

RSL Building, Blair Street 2010



Local Flood Guide

Harrow

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



FLOOD STORM
EMERGENCY **132 500**



If life threatening
call triple zero 000

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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: April 2026

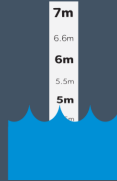


For more information visit: ses.vic.gov.au/plan-and-stay-safe

Local flood information



There have been 13 significant flood events in Harrow between 1956 and 2016.



The largest flood on record was in 2010 when the floodwater reached 2.85 metres at the Glenelg River Harrow Gauge.



Floodwater rises very quickly in Harrow, houses can be impacted within 24 after heavy rainfall, but impacts may happen earlier.

Why does Harrow flood?

When the Glenelg River rises and overflows its banks, and spills water onto land, it causes **riverine flooding**. The most common cause of this is prolonged heavy rainfall.

- Harrow is located along the Glenelg River, with parts of the town on the floodplain, the naturally low-lying areas are more likely to be impacted in a flood.
- Excess water from nearby waterways, such as Salt Creek, as well as heavy rainfall upstream can flow into the Glenelg River and may cause, or contribute to 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

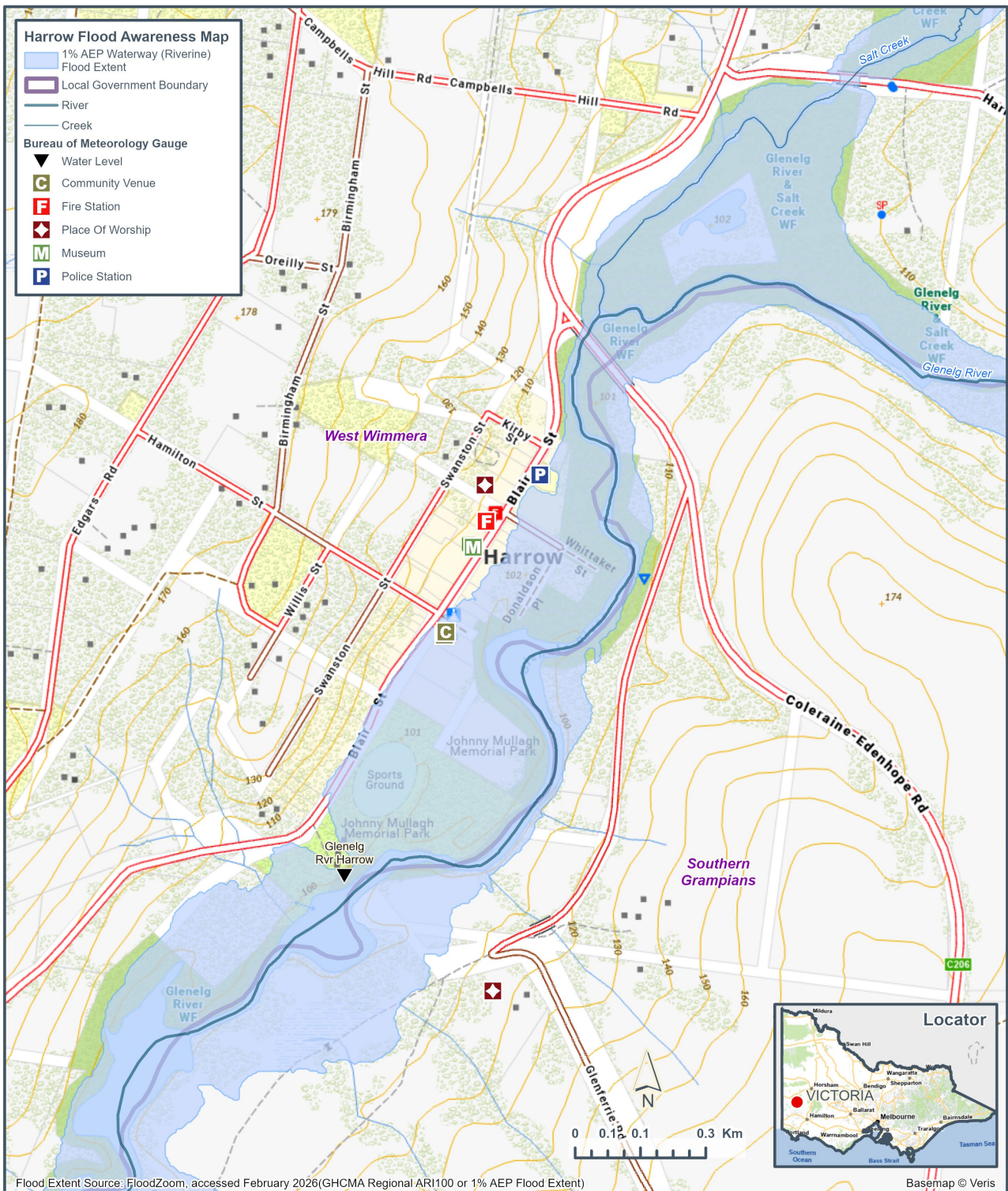
Check your home, work, and travel routes for floodwater

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.

- This map shows the area likely to flood in a significant flood event that would measure at least 3.17 metres high at the Glenelg River Harrow gauge in Harrow.
- 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 using the Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority's [GHCMA Flood Portal](#), see page [5](#) for more 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.

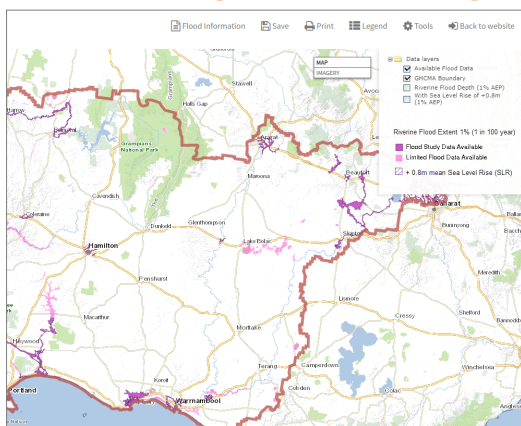
- **Before a flood:** Use the floodwater heights in the table to help you decide when you will need to act to protect yourself and your property in a flood event.
- **During a flood:** When a warning is issued by [VicEmergency](#), use the predicted floodwater height and warning information to understand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



Height (metres)*	Potential impacts and previous flood events^
3.28m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The Harrow Hall (Mechanics Institute) may be flooded above floor level.
3.23m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 1 in 200 year AEP (0.5% AEP) ■ Access is likely to be cut to Blair Street, with seven buildings expected to be isolated and impacted below floor level.
3.17m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 1 in 100 year AEP (1% AEP) Flood height shown on map, see page 4 ■ Likely Blair Street inundated by depth of up to 0.27m, Whittaker Street up to depth of 2.10m and Donaldson Place depth of up to 1.92m
3.09m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Three additional buildings may be flooded above floor in Blair Street, these include the Pivot Shed, RSL and the toilet block beside the Hall on Blair Street. ■ The Whittaker Street flood depth is up to 2.05m. Flooding may cut access to Blair Street next to the Harrow Hall (Mechanics Institute).
2.85m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ December 2010 flood event ■ Significant flood impacts to buildings, roads and bridges. The RSL building in Blair Street was at risk of flooding and was sandbagged. ■ There were several houses and businesses that were impacted by below floor flooding.
2.51m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ January 2011 flood event. ■ The levee surrounding the Johnny Mullagh Oval was overtopped. ■ Flooding surrounded the Harrow Hall (Mechanics Institute), Library and telephone exchange, isolating the buildings. ■ Flooding cut access to Whittaker Street and Donaldson Place.
2.20m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ September 2010 flood event impacted farmland along the Glenelg River and cut access to minor roads and river crossings.

*The height measurement is at the Glenelg River Harrow Gauge. ^This table includes information from previous flood events.

Download your Property Flood Report



The [GHCMA Flood Portal](#), developed by the Glenelg Hopkins Catchment Management Authority, is a tool for residents and businesses to assess their flood risk.

- Use the portal to zoom in on your property and see if it's likely to be affected in a large flood event.
- Visit the Portal for Flood Advice for properties inside the mapped area.

Go to flood.ghcma.vic.gov.au.



Previous flood impacts

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

2010 December Flood

- The flood level recorded at Glenelg River Harrow gauge for this flood event was 2.85 metres.
- It took approximately 18 hours for floodwater to travel from the Fulham Bridge gauge to Harrow.
- Flooding cut access to roads for several days in and surrounding Harrow, including Blair Street, Whittaker Street and Donaldson Place.
- The town levees were overtopped flooding the Johnny Mullagh Oval.
- Buildings impacted by flooding include the RSL Hall and the Telephone Exchange.
- Several buildings were flooded below floor and the Library and Mechanics Institute Hall



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.

- **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.

- **West Wimmera Shire Council**
westwimmera.vic.gov.au | 13 99 72



Floodwater can be very deep, rise quickly and move fast.

Stay safe by avoiding flooded areas.

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.

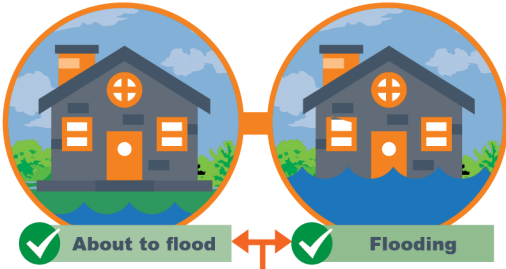



For more details and other tips, visit:
ses.vic.gov.au/flood



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 549AM, 3WM 1089AM, Mixx 101.3FM

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.

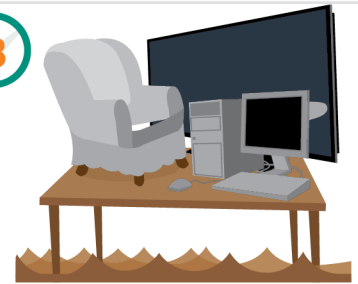
2



Block it

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

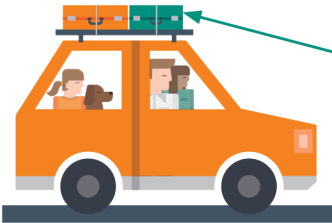
3



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:



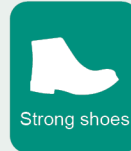
Phone & charger



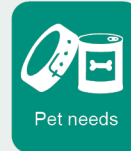
Prescriptions & medication



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



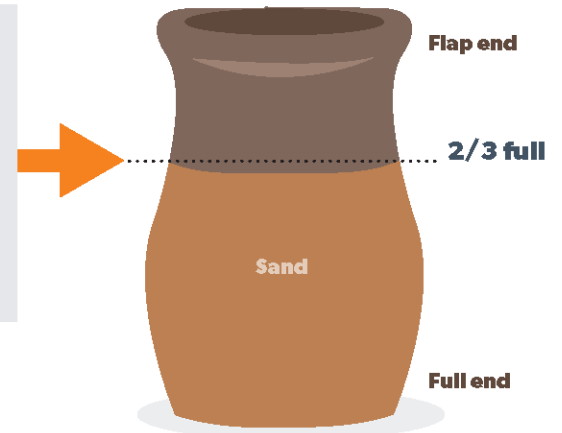
Sandbagging

Protecting your home

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

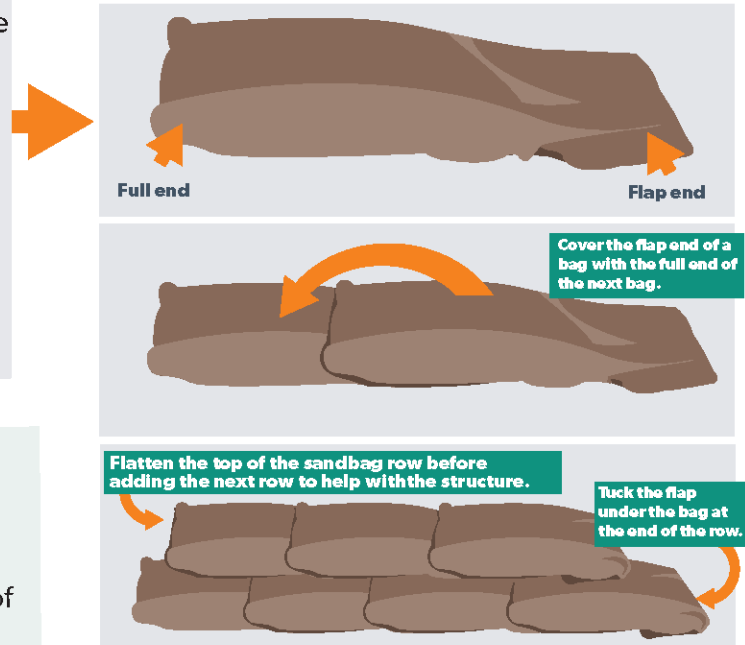
How do I fill a sandbag?

- 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.

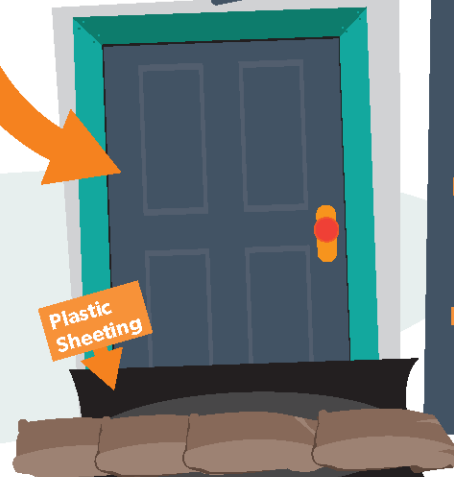


Where do I place the sandbags?

- 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



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.

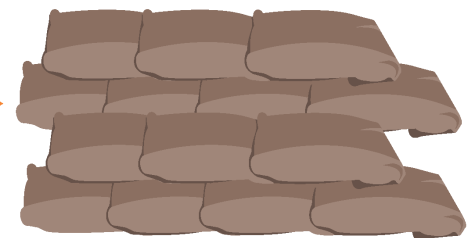


How many sandbags will I need and how much sand?

- 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.