Brisbane is a great place to live, work and relax – it’s a safe, vibrant, green and prosperous city, valued for its friendly and optimistic character and enjoyable lifestyle. Flooding in Brisbane is natural and part of our environment and we need to be prepared for flooding and the impact it can have on our homes, family and businesses.

Through smart planning and building across the city, our thriving industrial and commercial precincts have expanded and developed around our many waterways. Our growing economy, combined with our warm, subtropical climate, is a major attractor for the many new businesses and residents arriving in Brisbane each year.

Flooding can affect your business, either directly through water damage to premises, stock and equipment, or indirectly through disruptions to power, communication and transport services. We all have a role to play in minimising the impact of flooding. There are many simple things businesses can do to prepare themselves, their workforce and their customers.

Be prepared for flooding

Don’t wait until it’s too late. Brisbane City Council has a range of free tools and information that can help businesses understand their potential flood likelihood and how to be prepared. These include the following:

**Interactive Flood Awareness Map** – Identify the likelihood and sources of flooding that may affect your business. Learn about the extent of Brisbane’s major historic river floods.

**FloodWise Property Report** – Download a FloodWise Property Report for flood information relating to building, renovating or fit-outs for your business.

**Council’s Business Hotline** – Phone 133 BNE (133 263) 24 hours a day, seven days a week to discuss how to prepare your business for an emergency.

For more information and to access these tools, visit, brisbane.qld.gov.au/beprepared call Council on 3403 8888 or visit your nearest Council regional business centre.

Don’t wait until it’s too late. Be prepared.
**Use Council’s Flood Awareness Maps to determine the flood likelihood for your business**


**What do the shaded areas on the Flood Awareness Maps mean?**

Flood Awareness Maps are an awareness tool to provide an indication of the likelihood of a flood occurring from one or more sources: creek, river, overland flow and storm tide. Flood Awareness Maps do not provide information about the depth or speed of flood water. Use the FloodWise Property Report for information about flood levels specific to your property. Visit [brisbane.qld.gov.au/planning-building](http://brisbane.qld.gov.au/planning-building)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High flood likelihood</th>
<th>Medium flood likelihood</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flooding is almost certain to occur during a single lifetime (70 years) in a high likelihood area. A flood of this size or larger has a 5% chance of occurring in any year. Residents and businesses are strongly advised to learn about the flood likelihood for their property so they can be prepared to help minimise the impact on their home, business and family.</td>
<td>Flooding is likely to occur during a single lifetime (70 years) in a medium likelihood area. A flood of this size or larger has a 1% chance of occurring in any year. Residents and businesses are advised to learn about the flood likelihood for their property so they can be prepared to help minimise the impact on their home, business and family.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Low flood likelihood</th>
<th>Very low flood likelihood</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This area may experience flooding in a rare flood event. A flood of this size or larger has a 0.2% chance of occurring in any year. Residents and businesses should consider how flooding may affect their local area, suburb or community. Flooding is unlikely in a low flood likelihood area, but may still occur.</td>
<td>This area is unlikely to flood except in a very rare or extreme flood event. A flood of this size or larger has a 0.05% chance of occurring in any year. Residents and businesses should consider how flooding may affect their local area, suburb or community. Flooding is very unlikely in a very low flood likelihood area, but may still occur.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overland flow</th>
<th>High impact</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overland flow can occur in this area. Residents and businesses are strongly advised to learn about the overland flow paths surrounding their property so they can be prepared to help minimise the impact on their home, business and family.</td>
<td>In high impact areas, overland flow is almost certain to occur during a single lifetime (70 years). An event of this size or larger has a 5% chance of occurring in any year. The overland flow is generally unsafe for people, vehicles and buildings.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Medium impact</th>
<th>Low impact</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For the majority of medium impact areas, overland flow is very likely to occur during a single lifetime (70 years). An event of this size or larger has a 2% chance of occurring in any year. The overland flow is generally unsafe for people, vehicles and buildings, however these hazards are experienced less frequently than in high impact areas.</td>
<td>For the majority of low impact areas, overland flow is likely to occur during a single lifetime (70 years). An event of this size or larger has a 1% chance of occurring in any year. The overland flow is generally safe for people, vehicles and buildings, however certain areas can experience greater hazards.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Flood Awareness Maps include flooding from all sources: creek, river, overland flow and storm tide.

All floods are different and may occur from one or a combination of these four sources.

**Creek flooding**

Happens when intense rain falls over a creek catchment. Run-off from houses and streets also contributes to creek flooding. The combination of heavy rainfall, run-off and the existing water in the creek causes creek levels to rise.

**River flooding**

Happens when widespread, prolonged rain falls over the catchment of a river. As the river reaches capacity, excess water flows over its banks causing flooding. River flooding downstream can occur hours after the rain has finished.

**Overland flow**

Is run-off that travels over the land during heavy rainfall events. Overland flow can be unpredictable because it is affected by localised rainfall and urban features such as stormwater pipes, roads, fences, walls and other structures. The actual depth and impact of overland flow varies depending on local conditions but it generally occurs quickly.

**Storm tide flooding**

Happens when a storm surge creates higher than normal sea levels. A storm surge is caused when a low pressure system or strong onshore winds force sea levels to rise above normal levels. The impact from storm tide or storm surge is increased during high tides and king tides and can affect low-lying areas close to tidal waterways and foreshores.

Floodwater may rise very slowly and be slow moving. This is normally associated with Brisbane River flooding, which occurs after prolonged periods of heavy rain across the whole catchment. Floodwater can also rise quickly and be very fast moving and then recede quickly. This is normally associated with creek flooding.

**FloodWise Property Report**

Use the FloodWise Property Report for flood information relating to building, renovating or fit-outs for your business.

If you are in the high or medium flood likelihood area, it is likely that there are building requirements for developing or fitting-out a premises to ensure your new development addresses potential flooding issues. The FloodWise Property Report provides estimated flood levels for all properties in Brisbane.

How to prepare for flooding

All businesses should have a business continuity plan to ensure their business can operate if something unforeseen like a severe weather event, fire or natural disaster should happen.

Below are some guidelines to help your business, employees and customers to be safe and ready for potential flood impacts.

You can find more practical advice and templates to help you complete an emergency plan at business.qld.gov.au

### INSURANCE

- Check your business insurance policies – are you insured for flood damage, business disruption and lost income?

### BUSINESS CONTINUITY

- Have a plan for stock or other equipment that needs special protection from floodwaters. If relocating equipment ensure you store them in an area that will not be affected by flood waters.
- Develop a business continuity plan to use if you are unable to return to your business for a period of time. Consider if there is somewhere else you and your staff can continue to work from.
- Ensure all computer files are backed up off-site so you can still access them in the event your workplace computers are damaged or inaccessible for a period of time.
- Have a process in place for accounting – payroll, banking, accounts payable and receivable.
- Make a list of the essential items you need to run your business if you can’t access your workplace. Can you keep backups or spares?
- Think about what help you will need after a flood. If you have warning, make arrangements in advance to line up help and support. This may save you time and money after a flood.
- Consider after hours and emergency phone numbers that can be used if you can’t access your workplace – how easily can these be communicated via a voicemail message, website or social media?

### EMPLOYEES, SUPPLIERS AND CUSTOMERS

- Make a list of contact details for all members of your workforce. This should include mobile phone, email, and an emergency contact who may know their whereabouts should they not be contactable.
- Position emergency numbers for employees and suppliers in a readily-accessible place.
- Make a contact list of key suppliers and customers who may be affected by your business being flooded. For example, would you need to cancel any regular deliveries?
- Consider whether your staff need special assistance to evacuate in an emergency. For example, visual or hearing impaired, people with a disability, elderly.
- Have a process to inform all staff of an emergency evacuation. Consider an evacuation warning system and meeting point.
- Arrange staff training and regular evacuation drills.

### EMERGENCY AND EVACUATION PLANS

#### PREPARATION

- Keep a record of your security procedures – what needs to be done before exiting the premises? Do windows/doors need to be locked? Is there an alarm that needs to be set? Make sure you have staff who know what to do.
- Develop an evacuation plan and display the maps.
- Prepare an emergency kit using the emergency kit contents checklist on the back page.
- Conduct regular practice evacuation drills with staff.

#### DURING AN EVENT

- Activate call diversions and/or set up a message service.
- Erect signage on doors advising of closure periods and alternate contact details.
- Turn off electricity, gas and water.
- Activate data backup and computer security.
- Secure doors and windows.
- Pay attention to radio, television and online news weather updates.
### UTILITIES

- Make a list of important contacts (telephone and email), including building supervisors and owners, and electricity, water, gas and telephone providers.

- Know what you need to do to make your workplace safe – where do you turn off power, water and gas? These should be marked on a map with any necessary instructions, and kept with your emergency plan.

### HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

- If you have hazardous chemicals, oil or other substances, make sure they are stored safely away from possible flood-affected areas and other hazards. This might also include garbage that could become rotten if left for a period of time.

- Visit brisbane.qld.gov.au and search hazardous waste disposal for requirements on how to appropriately dispose of hazardous materials.

### UNDERSTAND BRISBANE’S CLIMATE AND WEATHER PATTERNS

- Listen to weather reports to check if storms or heavy rain are forecast.

- Visit bom.gov.au to check weather radars and forecasts for the Brisbane area.

### UNDERSTAND YOUR LOCAL AREA

- When it rains heavily, watch where the water comes from and where it goes.

- Consider your location. Is your business close to a river, creek, gully or tidal waterway that may cause flooding? If you are located close to a creek, water may move quickly through your business during a flood. Consider how this may affect your preparation plans.

- Consider how local roads or areas that flood frequently during heavy rainfall may affect access to your business for you, your workforce and your customers.

### USE LOCAL KNOWLEDGE

- Ask local traders and businesses what their flood experience is in your area and share your knowledge with other local businesses. This will also help build a local network so you can pool resources and help each other if a flood occurs.

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> Never drive through or enter floodwaters.
# EMERGENCY KIT CONTENTS

## checklist

The following list is a guide to business information and supplies that can help if your business is evacuated. Use a waterproof container to house items including:

- [ ] hard copy list of important numbers including insurance policy numbers and emergency phone numbers
- [ ] important documents, e.g. business account information, credit cards, insurance paperwork
- [ ] valuables and computer backup data
- [ ] portable radio and torch with spare batteries
- [ ] first aid kit
- [ ] list of special needs and physical aids
- [ ] additional blankets, food, water and first aid (for staff that might be stranded)
- [ ] spare set of master keys.

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## Emergency contact details

### Life threatening emergencies 000
- Police/fire/ambulance (mobiles 000 and 112)
- State Emergency Service (SES) 132 500
- Energex 13 19 62
- Brisbane City Council 3403 8888

During a flood you may also need to contact a range of people and services for help. Keep these numbers in your list of important contacts:

- medical providers (doctor or hospital, health fund)
- service providers (plumbers, electricians, gas and electricity providers, vet)
- financial providers (bank, insurance provider, real estate agent).

Check Council’s website (brisbane.qld.gov.au), sign up to our Facebook page (facebook.com/BrisbaneCityCouncil) and Twitter feed (@brisbanecityqld) for updates during an emergency event.

The Queensland Government will also update its alert website (QLDAlert.com) frequently during a flood or other emergency event.

Sign up to the Queensland Police Service Facebook page (facebook.com/QueenslandPolice) or Twitter feed (@QPSMedia) for regular updates.

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Brisbane City Council excludes all liability to any person arising directly or indirectly from using this flood preparedness guide, titled Flooding in Brisbane - A guide for businesses, and any information or material cited in it. The information in this guide is general information provided to help you decide if you need professional advice relevant to your particular situation.