Flooding in Brisbane
A guide for residents

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. Flooding in Brisbane is natural and part of our environment, therefore we need to be prepared for flooding and the impact it can have on our homes and families.

While Brisbane City Council is working hard to reduce the impact of flooding, there are simple things residents can do to protect themselves, their homes and families.

Be prepared for flooding

Don’t wait until it’s too late. Council has a range of free tools and information to help residents understand their property’s potential flood risk and how to be prepared. This includes:

- Interactive Flood Awareness Map – Identify the flood risk for your property.
- Flood Awareness Map – Download a printable Flood Awareness Map for your property.
- Flooding in Brisbane guide – Use this guide to help prepare for flooding and to minimise flood risk to your property.
- Interactive Flood Source Map – Identify the type or sources of flooding that may affect your property.
- 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 or renovating your home.
- Severe Weather Early Warning Alert Service – Sign up to receive free alert notices of severe thunderstorms, destructive winds and potential flooding.

All of these products are available to download or view on Council’s website. Visit www.brisbane.qld.gov.au, 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.

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.

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.

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.

Brisbane has 38 creek catchments. This means creek flooding is the most common type of flooding that affects Brisbane’s suburbs.

Consider how you might be able to help your community during a flood event. You could help by: storing other’s belongings, transporting valuables, cooking meals or donating items such as clothes or blankets. The community support during the 2011 Brisbane River flood helped those affected by flooding recover much faster.

Disruption of services such as power, water and gas may occur during a large flood event. Think about having an emergency kit ready with essential items such as bottled water to drink, non-perishable food, torches, radio and camp stove.
Use Council’s Flood Awareness Maps to determine your flood risk

Council’s Flood Awareness Maps help you understand your property’s flood risk. Visit www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/beprepared, call Council on (07) 3403 8888 or visit your nearest Council regional business centre to identify your property’s potential flood risk.

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>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flooding is almost certain to occur in a high risk area. Residents and businesses are <strong>strongly advised</strong> 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 <strong>advised</strong> 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>
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<tr>
<th>Low flood risk</th>
<th>Very low flood risk</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This area may experience flooding in a rare flood event. Residents and businesses <strong>should consider</strong> 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 <strong>should consider</strong> 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>
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Many properties within the high and medium flood risk were affected by flooding in the 1974 and 2011 Brisbane River floods.

Residents in the low and very low flood risk areas should still be aware of their risk of flooding and understand how they, as well as others in the area, may be affected.
How to prepare for flooding

Council is working hard to reduce the impact of flooding but we all have a responsibility to understand our flood risk and be better prepared to minimise the impact of flooding on our homes, property and businesses. Once you have used Council’s Flood Awareness Map to identify the flood risk your property is in, use the tips in this table to put a plan in place for your home and family.

### Brisbane’s weather
Understand Brisbane’s climate and weather patterns

- **Strongly advised**
  - Pay attention to radio, television and online weather updates.

### Flooding and your property
Understand how water flows in and around your property and street

- **High**
  - Observe where water flows from and to during heavy rain. This will indicate the path of potential floodwaters.
  - Consider that properties near a river, creek, gully or tidal waterway are more likely to flood.
  - Consider how fast moving flood waters may damage your home and interfere with evacuation plans.
  - Consider loss of power, road closures and interruptions to public transport.
  - Consider how close your property is to bordering other Flood Awareness Map flood risk areas.

### Building or renovating
Check Brisbane’s City Plan

- **Medium**

### Insurance
Make sure you are appropriately insured

- **Low**
  - Talk to your insurer about flood insurance and your property.

### Have an evacuation plan
Use the information on the back page of this guide to create an emergency plan and emergency kit

- **Very low**
  - Prepare an emergency kit.
  - Have emergency contact phone numbers easily accessible.
  - Consider your pets. They may need temporary to long-term alternative shelter away from your home during a flood.
  - Plan multiple evacuation routes. Some roads may be cut off by floodwaters.
Don’t wait until it’s too late. Be prepared.

Never drive through or enter floodwaters.

Strongly advised Advised

Personal possessions
Consider how and where to move valuables during a flood event

- Store valuables and possessions (jewellery, passports, financial statements etc) safely during a flood event.
- Consider where you can safely store your vehicle/s.

Your local area
Know your local area and talk with your neighbours

- Consider how potential loss of power, road closures and interruptions to public transport could affect you.
- Talk to your neighbours. Those living in the area for a long time may have experience of previous flood events.
- Consider how you can help your community. The elderly, disabled or families with young children may need your help to evacuate during a flood.

Council’s other flood information

There are many things you can do to understand your property’s flood risk. By better understanding the flood risk to your property, you can make informed decisions to protect your home and your family.

As well as the Flood Awareness Maps and this Flooding in Brisbane – A guide for residents, Council has a range of free tools and information to help you understand potential flood risks to your home or business and how to be prepared.

All of these free tools and information can be viewed or downloaded from Council’s website or by calling (07) 3403 8888 or by visiting your nearest Council regional business centre.

Interactive Flood Source Map – Identify the type or sources of flooding that may affect your property. Visit www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/beprepared to find out more.

Interactive Flood Awareness Map – Identify the flood risk for your property. You can search using address or lot number. Visit www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/beprepared to find out more.

Interactive Historical Flood Map – Learn about the history of Brisbane’s major river floods - 2011 and 1974. Use the interactive historical map to explore the history of river floods in Brisbane. The maps show the estimated extent of each of these floods. Visit www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/beprepared to find out more.


Severe Weather Early Warning Alert Service – Sign up for Council’s Severe Weather Early Warning Alert Service for notice of severe thunderstorms, destructive winds and potential flooding. The alerts are location-based, so residents only receive warnings if their registered residential address is at risk of being impacted. Alerts are sent by email, SMS and through a recorded message to a nominated landline. Visit www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/earlywarning to register.

Flooding in Brisbane – A guide for businesses – Brisbane-based businesses can take simple actions to manage and reduce the impact of flooding for their business and staff. Visit www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/beprepared to view and download this guide.

Consider that the type of building you live in (unit complex, two-storey or low-set house) may influence how your household and property is affected during a flood.

Interactive Flood Source Map

Flood risk

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<tr>
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<th>High</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Very low</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Store valuables and possessions</td>
<td><img src="high.png" alt="High" /></td>
<td><img src="high.png" alt="High" /></td>
<td><img src="medium.png" alt="Medium" /></td>
<td><img src="low.png" alt="Low" /></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consider where you can safely store your vehicle/s.</td>
<td><img src="high.png" alt="High" /></td>
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During heavy rain or flooding observe where water is likely to rise from, flow through or collect around your property and local area.

Even if you live or work on top of a hill, heavy rain can cause damage to possessions and structures.
Don’t wait until it’s too late. Be prepared.

EMERGENCY KIT CONTENTS checklist

Prepare your emergency kit in advance and keep it somewhere you can easily access. Consider including the following items in a waterproof container.

**Household**
- Waterproof torch with spare batteries and bulbs, or wind-up torch.
- Portable radio with spare batteries.
- Mobile phone with charger (preferably car charger).
- First aid kit, including essential medications and copies of prescriptions.
- List of emergency and personal phone numbers.
- Credit cards and cash.
- Drinking water and non-perishable food.
- Manual can opener.
- Toiletry items, e.g. toilet paper, anti-bacterial wipes, toothpaste, toothbrush and soap.
- Sealable waterproof bags.
- Spare keys for house and car.
- Tools, e.g. wrench, pliers, utility knife.
- Sturdy gloves and rubber boots.
- Personal valuables.
- Back-up copy of computer files.

**Baby and children**
- Baby needs, e.g. formula, nappies.
- Change of clothes.
- Toys.

**Pets**
- Pet supplies, e.g. water and food dishes, food, blankets.

**Important documents**
- Inventory of house and contents.
- Wills.
- Insurance documents and policy numbers e.g. life/car/house/contents.
- Birth and marriage certificates.
- Passports/visa details.
- Medical details, e.g. Medicare, immunisation records, and private health funds.
- Financial documents, e.g. bank statements, credit cards, shares.

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**Emergency plan**

1. Prepare a list of important phone numbers, including key family members and friends who can help. Other important contacts include medical, service and financial providers.

2. Put emergency numbers somewhere you can easily access.

3. Find out which radio station you should listen to for frequent flood updates.

4. Designate a person outside your area, such as a relative or friend, as your emergency household contact.

5. As a household, discuss and agree on your evacuation plan. Remember to include your pets and consider if your neighbours need help to evacuate.

6. Make sure everyone in your family knows what to do in a flood.

7. Prepare an emergency kit (use the checklist on this page as a guide).

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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 (07) 3403 8888

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

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

Check the Queensland Police Service Facebook page (www.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 residents, 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.