

PREPARING FOR DISASTERS

ALL HAZARDS GUIDE



Tablelands Regional Council

Production Partner **Tablelander**

INTRODUCTION

Being ready for disasters is a **SHARED RESPONSIBILITY** between local government, emergency services and communities.

The Tablelands Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG) chaired by the Mayor, is made up of representatives from Council, Police, Fire and Rescue, Rural Fire SES, Ambulance, Queensland Health and utility providers. The LDMG takes a proactive approach to planning and preparing for, responding to and recovering from the unfortunate event of a disaster or hazard occurring.

The Tablelands Regional Council area has suffered enormous destruction from disasters in the past. Cyclones and sudden storms have caused significant damage, bushfires are a fact of life in rural communities and we have also unfortunately, experienced a number of non-natural disaster events.

Our resilient nature in combination with forward planning, both as individuals and as a community, has enabled us to come through, and to learn from, the challenges these events have put before us.

Over the last few years, we have developed Community All-Hazards Disaster Plans for the majority of our smaller communities. Established in consultation with community members, these plans help ensure each town can respond quickly to a disaster by working with the Local Disaster Coordination Centre (LDCC) to minimise risks and react appropriately. This collaborative approach ensures the best possible outcomes for residents before and after an event.

We have highly trained and dedicated emergency services personnel ready to act when needed. But it is up to each and every one of us to also

take responsibility for ourselves and each other.

Nobody should be complacent about preparing for a disaster, whether it's a cyclone, flood or bushfire. We all need to know what to do before, during and after a disaster event. **It is important to prepare an emergency kit and a household emergency plan. Preparation for disasters is crucial.**

Having access to information, a battery powered radio, first aid kit and sufficient stores of water, food and medical supplies are all critical to help ensure your family's best protection.

This guide provides useful information for community members and visitors including helpful tips and suggestions to ensure you are prepared for dealing with any scenario, whether it is a natural event like a cyclone, bushfire, flood, earthquake, a man-made event or other unforeseen tragedy.

Please take the time to read this Guide. It contains practical steps to make sure that in a disaster you, your family, property and pets will be safe. You should discuss disaster readiness plans with your family for your home environment and with your colleagues in your work environment. Talk about your plans with your neighbours, and if you live close to older or more vulnerable people check to see if they need a helping hand with their preparations.

Please remember that the emergency services will be stretched to their capacity. 'Get Ready' now to make sure you are organised. By being prepared and informed you can significantly reduce your levels of stress and the impact of a disaster to you, your family, your property and your belongings.

Find out more:

- dashboard.trc.qld.gov.au
- trc.qld.gov.au
- [facebook.com/ TablelandsDCC](https://facebook.com/TablelandsDCC)



BEING PREPARED IS THE BEST PLAN

Preparation is much the same for any disaster. Follow these four simple steps:

1. Prepare your emergency plan
2. Check your emergency kit
3. Prepare your home
4. Tune in, log on, listen out and act

Step 1: Prepare YOUR emergency plan

Take the time now to prepare an emergency plan with the entire household by asking "What If" questions ...

- What if you live in a hazard prone area (e.g. flood, bushfire)? What will you do?
- What if you need to evacuate? Where will you go? Have you made plans for your animals and pets?
- What if you're separated when a disaster happens? Where will you meet up? How will you stay in touch?
- What if you need emergency assistance? Do you have a list of emergency contact phone numbers?

- What if someone in your household has special needs? Record assistance needed in your emergency plan and ensure any special items such as medication or aids are included in your emergency kit.

To help you, a household emergency Plan template can be found at: getready.qld.gov.au/plan/step-1-emergency-plan

DON'T WAIT UNTIL IT IS TOO LATE - GET READY NOW



Step 2: Check YOUR emergency kit

For many emergencies you will be able to shelter safely at home. In this situation you will rely on items you have included in your emergency kit.

Include items you would need to be self-sufficient for at least 3-4 days in case of disruption to essential services such as power and water supplies. If possible plan for 7 days in urban areas, up to 1 month in rural areas and up to 3 months in remote areas.

Keep your kit in a waterproof storage container and store in an easy to access location. Check your kit every 3 months to stock up and rotate supplies to ensure provisions are fresh and safe to use.

EMERGENCY KIT CHECKLIST

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fresh water (10L per person per day) | <input type="checkbox"/> Special needs items e.g. baby formula and nappies, hearing aids, glasses, etc. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Non-perishable food, portable gas stove or BBQ, can opener and utensils | <input type="checkbox"/> Suitable clothing, gloves and footwear |
| <input type="checkbox"/> First aid kit and manual and essential medications | <input type="checkbox"/> Toiletries (toothbrush, shampoo, toilet paper, etc.) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Portable radio and spare batteries | <input type="checkbox"/> Tools and supplies (tarps, timber, nails, tape, etc.) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Torch and spare batteries | <input type="checkbox"/> Pet items (food, water and bowls, leash, cage, etc.) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile phone and charger for home and vehicle | <input type="checkbox"/> Swag, sleeping bag, pillows, etc. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> UHF CB radio | <input type="checkbox"/> Kids toys / entertainment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cash | <input type="checkbox"/> Towel |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Important documents on USB in a sealed waterproof bag | |

Step 3: Prepare YOUR home

Preparing your home is an important step towards your family being prepared for, surviving and coping with emergencies.

General home maintenance:

- Check condition of the roof and repair loose tiles, eaves and screws
- Keep gutters and down pipes clear so water can drain quickly
- Trim trees and overhanging branches close to the house (be aware of any overhead powerlines)
- Check and fix any corrosion, rotten timber, termite infestations and loose fittings.

General home preparations:

- Ensure your home, contents and car insurance is current and adequate. (Check your policy includes debris clean up and removal)
- Identify your strongest room to shelter in place during a severe storm or cyclone
- Identify where and how to turn off the main supply for water, power and gas
- Have items on hand such as water storage containers and spare fuel for your vehicle (ensure you store it safely).

Final home preparations when warnings are issued:

- Make sure your vehicle is full of fuel and park undercover if possible.
- Secure your boats and caravans
- Disconnect electrical appliances and external television/radio aerials and turn off electricity and gas main supplies if instructed to do so
- Secure outdoor furniture and garden items, move garbage, chemicals and poisons to a higher location
- Empty and raise freezers/ refrigerators and stack or move furniture, valuables and electrical items off-site.
- Fill drinking containers with water including the bathtub and wheelie bin which can be used to

flush toilets if water supplies are affected.

- Close all doors and cover windows with timber sheeting or tape across the glass with masking tape and draw curtains.
- Sandbag internal drains and toilets to prevent sewage backflow
- Move livestock, plant and feed to higher ground.

More prepare your home information:

getready.qld.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/04_QRA_GR_Prepare-your-home.pdf

Step 4: Tune In, Log On, Listen Out and Act

Ensure everyone knows how to Tune In, Log On, Listen Out and Act:

Tune in:

Warnings and other emergency information will be made available to local radio and television stations for broadcast. Tune in to your local radio station for the latest emergency information, for warnings, weather updates for warnings and weather updates and local community safety announcements.

- ABC Far North – 106.7FM, 95.5FM, 801AM, 720AM
- 4AM – 558AM, 1422AM
- HIT FM – 97.9FM
- 4CA Cairns – 846AM

Log on:

- TRC Emergency Management Dashboard dashboard.trc.qld.gov.au
- Bureau of Meteorology for weather warnings bom.gov.au
- TRC Disaster Management [Facebook.com/TablelandsDCC](https://www.facebook.com/TablelandsDCC)
- TRC Twitter [Twitter.com/CouncilTRC](https://twitter.com/CouncilTRC)



Listen out:

- For the Standard Emergency Warning Signal (SEWS) – a distinctive audio signal used at the beginning of serious warnings on radio and television. If you hear the SEWS siren you should stop what you are doing and listen very carefully – your life may depend on it!
- For Emergency Alert voice messages to your landline and text messages to your mobile telephone.
- For Early Warning Network emails, voice messages and text messages (opt-in service – see page 6).
- For sirens and loud-hailer announcements that Emergency Services may use.
- For Emergency Services personnel who may door-knock your local area to pass on warnings.

Act:

- Act quickly on the advice provided.
- Ensure all householders are aware of the warning and advice provided.
- Check on neighbours and friends who may need special assistance.
- Activate your Emergency Plan and locate your Emergency Kit.
- Activate your evacuation arrangements if required

Tune in,
log on,
listen out,
and act!



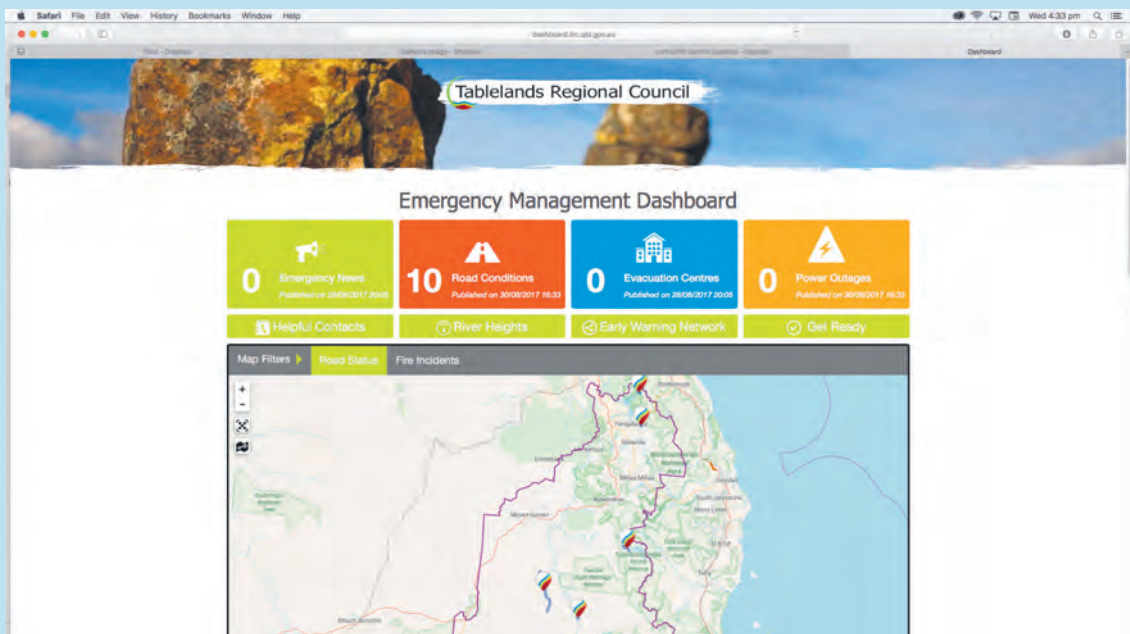
DISASTER MANAGEMENT INITIATIVES

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DASHBOARD

The Emergency Management Dashboard is designed as a one stop shop for accessing incident related information to keep our community safe, prepared and informed. The dashboard is now available at dashboard.trc.qld.gov.au

The dashboard provides access to live feeds on road closures, current weather conditions, fire incidents, power outages, evacuation centres, emergency news, local social media feeds as well as providing links to key disaster websites.

Whilst some of the features will only be available during disasters when the Local Disaster Coordination Centre (LDCC) has been activated, the dashboard has a number of useful tools that can be used on a daily basis including details of local and state road closures, power outages, weather warnings and updates from Atherton Live Weather.



UHF CITIZEN BAND RADIO (CHANNEL 10)

UHF-CB 10 is the alternative initial contact channel for use in a disaster event, or when communications such as landlines, mobiles and email have failed. This is not meant to replace normal communications, but to provide a back-up for residents and visitors in the Tablelands region if ever required.

Normal communication channels while often very robust, have demonstrated that they can fail during or immediately after a major disaster. The UHF-CB 10 initiative is a good alternative as it is accessible to the general community without the need for a license. Many people in our communities already have access to UHF-CB radios in their vehicles, farms and businesses so it's widely available and relatively inexpensive.

When standard communications such as landlines and mobiles fail, everyone with a two-way radio can listen out on UHF-CB 10 to offer support to other community members requiring assistance. This system may be extremely valuable in disaster events.

Please be aware that owning a radio and using Channel 10 is not a guarantee of help, but it provides a chance for community members to contact and help each other in situations where normal communications have failed. This is a community-led self-help initiative.



EARLY WARNING NETWORK

Subscribe now to the Early Warning Network (EWN) to access a free alerting system for severe weather and other emergency events.

Alerts will come by email and SMS, although there is the ability to send voice alerts to landlines as required. Join now and in doing so become better prepared for emergency events.

Council-initiated alert messages may be distributed, through the EWN system to subscribers.

The EWN uses publicly available information to provide subscribers with early warnings.

Conditions apply. For more information and to register go to:

trc.qld.gov.au/disaster-management/early-warning-network-ewn



Are You
Being Warned?

Join Now

TRC DISASTER MANAGEMENT FACEBOOK

Tablelands Regional Council operates a dedicated disaster management presence on Facebook.

facebook.com/TablelandsDCC

This page carries important information on preparation for cyclones, severe storms, bushfires or any other disasters which may impact on residents or visitors. This includes information specific to the Tablelands area whenever possible, providing local support at times of emergency.

During Tropical Cyclone Ita, for example, the Tablelands DCC page carried tracking maps showing where Ita was expected to cross the Tablelands region. It is a great avenue for discovering and contacting fellow community members involved in community all hazard disaster preparations and learn about training and skills-development opportunities. Please LIKE our page to get warnings and updates on emerging situations direct to your news feed.



TRC TWITTER

Tablelands Regional Council's official account on Twitter is **[Twitter.com/CouncilTRC](https://twitter.com/CouncilTRC)**



MANAGING DONATIONS OF MATERIAL GOODS & SERVICES

Tablelands Regional Council worked in partnership with GIVIT to provide material goods and services to flood affected residents in Malanda in 2015 and then again to manage the appeal fund following the Ravenshoe café explosion in 2015.

GIVIT is an online not-for-profit organisation that connects those who wish to donate goods to those in need. In partnership with the Queensland Government, GIVIT manages all offers of donated goods and services during times of natural disasters.

Individuals wanting to donate goods or services should visit **givit.org.au** to see what is needed in disaster affected communities.

Businesses and organisations wanting to assist communities impacted by disasters can visit **givit.org.au** or email **info@givit.org.au** to pledge a donation or offer assistance.

The GIVIT logo features the word 'GIVIT' in large, white, bold, sans-serif capital letters on a teal background. Below it, the tagline 'goods for good causes' is written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font.

BE A GOOD NEIGHBOUR

A good neighbour is an especially valuable asset when disaster strikes.

You can assist your neighbours by checking on them prior to the disaster event especially if they are vulnerable (e.g. aged, hearing, sight or mobility issues, foreign language speakers, recent arrivals etc.). Check on neighbours to ensure they understand what is happening and that they are adequately prepared.

It is also a good idea to check on your neighbours after the event to make sure they are ok and to see if you can lend a hand.

Please look out for yourselves and each other and report any issues to the emergency services and / or the Local Disaster Coordination Centre on **1300 362 242** or email **disastermanagement@trc.qld.gov.au**



SPONTANEOUS VOLUNTEERS

Spontaneous volunteers are a vital and significant part of our community. They can provide valuable assistance at times of disasters as well as support in preparedness and recovery activities.

Volunteering Queensland helps Tablelands Regional Council manage spontaneous volunteers through the Emergency Volunteering (EV) Crew. **You can offer to help** by registering with EV Crew at any time. Register online at: **emergencyvolunteering.force.com/Register**



COMMUNITY DISASTER TEAMS

In support of the National Strategy for Disaster Resilience, Tablelands Regional Council has developed a template for a Community 'All-Hazard' Disaster Plan and has successfully rolled out this project to seven communities as follows:

- Mount Garnet & District
- Herberton & District
- Millaa Millaa & District
- Tinaroo & Kairi
- Ravenshoe & District
- Malanda & District
- Yungaburra & District

These Community All-Hazard Disaster Plans are tailored to local risks and individual communities' needs. The aim is to build resilience to natural and non-natural disaster events by empowering communities to prepare for, respond to and recover from disasters.

The Plans build on community strengths and utilise local resources to mitigate local hazards and address local needs, as identified by community members. Also, the plans identify ways to enhance communication and collaboration between community members and the Tablelands Local Disaster Coordination Centre (LDCC).

If you are interested in finding out more, contact Tablelands Regional Council on Tel: **1300 362 242** or email **disastermanagement@trc.qld.gov.au**

Copies of Community All-Hazard Disaster Plans are at: **trc.qld.gov.au/disaster-management/disaster-plans**

UNDERSTAND YOUR INSURANCE

Most Australians know insurance is a necessary part of their lives, however many are unsure about what their policies cover, whether they have enough or even what they need.

The Understand Insurance website (**understandinsurance.com.au**) provides practical information to help you find out more about insurance and make decisions that meet your needs. The website looks at what insurers do, how insurance products work and why you might need it. It also helps you understand your risks, what to consider when choosing a product and an insurer, how to manage the cost of a premium and how to lodge a claim.

Understand Insurance is an initiative of the Insurance Council of Australia, the peak body for the general insurance industry.

BUSHFIRES

Bushfires are a destructive force. The drier winter months, coupled with the low humidity and gusty westerly winds that traditionally arrive in spring, increase the risk of bushfire. Spring brings about a need to prepare homes and properties for the bushfire season which officially starts on 1 August and continues until the onset of significant rains associated with the wet season.

You don't have to live in the bush to be threatened by bushfire, just close enough to be affected by burning material, embers and smoke. For Tablelands residents, that can be just about anywhere.

Understand your risk

1. Do you live within a few kilometres of bushland?
2. Does your local area have a bushfire history?
3. Is your home built on a slope? The slope can significantly affect how fast a bushfire spreads. A 10 degree upslope can double the speed of a fire.
4. Do you have trees and shrubs within 20m of your house?
5. Is your Bushfire Survival Plan more than one year old?

If you answered yes to one or more of these questions you may be at risk in the event of a bushfire.

Bushfires may be started from natural causes (e.g. lightning), be deliberately lit (arson), through carelessness (e.g. discarded cigarettes,

sparks from machinery, unattended fires), as the result of an accident or very rarely as the result of a prescribed burn.

Fire Danger Ratings

Fire Danger Ratings give an indication of the consequences of a fire, if one was to start. The higher the fire danger, the more dangerous the conditions. These signs are located across the region to help you understand when conditions are dangerous enough to enact your Bushfire Survival Plan. Ratings are forecast using Bureau of Meteorology data based on weather and other environmental conditions such as fuel load.

Are you Bushfire Prepared?

During large-scale events, Queensland Fire and Emergency Service (QFES) will not be able to place a fire truck at every property.

It is crucial that you have a Bushfire Survival Plan in place.

A Bushfire Survival Plan details how you will be prepared and what action you will take if you or your home is threatened by bushfire. Having a Bushfire Survival Plan is essential to help ensure the safety of you and your family in the event of a fire.

Your main priority in a bushfire scenario is to ensure that you and your family are safe. The lives of your family are more important than any building. You and your family's survival and safety may depend on your preparations and the decisions you make.

The safest place is to be away from the fire. Leaving early is the safest option. Being involved in a fire may be one of the most traumatic experiences of your life. If you do leave, it is important for your own safety and the safety of your community that you don't return to your home before the all-clear is given by emergency services and that when you do return home you are aware of the hazards and other issues you will face and that you exercise caution.

If your choice is to stay, you must have a home that is defensible. A well-prepared home has an increased chance of survival. You must still have a contingency plan as part of your Bushfire Survival Plan and you should identify a safer location (e.g. family or friends) or a Neighbourhood Safer Place should this become necessary.

It is important for all family members to understand your Bushfire Survival Plan. Keep your Bushfire Survival Plan with your household emergency plan in a safe place, visible in your home (e.g. fridge).

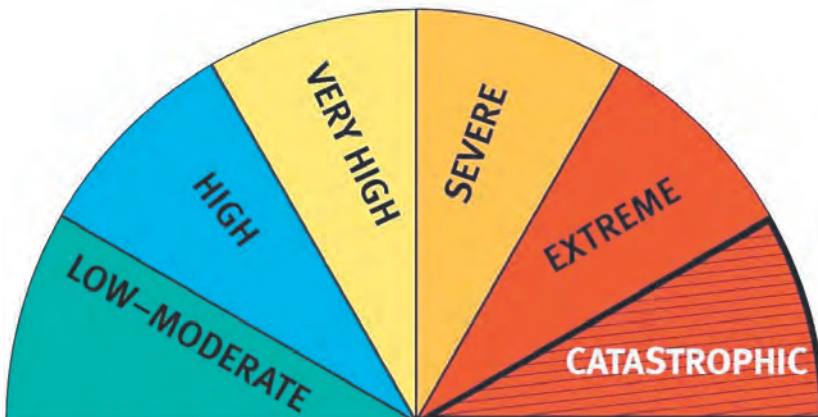
For more information and help on creating your own Bushfire Survival Plan, visit: ruralfire.qld.gov.au

Bushfire Warnings

If fire danger levels are rising in your area information will be broadcast on all usual media and websites (e.g. Rural Fire Service, BOM, Emergency Management Dashboard, etc.)

If lives or property are threatened you will receive warning messages:

- **ADVICE** - tells you a fire has started and provides general information to keep you updated.
- **WATCH & ACT** represents a higher level of threat such as conditions are changing, a fire is approaching or lives may be threatened.
- **EMERGENCY WARNING** is the highest level message advising of impending danger and you may hear the Standard Emergency Warning Signal (SEWS) first.



Information & Warnings

It is up to you to be aware of what is happening around you. Remember to stay informed and speak to others about your local conditions.

When are warnings issued?

If a fire starts that may threaten life or property, warnings are issued. It's up to you to take notice, seek information, make decisions and act. Remember, don't rely on one source of information.

What do warnings mean?



PREPARE.ACT.SURVIVE

ruralfire.qld.gov.au



Follow the instructions contained within an Emergency Warning immediately.

What to do before a Bushfire

- Keep an eye on the Rural Fire Service website (ruralfire.qld.gov.au) and Emergency Management Dashboard (dashboard.trc.qld.gov.au) when hot, dry conditions exist.
- Fire knows no boundaries. Work with neighbouring properties to create and/or maintain fire breaks and choose vegetation close to your home that is fire resistant/retardant.
- Reduce the fuel load by cutting grass, clearing away fallen leaves and dead undergrowth and vegetation from your property (e.g. weeds, overhanging branches, shrubs, etc.).
- Establish a buffer zone around your home and buildings and move flammable items (e.g. woodpiles) away from homes and structures.
- Build fences of fire resistant material if possible.

What to do during a Bushfire

- Keep gutters clean and install gutter plugs where appropriate.
- Have access to water supply for fire suppression. Check water systems, pumps and generators work on a regular basis and keep hoses at the ready.
- Keep access ways to the property clear for fire trucks.

- When warnings are given, act immediately on the instructions provided.
- Fires can move extremely fast – faster than you can run. They can be unpredictable, jump around and change direction with no notice. You may find yourself suddenly in danger. Heat, wind, smoke and burning material blowing around may make it difficult to see, hear or breathe.
- Don't wait. Leave when advised even if it feels safe where you are at the time. Take your household emergency kit. Go in the direction advised for your location.

After the Bushfire

- Wait until the all clear has been given by local emergency services before returning home.
- Consider using a face mask or similar (e.g. hanky, flannel, etc.)
- Check around the property for live electricity, leaking gas, sewage leaks, and hot embers, overhanging trees or branches and structural damage.
- If unsure about the safety of your property, seek advice from local emergency services. Do NOT take risks.
- If you are stranded, hurt or need other help contact emergency services.

Further information is available from the Queensland Fire and Emergency Service (QFES) website at qfes.qld.gov.au or the Rural Fire Service website at ruralfire.qld.gov.au

Hazard Reduction

Reducing fuel loads in high risk bushfire areas before the fire season decreases the chance of loss of life and property during bushfires. Hazard reduction is a shared responsibility between Council, Government Agencies and Landholders.

Queensland Fire & Emergency Services urges landholders to do their part to reduce fire risk prior to the bushfire season. Fuel loads can be reduced by:

- Burning – controlled or prescribed that requires a PERMIT
- Ploughing – commonly used in grassland areas
- Slashing – changing the arrangement of fuel
- Grazing – selective stocking to manage specific areas
- Spraying

Details of prescribed burns will be released via the media (websites, radio, and social media). In some cases you may be advised via letter or door knocking.

Every property has its own risks. An unprepared property is not only a risk itself but may also present an increased danger for your neighbours, their homes and your community.

Well maintained firebreaks help to:

- Provide management control during hazard reduction burns.
- Slow down or stop wildfires.

- Provide a prepared ready to operate back-burning boundary so that valuable time is not lost establishing the boundary during fire suppression activities.
- Provide access for fire appliances into the property for asset protection and/or water resources.
- Provide protection to valuable pasture assets either by preventing fires entering your property and to protect your neighbours and community.

Neighbourhood Safer Places

QFES approved Neighbourhood Safer Place for wildfire events is:

- Herberton & District Rugby League Ground, 1181 Longlands Gap Rd, Wondecla.

Lightening Fires without a Permit is Illegal

The Permit to Light a Fire system is enforced by QFES to ensure burns are conducted at an appropriate time of the year, are suitably managed and planned and emergency services are notified.

Fire permits are required all year round for land management burning and are available from your local Fire Warden at no charge. Contact details for Fire Wardens are available through the Fire Warden Finder on the Rural Fire Service website.

Tough penalties apply for people who light fires without a permit.

More information on Permit to Light Fires, Fire Bans, Declared Fire Danger

Periods and how to contact your local fire warden is available on the Rural Fire Service website at ruralfire.qld.gov.au

Arson

If your community is being affected by deliberately lit illegal fires, there are things you can do to help stop this:

- Remember the time and place where you see fires.
- Write down the description of people acting suspiciously and the description of vehicles entering or leaving fires.
- Contact Crime Stoppers on **1800 333 000** or talk to your local police.



TROPICAL CYCLONES

A cyclone is a violent tropical storm with very strong winds rotating around a calm centre of atmospheric pressure known as the “eye.” In the southern hemisphere, cyclones rotate clockwise. In the northern hemisphere, cyclones (or hurricanes/typhoons) rotate counter-clockwise.

Research has shown that cyclones in the Australian region exhibit more erratic paths than cyclones in other parts of the world. Movement in any direction is possible including sharp turns and even loops. Before a tropical cyclone forms it can be difficult to predict its exact strength and path, including whether or not it will make landfall.

Cyclone season typically runs between 1 November and 30 April, but can extend to May. Not all tropical cyclones cross the Australian coast. A tropical cyclone can last for a few days or persist for up to two or three weeks.

Cyclones usually dissipate over land but may travel many kilometres inland before being downgraded to a tropical low.

On the coast, there is also the risk of storm surge which is a rise in the ocean level caused by a cyclone. Water may travel several kilometres inland, especially if the surge occurs around a high or king tide.

Monitoring Tropical Cyclones

OUTLOOK STATEMENTS are issued daily by the Bureau of Meteorology during cyclone season. These present 3-day outlooks on possible tropical cyclone development in the region and surrounding oceans.

BULLETINS are issued every six hours if a tropical cyclone exists within the Australian region, but is not expected to threaten any coastal or island communities within the next 48 hours. Tropical Cyclone Bulletins include the cyclone’s name, current location and its forecast movement.

TROPICAL CYCLONE WATCH is issued every six hours when there are indications that gales or stronger winds are expected to affect coastal or island communities within 48 hours but not within 24 hours. It details the communities expected to be affected and gives a brief estimate of the cyclone’s location, intensity, severity category and movement.

TROPICAL CYCLONE WARNING is issued every three hours when there are indications that gales or stronger winds are expected to affect coastal or island communities within 24 hours. As well as information provided in a watch advice, warning advices also inform of expected maximum wind gusts. Forecasts of heavy rainfall, flooding and abnormally high tide are included where necessary.

Communities under threat are also advised to take precautions to safeguard their lives and property. When a cyclone is under radar surveillance close to the coast, hourly advices may be issued.

Cyclone Severity

The severity of cyclones is described in terms of categories related to the wind speeds:

CATEGORY 1 = <125km/h Gales. Minimal house damage. Damage to some crops, trees and caravans. Boats may drag moorings.

CATEGORY 2 = 125-164km/h Destructive Winds. Minor house damage. Significant damage to signs, trees and caravans. Heavy damage to some crops. Risk of power failure. Small boats may break moorings.

CATEGORY 3 = 165-224km/h Very destructive winds. Some roof and structural damage. Some caravans destroyed. Power failure likely.

CATEGORY 4 = 225-279km/h Very destructive winds. Significant roofing and structural damage. Many caravans destroyed and blown away. Dangerous airborne debris. Widespread power failures.

CATEGORY 5 = >280km/h Extremely destructive winds. Extremely dangerous and widespread destruction.



To monitor the progress of cyclones visit the Bureau of Meteorology tracking and threat maps at bom.gov.au

Information will be regularly released by the Tablelands Local Disaster Coordination Centre (LDCC) on what action those in the Tablelands Regional Council area should take and what impacts are happening across the region (dashboard.trc.qld.gov.au).

You might receive emergency information via email, landlines and mobile phone and the Standard Emergency Warning Signal (SEWS) may be used.

The weather may not look threatening when safety information and advice is issued but it will deteriorate over time and more quickly as the cyclone reaches land.

Regardless of the category of cyclone predicted, rain may be worse than wind or vice versa. The effects may continue for up to 18 hours.

What to do before a Cyclone

- Arrange for a professional builder to check and identify ways to increase the structural security of your home (e.g. fit windows with shutters or protective screens, etc.)
- Consider having a generator connect to your home, this should be undertaken by a suitably qualified electrician.
- Prepare your household emergency plan.
- Check your emergency kit.
- Prepare your home – see page 4.

What to do during a Cyclone

- Tune in, log on, listen out and act.
- Stay inside and take shelter in the strongest part of the building (this is often the bathroom, toilet or somewhere with few windows).
- Mattresses, strong furniture and blankets can protect you and your family.
- Turn off and unplug all non-essential electrical equipment.
- If the building starts to break up consider anchoring yourselves to or under a strong fixture (e.g. a sturdy bed, water pipe, etc.).
- Beware of the calm “eye”. If the wind drops, don’t assume the cyclone is over, violent winds will soon resume from the other direction.
- Stay inside until the official all clear is provided by local emergency authorities.

After the Cyclone

- Tune in, log on, listen out and act.
 - Stay indoors until local emergency authorities advise it is safe to go out.
 - Heed all warnings and do not go sightseeing.
 - If you had to evacuate don’t go home until advised it is safe.
 - Stay away from flood waters – do not walk, drive, swim or play in them.
- Remember: If it’s flooded, forget it.**
- Stay away from damaged or fallen powerlines – they could be “live”
 - Some phones will not work in a power failure. Ensure you have a back-up telephone which plugs straight into the telephone line. Equipment

connected over the nbn™ network will **not** work during a power blackout.

- Avoid making unnecessary phone calls. The phone system may be limited and should be kept available for emergency services.
- Monitor UHF-CB 10 to offer or request assistance if standard communications fail.
- Check on neighbours especially the vulnerable and assist others in your local community wherever possible.
- Don’t handle or use electrical appliances if wet.
- Beware of hazards, e.g. damaged bridges, debris from buildings or trees, flooded watercourses, etc. Report any damage to the Tablelands LDCC on **1300 362 242**.
- Don’t try to clean up too quickly. Get assistance if the job is too big.
- Look out for snakes and spiders and other wildlife hazards. Keep children and pets inside and away from danger.
- Operate chainsaws and other vegetation-clearing equipment safely and wear protective clothing.
- Avoid unnecessary contact with mud and dirt and clean cuts and scratches with salt water or antiseptic and dress wounds. Wash hands thoroughly before eating.
- Even in cloudy conditions, protect yourself from the sun and ensure you drink plenty of water to avoid dehydration.
- Clean and disinfect any household surfaces which have come into contact with floodwater.
- Throw out any damaged or thawed food. **If in doubt, throw it out.**



FLOODING

Flooding may occur as a result of cyclones, severe thunderstorms, heavy rainfall or dam failure.

Flooding can happen anywhere, at any time, even on a sunny day, and can be caused by more than just rain. Even if you don't live near a river or creek, different types of flooding may still happen in your area from other causes.

Flooding of rivers in some inland areas of Queensland creates slow-onset flooding which can spread for thousands of square kilometres and may last for weeks or even months. However, in hilly or mountainous areas like the Tablelands, flooding can occur more quickly and with little to no warning. As these rivers are steeper, flooding often recedes much more quickly and may only last for one to two days.

Flash flooding occurs when soil absorption, runoff or drainage cannot adequately disperse intense rainfall, and is usually caused by slow-moving thunderstorms. Water levels can rise surprisingly fast in drains, creeks and rivers. Flash floods are generally defined as developing in six hours or less from rainfall to the onset of flooding.

It is important to realise that flash floods tend to be quite localised and it is difficult to provide effective warning because of their rapid onset. It is important for

residents to realise that water levels may rise rapidly with little or no warning.

Flood Information & Warnings

There are a number of BOM gauges within the region. These have been installed by BOM or neighbouring Councils (e.g. Cairns) to monitor rainfall and river height data in the upper catchment to provide advance warning of flooding on the coast.

BOM may issue:

FLOOD WATCH to provide early advice of potential riverine flooding to emergency services and communities at risk of flooding on the coast.

FLOOD WARNING when flooding is occurring or expected to occur in a particular area.

Flood Warnings typically include a statement about both current and expected levels of flooding at key locations in the area covered by the warning, along with a weather forecast and the latest available observations of river height and rainfalls in the area.

Remember: When it's raining there is only one rule **If it's Flooded, Forget it!**

In order to get the most benefit from flood warnings, people in flood prone areas will need to know what,

if any, effect the flood will have on their property and some knowledge of how best to deal with a flood situation.

Minor flooding: Causes inconvenience. Low-lying areas next to watercourses are inundated which may require the removal of stock and equipment. Minor roads may be closed and low-level bridges submerged.

Moderate flooding: In addition to the above, the evacuation of some houses may be required. Main traffic routes may be covered. The area of inundation is substantial in rural areas requiring the removal of stock.

Major flooding: In addition to the above, extensive rural areas and/or urban areas are inundated. Properties and towns are likely to be isolated and major traffic routes likely to be closed. Evacuation of people from flood affected areas may be required.

SEVERE WEATHER WARNINGS may be issued when severe weather is expected e.g. heavy rainfall which may lead to flash flooding.

The BOM website has a number of useful features to monitor severe weather e.g. radar, rainfall and river heights, etc.



Warnings will be broadcast on radio, TV, social media and Council's website or directly within communities by street announcements and door knocking. The emergency alert system or SEWS (State Emergency Warning Signal) may also be used.

What to do before a Flood

By being aware and taking preventative measures before a flood, the negative effects can be reduced. Here are some actions you could take in advance of a flood to prepare your home and to reduce the impacts to you and your family:

- Research local flood history – ask neighbours, locals and Council for information.
- Avoid building on floodplains unless you elevate and reinforce your home.
- If your area is flood prone, consider alternatives to carpet on ground

levels, such as removable floor rugs, tiled floors and walls and identify items you will need to raise if flooding threatens.

- Have your electrician raise your electrical panel to a high position above flood level.
- Store all poisons and garden chemicals well above ground level.
- Check sandbags before the storm season as they deteriorate over time. Organise sandbags from hardware stores. During extreme events, sand and empty bags may be made available at SES or other facilities for residents to fill themselves. SES do not deliver sandbags except in exceptional circumstances and only to elderly residents and those with special needs.
- Prepare a household emergency plan.
- Check your emergency kit.
- Prepare your home.

- Know how to tune in, log on, listen out and act.
- Flood damage is not always covered by insurance – check your policy documents carefully.
- Never camp in dry river beds as they can become flooded without warning.

What to do during Flood events

It is important to stay informed during heavy rainfall and potential flooding events. Warnings, latest situation updates and information will always be released via the BOM website and broadcast media. Heed all warnings, information and advice.

- Anchor down anything which might float away, including wheelie bins. Move vehicles, outdoor equipment, garbage, chemicals and poisons to higher locations (unsecured items can cause damage to people, property and the environment).



- Raise furniture, clothing and valuables to higher ground – on to beds, tables and into roof spaces.
- Drains, creeks and rivers that have had little or no water flow in previous months may fill rapidly with fast flowing water which can then spread to houses and streets. You may not be able to get in or out of your house or street.
- Avoid travelling long distances as motorists can be stranded for days at a time in the wet season. Ensure you have communication and your emergency kit if you can not avoid travel.
- Switch off power at the switchboard, gas and main water valve.
- Sandbag areas at risk from flooding including drains inside the house to help prevent sewage overflows.
- Safeguard your pets.
- If you have to evacuate go to family or friends who live on higher ground. Don't forget your evacuation kit.
- In some circumstances, Council may establish an Evacuation Centre for people who are unable to make alternative arrangements. If activated, the location will be publicised on broadcast radio.

After the Flood

Cleaning up after a flood is challenging and you may be faced with dangerous and hazardous situations. Always consider hazards and never put your safety in jeopardy.

- Tune in, log on, listen out and act on weather warnings and official advice. Flood waters sometimes go down and then up again.
- DO NOT drink or prepare food with tap water until advised by Council that the infrastructure has been checked as it may be contaminated. Boil tap water until supplies have been declared safe.
- If you had to evacuate, DO NOT return home until advised it is safe to do so and then only use the official route recommended.
- Never drive, walk, swim or play in floodwaters. There could be hidden hazards below the water that you cannot see, regardless



of how well you know the area. Flood water is frequently contaminated.

- Be wary of fallen power lines, damaged buildings, flooded roads, unstable tree branches, and hidden dangers associated with any flooding. Watch out for unexpected visitors e.g. snakes.
- Electrical equipment that has been water damaged should be dried and checked by a qualified electrician before use.
- Wear rubber boots or rubber-soled shoes and rubber or leather gloves. Treat all items exposed to floodwater as contaminated. Wash away mud, dirt or debris as soon as you can. Use household detergents and disinfectants to wash furniture, objects, walls etc and prevent

mould. Wash yourself thoroughly after handling floodwater.

- Check the fridge and freezer for spoilage. Throw away any food that has come into contact with flood waters. DO NOT consume.
- Pump out flooded basements gradually to avoid structural damage.
- Repair damaged septic tanks, cesspools, pits and leaching systems as soon as possible as they pose a health hazard to yourself, your family and your neighbours.
- Use the telephone only for emergency calls as the networks will be busy.
- Contact emergency services if you need help. For flood and storm emergencies contact the SES on Tel: **132 500**.

EARTHQUAKES

Earthquakes are a shaking or trembling of the Earth's crust caused by the release of huge stresses due to underground volcanic forces, the breaking of rock between the surface, or by a sudden movement along an existing fault line. Earthquakes are unpredictable and strike without warning. They range in strength from slight tremors to great shocks lasting from a few seconds to a few minutes. If an earthquake occurs in the ocean, it can push up powerful waves known as tsunamis.

The Tablelands region has a long volcanic history. Earthquakes have not in the immediate past been a major threat to our communities and the Tablelands region has not been severely affected by earthquake hazard. However, recent historical data exists in relation to tremors which have caused minor damage.

The impact of an earthquake depends on its depth as well as its intensity which is measured in magnitude (1 may be noticeable to 10 causing significant damage) and proximity to inhabited areas.

Earthquakes occur with little or no warning – it's possible you may feel the earth tremor before any emergency services know it's going to happen. Earthquakes can occur at any time of the day or night and at any time of year.

The existence of even a slightly volatile seismic environment acts as a prompt for maintaining situational awareness of the threat of earthquakes, and their possible consequences.

The table below shows the five strongest recorded earthquakes that

have occurred within the Tablelands Regional Council's area.

What will happen?

Earthquakes sometimes sounds like rolling or rumbling. There may be movement of the earth which could be a jolt or series of jolts of varying intensities possibly accompanied by a rolling sensation. Items may fall from ceilings, walls or out of cupboards; the water in toilets may slosh around, walls may crack if the shock is severe. Electricity may fail and sprinkler or alarm systems may turn themselves on.

What to do during an Earthquake

If you are indoors:

- Protect yourself – DROP, COVER, HOLD ON. Drop to the floor and take cover under a sturdy desk, table or other furniture. Hold on to the table or desk and be prepared to move with it; cover your head with your other arm.
- DO NOT stand in a doorway as this will not provide protection. Stay away from glass windows, outside doors, chimneys, walls and anything that could fall.
- Stay inside until the shaking stops. Remember that there could be aftershocks.
- Don't use lifts.
- Follow any instructions from the emergency services. If you are unsure, contact Council on **1300 362 242**

If you are outside:

- Stay there
- Move away from buildings, awnings, street lights, bridges, power lines, etc. The greatest danger exists directly outside buildings, at exits and alongside exterior walls.
- Follow any instructions from the emergency services. If you are unsure, contact Council on **1300 362 242**

If you are vehicle:

- Stop as quickly as safety allows and stay in the vehicle. Avoid stopping near or under buildings, trees, power lines, etc.
- Listen to your car radio for warnings before moving.
- Proceed cautiously once the earthquake has stopped. Avoid roads, bridges or ramps that might have been damaged.
- Follow any instructions from the emergency services. If you are unsure, contact Council on **1300 362 242**

If you are trapped:

- Do not use a naked flame – no lighters or matches.
- Keep as still as possible.
- Cover your mouth with a handkerchief or clothing.
- Tap on a pipe or wall or call out so rescuers can locate you.
- Contact the emergency services (**000**) if your mobile phone is with you and working.

More information about earthquakes is available at qld.gov.au/emergency/dealing-disasters/earthquakes.html

Date	Magnitude (Richter Scale)	Location
06 Nov 1992	3.5	3 km S of Ravenshoe
19 Jun 1950	3.2	1km ESE of Evelyn
20 Mar 2000	3.1	3.7km SE of Yungaburra
24 Jun 1961	2.9	25km SE of Ravenshoe
01 Dec 2013	2.8	North of Tinaroo Dam

LANDSLIDES

Landslides can injure people and animals, damage property and infrastructure as well as interfere with supplies and isolate communities.

Landslides usually involve the movement of large amounts of earth, rock, sand or mud or any combination of these. They can be caused by earthquakes, soil saturation from heavy rainfall or seepage or by human activity (e.g. vegetation removal and/or construction on steep terrain).

Some landslides move slowly and cause damage gradually, other move so rapidly that they can destroy property and take lives suddenly and unexpectedly. Sudden, rapid events are the most dangerous because of lack of warning, the speed at which a landslide can travel and the force of its impact.

Gravity is the force driving landslide movement. Landslides usually start on steep hillsides and can accelerate to speeds that exceed 50kph. Factors that allow the force of gravity to overcome the resistance of earth material to landslide movement include saturation by water, steepening of slopes by erosion or vegetation removal or construction and earthquake shaking.

The consistency of landslides range from watery mud to thick, rocky mud that can carry large items such as boulders, trees and cars. They continue flowing down hills and through channels, growing in volume until the flows reach flatter ground where the debris spreads over a broad area, sometimes accumulating in thick deposits of mud.

What will happen?

You may notice changes in the house or yard such as:

- Doors or windows stick or jam for the first time.
- New cracks appear in plaster, tiles, bricks or foundations.
- Outside walls, walkways or stairs begin pulling away from the building.

- Slowly developing, widening cracks appear on the ground or on paved areas such as streets or driveways.
- Underground utility lines break.
- Bulging ground appears at the base of a slope.
- Water breaks through the ground surface in new locations.
- Leaning trees, slumping earth, movement in fences, power poles or trees, etc.
- You hear a faint rumbling sound that increases in volume as the landslide nears. The ground slopes downward in one specific direction and may begin shifting in that direction under your feet.

What to do before a Landslide

- Discuss landslides and debris flows with your family.
- Be aware of the area you live in and learn about the landslide risk in your community. Become familiar with the land and structures around you so that you will notice any changes.
- Make sure your household emergency plan includes this hazard.

What to do during a Landslide

- If there has been a period of heavy rain, you may be at risk of a landslide.
- If you believe there is a real potential for a landslide to occur within a short period of time call the emergency services immediately on 000.
- Inform affected neighbours. Your neighbours may not be aware of potential hazards.
- Evacuate. Getting out of the path of a landslide or debris flow is your best protection.
- If escape is not possible, curl into a tight ball and protect your head. A tight ball will provide the best protection for your body.

- If indoors, shelter at the least affected end of the building under a strong table or bench and stay put until movement has stopped.
- Follow any instructions from the emergency services.

After a Landslide

- Tune in, log on, listen out and act on the latest emergency information and follow instructions.
- Stay away from the slip area – there may be a danger of additional slides.
- Watch for flooding, which may occur after a landslide or debris flow. Floods sometimes follow landslides and debris flows because they may both be started by the same event.
- Check for injured and trapped persons near the slide, without entering the direct slide area. Direct rescuers to their location.
- Help neighbours who may require special assistance. Elderly people and people with disabilities may require additional assistance.
- Look for and report broken utility lines and damaged roads etc. to appropriate authorities. Reporting potential hazards will help to prevent further hazards and injuries occurring.
- Seek help from emergency services if needed.
- Engage a professional to check the building foundations and surrounding land for damage to help you assess the safety of the area.
- Re-plant damaged ground as soon as possible since erosion caused by loss of ground cover can lead to flash flooding.
- Seek the advice of a geotechnical expert for evaluating landslide hazards or designing corrective techniques to reduce landslide risk. A professional will be able to advise you of the best ways to prevent or reduce landslide risk, without creating further hazards.

NON-NATURAL DISASTER EVENTS

Disasters can take many different forms, and the duration can range from an hourly disruption to days or weeks of ongoing destruction. Sometimes disasters can happen with little to no warning and we are reminded how life can change forever in an instant.

Disasters are not always natural. Some disasters can be caused accidentally or deliberately by humans. Some examples include:

- Home and workplace fires are quite common and can cause significant property damage and loss of life.
- Hazardous materials emergencies include chemical spills and groundwater contamination.
- Dam failure emergencies.
- Threats from extremist groups who use violence against both people and property. High-risk targets may include military and civilian government facilities, international airports, large cities and high-profile landmarks.

- Cyber-terrorism involving attacks against computers and networks done to intimidate or coerce a government or its people for political or social objectives.

Fires in the home - know the rules!

Instead of waking you, smoke and toxic gases from a fire quickly numb your senses and put you into an even deeper sleep. Smoke alarms are a simple way to warn you of a developing fire and give you time to escape.

New smoke alarm legislation aims to protect the lives of every resident, by creating safer homes and one unified smoke alarm system. This means that you will be more rapidly alerted to the presence of a fire in your home. The laws impact all newly built homes and rentals, plus any home undertaking substantial renovations.

From 1 January 2017 smoke alarms installed in new homes must be:

- Photoelectric type only;
- Hard wired to the electricity supply;

- Interconnected to every other smoke alarm;
- Installed in each bedroom;
- Installed in hallways serving bedrooms;
- Installed in the exit path of every storey not containing bedrooms.

Queensland Fire and Emergency Services has a fact sheet on the changes - qfes.qld.gov.au/community-safety/smokealarms/documents/New-Smoke-Alarm-Legislation.pdf

Knowing what to do in the event of a fire is your responsibility. If the smoke alarm in your home sounds you need to act quickly and safely and follow the rules!

1. Get down low and GO, GO, GO!
2. Don't Hide! Scream and Shout!
3. Close any doors behind you (remember to check closed doors if they are hot with the back of your hand as there may be fire behind the closed door).



4. Once you are out of the home do not go back inside for anything! Get Out and Stay Out!

If your clothes catch fire, don't run. STOP. DROP. ROLL.

QFES strongly recommend:

- you are familiar with escape routes from the house and property.
- practice a fire drill with your family utilising your fire escape plan (showing the emergency meeting point).
- have a torch beside your bed.
- keep your mobile phone by your bed at night.
- Regularly check the batteries on your smoke alarms.

Industrial Accidents & Chemical Spills

When you come across an accident / spill involving hazardous materials

- Beware! An unplanned approach could result in being exposed to hazardous materials.
- Stay upwind and on high ground.
- Notify police and/or fire services.
- Avoid contact with material.
- Stay well away.

When hazardous material accident or spill occurs in your area

- Stay indoors.
- Close doors and all windows.
- Listen to the radio for further advice.
- Evacuate only when advised by police or fire service personnel.
- Turn off all power.

Referable Dams

Although dam failures are rare, their effects can be significant. Dams which put people at risk in the event of a failure are defined as referable.

There are four referable dams in the region

- Tinaroo Falls.
- Koombooloomba.
- Crooks.
- Wild River.

Referable Dam Emergency Action Plans are available at: dews.qld.gov.au/water/dams/safety/eap/emergency-action-plans

The safety of these four dams is monitored closely and warning arrangements are in place to warn downstream residents of potential dam failure threats.

In the unlikely event of dam failure, significant downstream flooding can involve potentially swift flowing water and high amounts of debris. It is important for populations at risk to understand their responsibilities and manage their own safety in accordance with the Emergency Action Plan for each referable dam.





EVACUATION ADVICE

The Tablelands Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG) does not issue evacuation advice for wind. During cyclones, evacuation is only required if you live in a low lying area that is prone to flooding or you live in a caravan, tent or older style home. All homes constructed since 1984 afford a certain level of cyclone protection. Your home is often the safest place for you and your family. If you do have a need to self-evacuate then you are encouraged to seek temporary shelter with family or friends in safer places or with an accommodation provider.

If you do need to evacuate lock doors, turn off power, gas and water and take your emergency kit with you and add extra items you need for evacuation e.g. bedding, etc. Consider lifting valuable items off the floor if there is a threat of flooding.

Wear strong shoes and tough clothing for protection. Leave early to avoid heavy traffic, flooding and wind hazards. Avoid using the range roads which are prone to landslips and closures from vehicle breakdown and debris.

TRC has earmarked a number of buildings to be used as Places of Refuge. These should be considered an absolute last resort and should only be used if you have nowhere else to go.

There are **no Public Cyclone Shelters** in the Tablelands Regional Council area.

If necessary, the Tablelands LDMG will establish Evacuation Centres once the cyclone has passed. Do not go to an Evacuation Centre unless officially advised. It will not be functioning and will not be ready to receive evacuees.

Evacuation Centres and/or Places of Refuge are typically large public buildings such as halls. They are likely to be crowded, noisy and uncomfortable. There may also be long queues for toilets and limited access to kitchen facilities. You will be required to register for safety purposes.

These facilities have limited capacity and will be used to accommodate as many people as possible. Places of Refuge may be crowded and you will be sitting in a chair for a long period, and any belongings you bring are required to fit under your seat. You need to bring food which doesn't require cooking and it's a good idea to bring something to occupy yourself and family members. There may not be power.

Weapons, non-prescription drugs, alcohol and other forms of anti-social behaviour are not acceptable in Evacuation Centres and Places of Refuge. You will be asked to leave or be removed/confined by the Police if necessary.

It is difficult for the authorities to manage animals at such facilities. Domestic pets will not be accepted at Evacuation Centres and Places of Refuge. You need to make your own arrangements for your animals. Guide Dogs and Assistance Dogs will be admitted (with proof of accreditation).

If you don't have means of transport for evacuation, seek assistance from family, friends or neighbours. Contact the Local Disaster Coordination Centre (LDCC) as a last resort.

The LDCC will publicly notify the opening of Places of Refuge and Evacuation Centres via local ABC

and commercial radio broadcasts and online.

Public Cyclone Shelters are purpose built and designed to withstand category 5 cyclones. They are provided for people on the coast who live in storm surge areas. Cyclone evacuation on the coast is based on the threat of storm surge not wind and these facilities are provided for people who are unable to make alternative safe arrangements during the impact phase of a severe tropical cyclone. As the TRC region is not at risk of storm surge, it is unlikely that we will ever have a cyclone shelter in our region.

Places of Refuge are normal buildings. They have been selected as being amongst the best existing buildings available within a community but they are not designed to the criteria of Public Cyclone Shelters and therefore there is no guarantee that facilities will survive a direct hit from a severe tropical cyclone. Places of Refuge facilities are provided during the impact phase of a severe cyclonic event for people that are unable to make alternative safe arrangements.

Evacuation Centres are buildings designated by Council that can be used to provide short-term shelter for people evacuated or who have been displaced as a result of a disaster event e.g. wildfire, flooding, etc. Evacuation Centres can also be used in the recovery phase following the passing of a cyclone when it is clear there is a need for accommodation e.g. people have lost their homes.

Places of Refuge and Evacuation Centres are provided as a LAST RESORT for people who are unable to make alternative safe arrangements.

DISASTERS ARE A FAMILY AFFAIR

Educate your Children

It is important for children to be prepared. Explain to children (in a manner that does not cause them anxiety) that a disaster is something that happens that could potentially hurt people, cause damage, or cut off essential services such as electricity, water and telephones. Explain to them that nature sometimes provides too much of a good thing (e.g. rain, wind and fire).

Talk about things that your children can relate to such as loss of power or water. Watch television programs on natural hazards and explain what may happen and discuss their impressions.

Give examples of disasters that could happen in your area. Help children recognise the warning signs of

the disaster that could affect your community. Talking about disaster with them, ahead of time will reduce the fear and anxiety when an event does occur and lets them know how to respond. This sends a powerful message that their safety during a disaster is your priority.

Teach your children how to ring 000 in a life threatening emergency or when parents are incapacitated. Ensure they understand to listen carefully to the operator who will help them and ensure they know where they live and their telephone number.

Have your children undertake a first aid, fire safety or CPR course.

Talk to your child's school to understand the information your child is receiving about safe behaviour and disasters.

Tell children about the many people who will help them during a disaster. Explain the roles of the various emergency services and support agencies and how your children can identify them.

Teach your children to call a family contact if they become separated during a disaster event. Help them memorise the telephone number or give it to them on a card they can keep with them.

Practice disaster scenarios with the whole family. For example, undertake a fire evacuation exercise at home or have a discussion about your household emergency plan. Consider as a family what items you need to shelter, where you will go if you need to evacuate, what the plan is for pets and so on.



Caring for Animals

Pets

Be Prepared, Act Early, Be Considerate and Act Safe. For each pet get a carrier. Be sure that it is large enough for the animal to stand, sit, lie down and turn around in. Record contact phone numbers of your vet, local animal welfare agencies and Council Animal Control office. Be sure your pet has a current registration tag and implanted microchip. Keep a current photo of your pet in case your pet gets lost. Be sure your pet has current vaccinations.

If you are staying at home, prepare an easily cleaned room (e.g. bathroom or laundry) for your pet, preferably with small or no windows. Keep a good supply of old newspapers for your pet's sanitary needs. Keep a leash handy at all times. Have one week's supply of food/water and medication for each pet.

If you will be evacuating your pet, consider safe relocation options (e.g. temporary animal shelter or

safe refuge with family or friends). Please note that public evacuation centres, often school buildings or community centres, are not set up to cater for pets. Don't leave animals in vehicles. If you need to evacuate your home without your pet, bring your pet inside to a prepared safe area, (e.g the laundry). Check with relevant authorities regarding missing animals.

Livestock

Develop a disaster plan. Include a list of resources, evacuation sites, emergency phone numbers and contacts of who can help with the animals and securing loose items around the farm. Identify food and water sources that do not rely on electricity, which could be lost during an emergency event.

Be aware that animals can get jittery before a storm and may be easily spooked. If possible, evacuate your livestock early to ensure their safety. Familiarise yourself with several evacuation routes to your destination. Avoid routes likely to be travelled heavily by people.

Animals may become displaced or lost when homes, sheds and fences are damaged or destroyed.

Take care when dealing with animals during and after a disaster event, as they may be disoriented, frightened or aggressive.



SAFETY TIPS

Generators

- Before storm season, inspect your generator's fuel and ignition systems to make sure it is in good working order and refill the tank with fresh fuel and test run the generator.
- Appliances can be plugged directly into the generator but always read the manufacturer's instructions carefully. Always follow the manufacturer's recommendations for earthing the generator.
- **Do not use generators indoors** or in enclosed places such as garages or carports. This can lead to a build-up of carbon monoxide, a colourless and odourless gas that can lead to poisoning which may result in incapacitation or death. If you have been using a generator and you begin to feel dizzy, or weak, you should turn the generator off and move to fresh air. If the symptoms persist, seek medical attention.
- Use a heavy duty extension cord rated for outdoor use and site your generator where it will cause the least noise and exhaust concerns to others.
- Generators often vibrate when in use so make sure that the generator is placed on even ground and anchored if required to stop the generator travelling. The generator should also not come into contact with water and be placed in a position where water will not pool.

Ergon Energy advises residents not to modify and plug generators directly in to power points in their home or into any part of the Ergon Energy network. Plugging a generator into a power point will send electricity through the switchboard and into the Ergon Energy powerlines - either on the ground or on poles. That poses a significant safety risk to Ergon staff working on the network or neighbours cleaning up around fallen powerlines.

Onsite Sewage Treatment Systems

Residents who have onsite sewage treatment plants are advised that the loss of electricity supply for more than 1-2 days may have an effect on the operation of the plant.

Loss of power can affect the biological system of the plant or the operation of the pump and filter.

Residents are advised to check with their local service agent or supplier if they have any concerns that their onsite sewerage treatment plant has been affected by a loss of power supply.

Food and Water Safety

To prevent a food-borne illness:

- Ensure all refrigerated food items are stored below 5°C. It is recommended you not consume or give away any food products that have exceeded this temperature.
- Ensure all hot foods served are thoroughly cooked.
- During a power shortage or blackout minimise the number of times the refrigerator and freezer doors are opened. If power is to be disconnected for some time, place refrigerated items in the freezer. If freezer blocks are available place them below food items to keep the temperature below 5°C.
- Do not refreeze thawed items. **If in doubt, throw it out!**
- Ensure food is protected from contamination and pests.
- Wash hands prior to handling food and equipment used to handle food.

To prevent water-borne illness:

As water supplies may become contaminated in a disaster event, residents are advised to store water in advance where possible (e.g. fill water containers prior to a cyclone).

When water quality has been compromised during or after a disaster event as a precaution residents are asked to bring water to a rolling boil for at least one minute and allow to cool. This water can then be used for drinking and when preparing food for consumption. Once the quality of water supplies have been assessed and declared safe to use Council will provide further advise on local radio.

Dealing with Stress following Disasters

Natural disasters like bushfires, floods, cyclones and drought can be extremely challenging. Non-natural disaster events can also be incredibly traumatic and sometimes we experience situations that remind us how life can change forever in an instant. All disaster events are extremely challenging for the people directly affected and can have a ripple effect throughout our communities.

It is important to remember that the feelings and emotions we experience after disaster events are completely normal reactions to abnormal events. The stress experienced following a disaster can lead to burnout and physical, mental and emotional exhaustion. Some people will be able to manage the stress but for others it may be difficult to cope.

In the first few days and weeks following a disaster, those involved may experience flashbacks or sights, smells and sounds that trigger emotional reactions. This is normal. People will deal with things differently but after some time, most emerge stronger and more resilient.

Most people eventually heal and recover and go on to rebuild their lives. Recovery takes time. It is important to allow yourself time to process your circumstances and regain a sense of normalcy. Take time out to look after yourselves - be selfish if necessary so you can build internal resilience to help others.

There are numerous options for support including friends, neighbours, GP's, Counsellors, Churches and others. Be kind to yourselves and reach out for support when needed.

More information can be found at the Red Cross web site: aftertheemergency.redcross.org.au/

Further information can also be obtained from Lifeline on Tel: **13 11 44** or on their website at: lifeline.org.au/get-help/topics/recovering-after-a-natural-disaster

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Keep this information close to your home phone and store important numbers and details in your mobile phone to use in the event of an emergency.

Tablelands Regional Council	1300 362 242
Fire, Police or Ambulance	000
SES	132 500
Ergon (faults)	132 296
Traffic & Travel Information	131 940
Queensland Health	13 HEALTH/13 432 584
Bureau of Meteorology.....	4035 9777
RACQ.....	1300 130 595
Lifeline	131 114
Australian Red Cross	1300 554 419
Dep of Community, Child Safety and Disability Services	137 468

My Doctor _____
My Vet _____
My Neighbour _____
My Insurance Company _____
My In Case of Emergency _____



www.facebook.com/TablelandsDCC



www.twitter.com/CouncilTRC

Useful websites

Emergency Management Dashboard
www.dashboard.trc.qld.gov.au

Tablelands Regional Council
www.trc.qld.gov.au/disaster-management

Bureau of Meteorology
www.bom.gov.au

Traffic & Travel Information
www.131940.qld.gov.au

In an event, tune into

ABC Far North	106.7FM, 95.5FM, 801AM, 720AM
4AM	558AM, 1422AM
HIT FM	97.9FM
4CA Cairns	846AM

