

Can you weather any storm?

A guide to severe weather planning
for Brisbane seniors



Dedicated to a better Brisbane

Brisbane can experience several different severe weather events, which can be challenging for seniors. Knowing how to plan for severe weather and what to do during such event can help you stay safe and secure, and help protect your property from damage.

Brisbane City Council encourages everyone to be prepared for severe weather events. This booklet provides information and tips on how best to prepare for each of these events. Take time to read this information, share your local knowledge and help each other prepare.

SEVERE WEATHER IN BRISBANE

Severe storm



Flooding



Heatwave



Bushfire



Get ready for storm season

Brisbane's subtropical climate means that severe weather is a common occurrence especially during the warmer months, October through to March. Throughout this time we can experience severe storms with high winds, heavy rain and hail. Storms often provide a welcome break from hot weather and dry conditions, but the damage caused during a severe storm can be devastating. Good preparation is the best way to combat the effects of storms. Follow the tips on the next page to help you and your home be prepared.



Be prepared for severe
weather in Brisbane.

Be prepared for severe storms

- Stay ahead of the weather by subscribing to Council's free Brisbane Severe Weather Alert, visit **brisbane.qld.gov.au** and search 'severe weather'.
- Share your knowledge of the local area with others, or if you are new to the area ask neighbours about weather events that have occurred.
- Make sure that your home and contents insurance is up-to-date and adequately covers you for storm and flood damage.
- Prepare an emergency kit and plan, and keep it in an easily accessible location (details of what to include in an emergency kit and how to create a plan are at the back of this booklet).
- Make sure your home is free of trip hazards.
- Consider your capabilities. If you are comfortable to do so, clean leaves from gutters, roofs and downpipes regularly or don't be afraid to ask someone for help.
- Have your roof checked for damaged or loose tiles and sheeting.
- If you have large trees get them checked by a qualified arborist.
- Tidy your yard and balconies, and remove or secure loose items around outdoor areas.
- Know where and how to switch off your water, electricity and gas.
- Have plastic bags, masking tape and plastic sheeting on hand, should you need them for emergency sandbags or to make temporary repairs.

When a storm is predicted

- Keep tuned to the local radio or television station for further information.
- Stay inside and shelter your pets. Do not tie up pets outside.
- Keep your emergency kit and plan handy.
- Close windows and doors.
- Allow plenty of time if leaving your home to go of your nominated emergency plan contacts.

After a storm

- Listen to local radio for official warnings and advice.
- If you are not at home, return to your home when it is safe to do so.
- Beware of fallen power lines, damaged buildings, fallen trees and flooded watercourses.

Seeking assistance

There are a number of agencies that may be able to assist you to prepare depending on your circumstances. Consider contacting Australian Red Cross or Volunteering Queensland.

Storm checklist

- ☐ Subscribed to weather alerts
- ☐ Created an emergency kit
- ☐ Prepared property

A person's hands are holding a purple Nokia smartphone. The screen shows a map of Brisbane, Australia, with various areas highlighted in blue and green, indicating flood-prone regions. The map includes labels for 'Herston', 'Boronia Hill', 'Fonside Valley', and 'Teneriffe'. The background is a blurred wooden table and a person's arm.

Flooding can affect everyone

Understand flooding in Brisbane with Council's free online flood tools. Visit brisbane.qld.gov.au and search 'Flood Information Online'.

Be prepared for flooding

Flash flooding and localised creek flooding can happen in many areas of Brisbane. Take some time to get to know your local area. Unsure whether your property is likely to flood? Use Council's free online flood tools by searching 'Flood Information Online' or call Council. Read the tips below to help you be prepared for flooding.

- Place important personal documents and valuables into a waterproof case, in an accessible location.
- Sign up for location-specific flood warnings via Council's free Brisbane Severe Weather Alert (online at **brisbane.qld.gov.au**). You can choose from SMS, email and recorded voice message.
- Keep your emergency kit and plan handy.
- Stay tuned to local radio or television for warnings and updates.
- If you think your property may flood and are able to do so, sandbag areas of your home that require protection.
- Move vehicles, outdoor items, chemicals, poisons and valuables to higher positions.
- Based on your needs consider in which situations you might need to stay with a nominated friend or family member and discuss this with them. If possible it is good to arrange a place to stay both in the local area and further away.
- Identify evacuation routes and be ready to evacuate if necessary.
- If it is flooded, forget it - never drive through or enter floodwaters.



Flood checklist

- ☐ Checked flood risk
- ☐ Checked flood insurance
- ☐ Nominated a friend or family member to stay with



Keep your cool when Brisbane heats up

Filling a large jug with drinking water and finishing it each day can help you keep track of how much water you are drinking and keep you hydrated.

Be prepared for heatwaves

During summer Brisbane can experience heatwave conditions, which occur when there are more than 3 days in a row of very high temperatures, often combined with high humidity. Severe heatwaves can cause dehydration and overheat your body. Older people and those with health conditions and mobility problems are at increased risk. Read the tips below to help avoid the effects of heat-related illness during a heatwave.

- Drink plenty of water. Make sure you have easy access to drinking water. If you are on medication check with your doctor about how much water you should drink.
- Wear light-weight, light-coloured, cotton clothing and if possible take additional cool showers during the day.
- Check on the wellbeing of family and friends and let them know if you need assistance. Seek medical advice if you are unsure about your condition or someone else's.
- Stay cool. Draw blinds and curtains to shade your home from the sun. Keep your home well ventilated. If you don't have air-conditioning, keep windows and doors open during cooler parts of the day and use fans to circulate air. Try to stay inside between 10am-3pm unless you are visiting an air-conditioned place like a shopping centre.
- Slow down and avoid strenuous activity.



Heatwave checklist

- ☐ Prepared a cool room in my home using window coverings, air-conditioning or fans
- ☐ Located a cool place in my area, such as a friend or family member's house, shopping centre or library that has air-conditioning, if I don't have air-conditioning at home
- ☐ Cared for my animals by ensuring they have plenty of water and shade

Bushfire risk in Brisbane is real

Talk to your neighbours about reducing the risk of bushfire, particularly if your property borders bushland.



Be prepared for bushfires

Bushfires can start suddenly and without warning. Bushfire is an increased risk for those living in or near bushland, in semi-rural areas or in residential estates on the outskirts of the city. It's important to be prepared if your home is at risk of bushfire. Follow these tips, especially during Brisbane's bushfire season from August to December, to help prepare.

- Reduce combustible material. If you are comfortable to do so, clean out gutters, clear vegetation away from the house, tidy the yard and mow your grass frequently.
- Store flammable items away from the house.
- On total fire ban days follow regulations from authorities.
- Ensure your property is easily identifiable with the house number clearly visible.
- Keep a clear access to the fire hydrants near your home.
- Make a plan for where you will go if your home is at risk.
- If you live near bushland or in a rural area visit the QFES website for information on how to create a bushfire survival plan - visit **qfes.qld.gov.au**
- Keep up-to-date with fire conditions in your local area. For alerts and warnings listen to local radio.

Remember, fire conditions can change quickly, sometimes with little or no warning. For more tips on preparing for bushfire season, visit **brisbane.qld.gov.au** or **qfes.qld.gov.au**



Bushfire checklist

- ☐ Nominated a place to stay
- ☐ Created a bushfire survival plan
- ☐ Cleared vegetation. Remembered to check Council's website before undertaking any work on protected vegetation on my property

How to prepare an emergency kit



During a severe weather event you may experience power outages and interruptions to water supply. It may also be difficult to travel to local shops. In these instances you may need to rely on items in your emergency kit, which should be stored in a sturdy carry bag or water-resistant container.



Emergency kit checklist

- ☐ Created an emergency kit
- ☐ Considered the needs of your pets
- ☐ Stored the kit in an accessible location

Be Prepared emergency kit



Emergency kit essential items

- | | |
|---|--|
| Three days' worth of fresh water | Mobile phone and charger |
| Three days' worth of non-perishable food and can opener | Essential medication and prescriptions |
| First aid kit | Important documents in sealed bags as well as cash |
| Battery-powered radio | Waterproof bags |
| Battery-powered torch | Toiletries and sanitary supplies |
| Spare batteries for radio, torch and medical aids | Sturdy gloves |

You may also want to consider including additional items such as sleeping equipment and spare clothes, including sturdy shoes, broad-brimmed hat, leather gloves and sunscreen for each household member. For pets, include sufficient food and water as well as a secure pet carrier, leash or harness to move them to safety.

Be Prepared emergency plan

Emergency contact list

Ambulance • Fire • Police **000** (triple zero) or **112** (mobile phones)

Brisbane City Council **3403 8888**

State Emergency Service (SES) **132 500**

Doctor

Energex (power lines) **13 19 62**

Electricity supplier

Gas supplier

Water supplier

Frequency of radio station for emergency warnings and information

Insurance company

Policy number

Personal emergency contacts

Contact 1 Name: Number:

Contact 2 Name: Number:

Contact 3 (interstate) Name: Number:

Where to go if we need to leave home

Local

Outside neighbourhood

Personal items to remember

Medical considerations

Emergency kit

Location in house

Last updated

Tear off and keep on your fridge

For more information on preparing for severe weather visit brisbane.qld.gov.au/beprepared or call Council on **3403 8888**.



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