Brisbane is a thriving, world-class city, enjoyed by residents and visitors. Like many cities around the world, Brisbane has been built on a floodplain. This means we need to be prepared for flooding and the impact it can have on our homes, families 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, sub-tropical climate, is a major attractor for the many new businesses and residents arriving in Brisbane each year.

However, with these benefits come the natural risks of living with flooding. Although we can never remove the risk, the impacts of these events can be minimised through good planning and preparation.

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.

Don’t wait until it’s too late. Council has a range of free tools and information that can help businesses understand their potential flood risk and how to be prepared.

Be prepared for flooding

Interactive Flood Source Map – Identify the type or sources of flooding that may affect your business.

Interactive Historical Flood Map – Learn about the history of Brisbane’s major 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.

All of these products are available to download or view on Council’s website. Visit www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/beprepared or call Council on (07) 3403 8888 or visit your nearest Council regional business centre.

Don’t wait until it’s too late. Be prepared.
The 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 risk 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.


**Be prepared and make a plan**

It makes good business sense to have a plan to minimise the impact of flooding on your business, regardless of whether your business is in a high, medium, low or very low flood risk area.

Talk to your insurer about flood insurance for your business.
Use Council’s Flood Awareness Maps to determine the flood risk for your business


What do all these areas on the Flood Awareness Maps mean?

The 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. The 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 www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/planning-building

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High flood risk</th>
<th>Medium flood risk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flooding is almost certain to occur in a high risk area. Residents and businesses are strongly advised to learn about the flood risk 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 in a medium risk area. Residents and businesses are advised to learn about the flood risk for their property so they can be prepared to help minimise the impact on their home, business and family.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low flood risk</th>
<th>Very low flood risk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This area may experience flooding in a rare flood event. Residents and businesses should consider how flooding may affect their local area, suburb or community. Flooding is unlikely in a low flood risk area, but may still occur.</td>
<td>This area is unlikely to flood except in a very rare or extreme flood event. Residents and businesses should consider how flooding may affect their local suburb, area or community. Flooding is very unlikely in a very low flood risk area, but may still occur.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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 www.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, sight 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, 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 from floods and other hazards. This might also include garbage that could become rotten if left for a period of time.
- Visit [www.brisbane.qld.gov.au](http://www.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 [www.bom.gov.au](http://www.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.

---

**Never drive through or enter floodwaters.**

**Check Brisbane’s City Plan if you are building or renovating.** [www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/planning-building](http://www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/planning-building)

**Many businesses located within a medium flood risk area were affected by flooding in the 1974 and 2011 Brisbane River floods.**
Don’t wait until it’s too late. Be prepared.

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 the following items.

☐ Have a hard copy list of important numbers including insurance policy numbers and emergency phone numbers (Council, SES, Police, fire and ambulance) – refer to the Emergency contact details.
☐ 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.

Life threatening emergencies 000
Police/fire/ambulance (mobiles 000 and 112)
State Emergency Service (SES) 132 500
Energex 13 19 62
Brisbane City Council (07) 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 (www.brisbane.qld.gov.au), sign up to our Facebook page (facebook.com/BrisbaneCityCouncil) and Twitter feed (@brisbanecityqld) updates during an emergency event.

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

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

More information about creating an emergency plan can be found at www.brisbane.qld.gov.au

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.