



Local Flood Guide

Warrnambool

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.

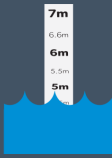
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Content reviewed: June 2025



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

Local flood information

	There have been 12 significant flood events in Warrnambool between 1946 and 2023.
	1946 was the largest flood in living history which saw Cassady's Bridge at Caramut Road washed away.
	Flooding can happen within hours, giving people little to no time to prepare and take action.

Why does Warrnambool flood?

Warrnambool is at risk of **riverine flooding**, **coastal flooding**, and **flash flooding**, which can happen separately or at the same time.

Riverine flooding

This can occur from rain that falls upstream and it may not be raining in Warrnambool. When that happens the Merri River and/or Hopkins River rise and overflow their banks, spilling water onto land.

Coastal Flooding

Low-lying coastal areas in Warrnambool may flood due to storm surges caused by strong winds and storms, resulting in an abnormal rise in sea level and the formation of large waves.

Flash flooding

Flash flooding is usually caused by heavy rainfall and can happen quickly, you may not receive an official warning. Although these floods only last a short time, they can cause severe damage. Flash flooding includes storm water that can become deep and fast flowing. Drains are particularly dangerous during flash flooding.



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

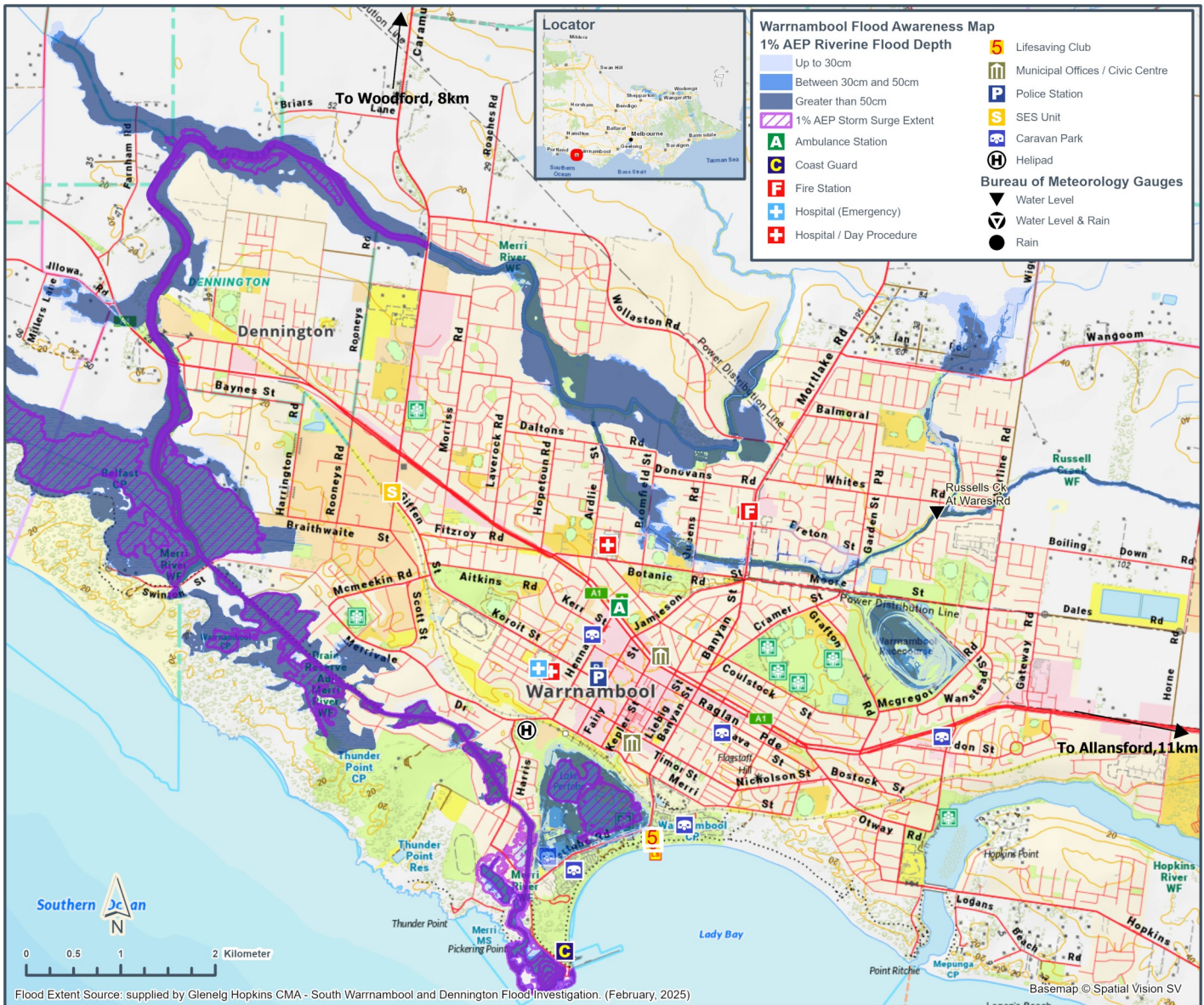
Check your home, work, and travel routes for floodwater

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.

The map below shows the expected depth of a 1% and 20% AEP flood in Warrnambool. A 1% flood means there is a 1% chance of a flood this size or larger occurring in any year.

The map is provided as a guide only and represents one of many flood scenarios that could occur in the area.

AEP is the likelihood of a flood of a certain size or larger happening in any year. For example, a 1% flood has a 1% chance (or greater) of happening in any year.



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



What might happen in a flood in your area?

During a flood the Russells Creek Path, Rail Trail and low-lying parks are likely to become flooded, and may be closed.

The two pedestrian bridges in Woodford crossing the Merri River connecting Jellie's Reserve and Jubilee Park, and at Miles Road can become inaccessible when the river floods



Floodwater is a powerful force and there are many unseen dangers. You can't see what lies under the water and you should never ride or walk through floodwater, and never allow children to play in or near floodwater

If your property is not impacted by flooding, it is recommended that you shelter in place rather than try to drive through floodwaters.

The following roads listed below may flood, and could be closed:

- | | | |
|----------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|
| ■ Ardlie Street | ■ Atkinsons Lane | ■ Baynes Street |
| ■ Braithwaite Street | ■ Bridge Road at Woodford | ■ Bromfield Street |
| ■ Cody Place | ■ Conns Lane | ■ Daltons Road |
| ■ Davis Street | ■ The Esplanade | ■ Fairway Crescent |
| ■ Farnham Road | ■ Ferrier Drive | ■ Hopkins Highway |
| ■ Illowa Road | ■ Japan Street | ■ Landmann Street |
| ■ Lightermen Lane | ■ McGennan Street | ■ Macdonald Street |
| ■ Merrivale Drive | ■ Mervue Court | ■ Millers Lane |
| ■ Morse Street | ■ Mortlake Road | ■ Obrien Street |
| ■ Pertobe Road | ■ Plummers Hill Road | ■ Price Street |
| ■ Princes Highway | ■ Queens Road | ■ Rentsch Court |
| ■ Russell Street | ■ Silesia Court | ■ Stephens Street |
| ■ Swinton Street | ■ Wares Road | ■ Wellington Street |
| ■ Whites Road | ■ Wilson Street | ■ Wollaston Road |
| ■ Younger Street | | |



Stay safe by never driving through flood water. It can take just 15cm of flowing water to float a car, that's the height of an average pen.



For current road closures, check [VicTraffic](https://www.vic.gov.au/traffic) ([traffic.transport.vic.gov.au](https://www.vic.gov.au/traffic)).

[VicEmergency](https://www.vic.gov.au/emergency) ([emergency.vic.gov.au](https://www.vic.gov.au/emergency)) may include road closures in its warnings, see [page 9](#) for more information.

1946 Flood event

While no two floods are the same, understanding the impacts of past floods can help you anticipate impacts of future flood events.



- Floodwater estimated to be above 8.5 metres
- 180-320 millimetres of rain fell over three days, causing severe flooding made worse by a storm surge reaching close to one metre
- Seven people died, thousands lost their homes and there was extensive loss of livestock and crops
- Infrastructure was impacted, with Cassady's Bridge and Woodford Bridge washed away

Evacuating due to Flood

The safest option in the lead up to an emergency is always to leave early. Leaving early is the recommended course of action and should be your first consideration and included in your planning. If you would require assistance to evacuate this should be taken into account as part of your planning.

If you do not have a means of transport to leave the area you need to have an alternative plan in place, such as leaving with your neighbours or arranging for family to help you evacuate. Remember: Leaving early is always the safest option.

A designated emergency access route will be established through the Warrnambool Golf Course to provide rapid response and evacuation capabilities for the Younger Street area in the event that it becomes inaccessible due to flooding. Victoria Police is responsible for co-ordinating an evacuation in an emergency and will advise the location of the track once an evacuation has been announced.



In a flood emergency, stay informed through [VicEmergency](#), see [page 9](#) for more Information.

Your local services

Catchment Management Authority

For general advice about flooding and controls on planning scheme amendments

- **Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority**
ghcma.vic.gov.au | 03 5571 2526

Local Council

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

- **Warrnambool City Council**
warrnambool.vic.gov.au | 1300 003 280

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.

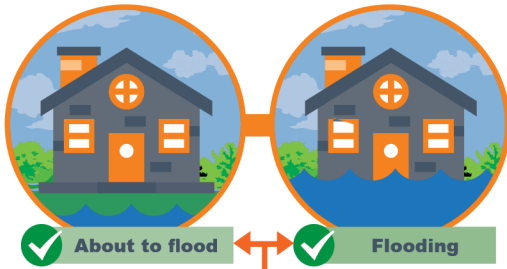


For more details and other tips, visit:
ses.vic.gov.au/flood



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/glenelg_hopkins.shtml

Emergency broadcasters



Radio | ABC 1602AM, Coast 95.3FM, 3YB 882AM

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.

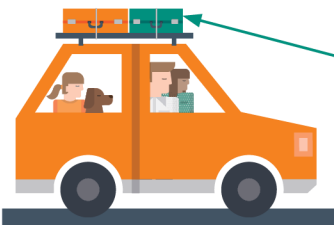
3



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:



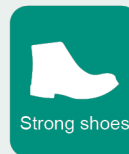
Phone & charger



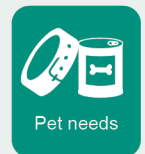
Prescriptions & medication



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

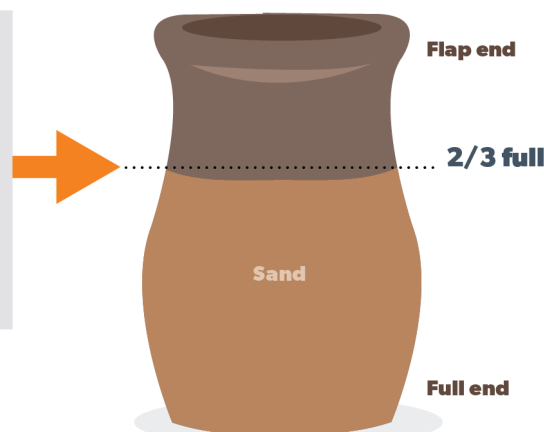


Sandbagging

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

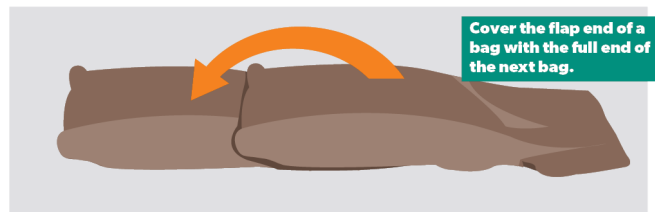
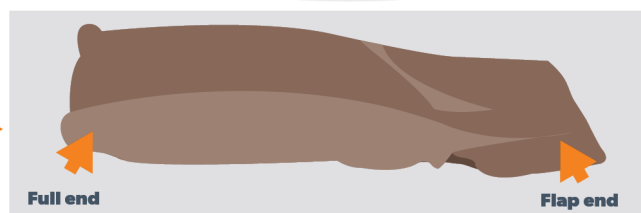
How do I fill a sandbag?

- 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?

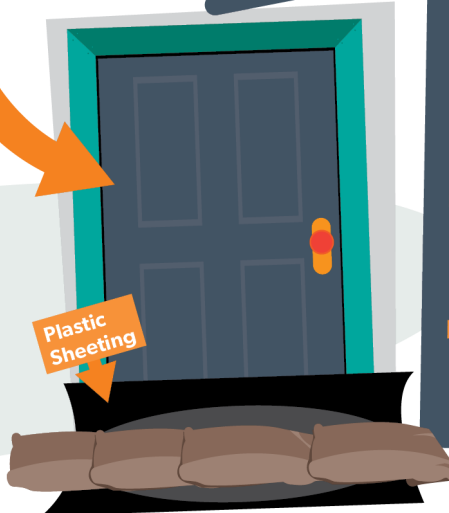
- Place sandbags in plastic bags to cover drainage holes in home (e.g. showers, toilets, sinks) to stop back flow of water.
- Place a small wall across doorways, at least the height of the expected water level. Be careful not to trap yourself inside.
- If available, plastic sheeting may be used under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

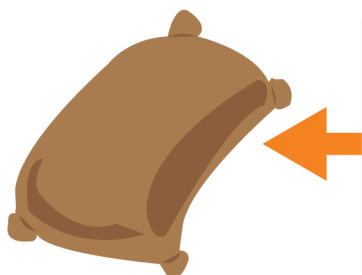


What supplies do I need to sandbag my home?

- Sandbags
- Sand
- Plastic sheeting
- Gloves and safety goggles
- Shovel 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.

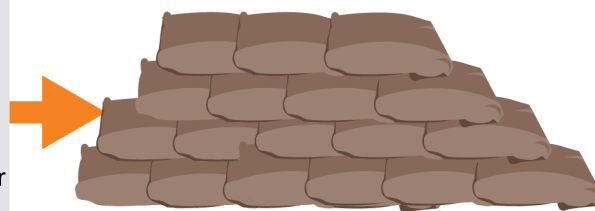


How many sandbags will I need and how much sand?

- 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.

