Preparing for Floods

Around 60,000 Queensland homes are at risk of flooding.

Floods are the most expensive natural disaster, with damage from floods in 2011 worth around $2.4 billion.

Over 50% of flood-related deaths are from driving through flood water.

In 2011, floodwaters in Queensland rose to 19.4 metres.

If you live or work close to a river, water course, creek, drain, culvert or low-lying area, you may be at risk of flooding. Water associated with flash flooding can move quickly over land in either natural depressions or along roadways and parkland.

Floodwater can place lives at risk. It can be several metres deep, rise quickly and move fast.

Even if your property is not inundated by floodwater, you could become isolated, access to other areas may be cut off, and you could lose access to power and water. Large areas can often be flooded and people and animals can be isolated for many weeks.

Storm surges caused by low pressure systems, like tropical cyclones, can place coastal residences at risk of inundation. Persistent very strong onshore winds can result in localised sea-level rises and potentially flooding in low lying coastal areas.

If you live in an area prone to flooding it is important to prepare your family and property now, before floods arrive.

Be Prepared

- Check that your insurance policy is current and adequate.
- Make a home emergency plan.
- Have an emergency kit prepared.
- Stack possessions and electrical items on benches and tables.
- Secure objects in and around your home which may float and cause damage.
- Relocate waste containers and chemicals well above floor level.
- If evacuating, turn off electricity and gas at the mains before leaving.

Remember

- When flash flooding is likely, leaving low-lying homes or businesses well before flooding begins is the best action to take.
- If you are trapped by rising floodwater, seek refuge in the highest point of a sturdy building. Stay there and call 000 (triple zero) if you need rescue.
- Never attempt to drive through floodwater. Water can be deeper and faster flowing than it appears, and can erode and wash away road surfaces leaving deep holes and uneven surfaces.
- Never enter or play in floodwater. Floodwater may be deeper and faster flowing than it appears and often contains hidden snags and debris, including rubbish, dead animals, sewage and other contaminants.
- Remain away from drains, pipes and grills during flooding. They can be slippery, have strong suction and currents and can be very hard to get out of.

Sandbagging

Sandbags will not stop flood waters entirely, however, suitable placement of correctly filled bags may reduce the amount of water that enters your property.

Some local governments may make available a limited supply, others will advise people to purchase the items needed from their local hardware stores.

Sandbagging is a self-help process for residents; however, the SES may be able to provide assistance to individuals physically unable to get their own sandbags due to illness, age or other incapacity.
Know Your Risk

Make sure you are prepared by finding out about your local flood history. Contact your local council for specific information on how floods may affect your property.

For information on flooded roads in your area during weather events, visit floodwatersafety.initiatives.qld.gov.au.

For more information on how to keep your home flood ready, visit ses.qld.gov.au.