnings and emergency checklist

**Warnings** are issued by the Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) to tell people about possible flooding.

A **Flood Watch** means there is a developing weather pattern that might cause floods in one or two days. This service covers the whole state.

A **Flood Warning** means flooding is about to happen or is already happening. There are minor, moderate and major flood warnings. This service is only available where flood warning systems are in place.

**The Bureau of Meteorology does not issue river height predictions for Port Fairy. Weather Warnings and Flood Watches issued by the Bureau will provide information about when flooding is possible.**

## Severe Thunderstorm Warnings

Thunderstorms are classified as severe when there is potential to cause significant localised damage through wind gusts, large hail, tornadoes or flash flooding. Severe Thunderstorm Warnings are issued to the community by BoM.

## Severe Weather Warnings

These warnings are issued to the community by BoM when severe weather is expected that is not directly related to severe thunderstorms or bushfires. Examples of severe weather include damaging winds and flash flooding.

## Flash Flooding

- Flash Flooding can occur quickly due to heavy rainfall. You may not receive an official warning.

**Stay informed** - monitor weather warnings, forecasts, river and rainfall levels at the [BoM website](#) and warnings through [VicEmergency](#). Take notice of Flood Watches, Severe Weather Warnings or Thunderstorm Warnings that relate to high rainfall for Port Fairy.

## Staying Informed and Further Information

■ Current warnings (VicEmergency)	<a href="https://emergency.vic.gov.au">emergency.vic.gov.au</a>	1800 226 226
■ Bureau of Meteorology (BoM)	<a href="https://bom.gov.au/vic/warnings">bom.gov.au/vic/warnings</a>	1300 659 217
■ VicRoads Traffic	<a href="https://traffic.vicroads.vic.gov.au">traffic.vicroads.vic.gov.au</a>	
■ Emergency Broadcasters	ABC Local 1602 AM SKY NEWS Television Coast 95.3 FM	
<b>Watch and listen for warnings relating to:</b>		
■ <i>Moyne River</i> ■ <i>Murray Brook</i>		
■ <i>Reedy Creek</i> ■ <i>Glenelg Hopkins Catchment</i>		
■ <i>South West weather district</i>		
■ VICSES Social Media	<a href="https://facebook.com/vicses">facebook.com/vicses</a> <a href="https://twitter.com/vicsesnews">twitter.com/vicsesnews</a>	
■ Preparing for Flood Emergencies	<a href="https://ses.vic.gov.au/get-ready">ses.vic.gov.au/get-ready</a>	
■ Creating an Emergency Plan	<a href="https://redcross.org.au/prepare">redcross.org.au/prepare</a>	
■ Catchment Management Authority	<a href="https://www.ghcma.vic.gov.au">www.ghcma.vic.gov.au</a>	(03) 5571 2526
■ Moyne Shire Council	<a href="https://www.moyne.vic.gov.au">www.moyne.vic.gov.au</a>	1300 656 564

**Life-threatening  
Emergency: 000**  
**Storm and Flood  
Emergency: 132 500**



### VICSES Warnings

VICSES utilises the VicEmergency app, website and hotline to distribute flood warnings and emergency information in Victoria. Communities can also access this information through VICSES social media channels and emergency broadcasters.

VICSES warnings aim to provide you with information to help you make good decisions to protect yourself and your family

The warning level is based on severity, conditions and the likelihood that the emergency could impact on the community.

WARNING LEVELS	
	<p><b>EMERGENCY WARNING</b></p> <p>You are in imminent danger and need to take action immediately. You will be impacted. A Major flood warning usually fits into this category</p>
	<p><b>WARNING (WATCH AND ACT)</b></p> <p>An emergency is developing nearby. You need to take action now to protect yourself and others. A Moderate flood warning usually fits into this category.</p>
	<p><b>ADVICE</b></p> <p>An incident is occurring or has occurred in the area. Access information and monitor conditions.</p> <p>Can also be used as a notification that activity in the area has subsided and is no longer a danger to you. A Minor flood warning or Flood Watch usually fits into this category.</p>

ADDITIONAL MESSAGES	
	<p><b>PREPARE TO EVACUATE/ EVACUATE NOW</b></p> <p>An evacuation is recommended or procedures are in place to evacuate.</p>
	<p><b>COMMUNITY INFORMATION</b></p> <p>A newsletter containing updates for communities affected by an emergency.</p> <p>Can also be used as a notification that an incident has occurred but there is no threat to community.</p>
	<p><b>EMERGENCY ALERT</b></p> <p>During some emergencies, we may alert communities by sending an SMS to mobile phones or a voice message to landlines.</p>

### Your emergency plan

Emergencies can happen at any time and with little warning. People who plan and prepare for emergencies can reduce the impact and recover faster.

Taking the time to think about emergencies and make your own plan helps you think clearly,, have more control and make better decisions when an emergency occurs.

Visit [redcross.org.au/prepare](http://redcross.org.au/prepare) start creating your plan.



- Remember, you may not receive any official warning.
- Emergency assistance may not be immediately available. Be aware of what is happening around you to stay safe.
- Never wait for a warning to act.



## Emergency Kit

Visit [Emergency Toolkit](#) for more information



Every home and business should have a basic emergency kit with supplies for 3 days:



Check your kit often. Make sure things work. Replace out of date items.

When a warning is issued, have ready for use or pack into your kit:

**I need to add:**

Write your list here. Tick items as you pack them into your kit.

Special needs (eg, babies, elderly and people with a disability)	
Photos	
Family keepsakes	
Valuables	
Other	





## Emergency Checklist

- Check if your insurance policy covers flooding.
- Keep this list of emergency numbers in your mobile phone.
- Download the Vic Emergency app on your mobile phone.
- Put together an emergency kit and prepare a home or business.
- Emergency plan, see <https://www.redcross.org.au/prepare>



### Before Flooding

- Leaving early before flooding occurs is always the safest option. Evacuating through floodwater is very dangerous and you may be swept away.
- Stay informed- monitor weather warnings, forecasts and river levels at the <http://www.bom.gov.au> and warnings through [www.emergency.vic.gov.au](http://www.emergency.vic.gov.au)
- Secure objects likely to float and cause damage.
- Listen to the radio and check the VICSES website for information and advice.
- Go over your emergency plan. Pack clothing and other extra items into your emergency kit and take this with you if you evacuate.

### During Flooding

- Make sure your family members and neighbours are aware of what is happening.
- Conditions change rapidly; roads and escape routes can be covered or blocked.
- Put household valuables and electrical items as high as possible.
- Turn off water, gas and electricity at the mains.
- If you are staying in a caravan, move to higher ground before flooding begins.
- Seek shelter indoors, away from floodwater.
- If floodwater comes inside, move to a higher point such as a kitchen bench or second storey.
- Stay away from trees, drains, low-lying areas, creeks, canals, culverts and floodwater.

### Evacuating in Flooding

- Flood water is dangerous. Never enter floodwater. It can take just 15cm of water to float a car.
- Find alternative travel routes if roads or underpasses are flooded.
- Be aware of driving hazards, such as mud, debris, damaged roads and fallen trees. If driving conditions are dangerous, safely pull over away from trees, drains and floodwater.

### After Flooding

- For recovery information, contact your local council, go to the VicEmergency Relief and Recovery-[emergency.vic.gov.au/Relief](http://emergency.vic.gov.au/Relief) page or call the VicEmergency Hotline (1800 226 226).
- Have all electrical and gas equipment professionally tested before use.
- Stay away from damaged and flooded buildings, fallen trees and powerlines and damaged roads until authorities advise it is safe to do so.
- Drive slowly, obey all road signs and never drive through floodwater.
- When cleaning, protect your health and safety. Wear strong boots, gloves and protective clothing and wash your hands and clothes regularly.

For VICSES emergency assistance,  
call **132 500**, or **Triple Zero (000)**  
in life threatening emergencies.