



If emergency is life threatening  
call **Triple Zero (000)**

■ **FLOOD STORM  
EMERGENCY 132 500**

■ For more information visit  
**[ses.vic.gov.au](http://ses.vic.gov.au)**



# Emergency Toolkit

A guide to staying safe





**This emergency toolkit provides you with steps to take before and during emergencies to protect you and your property.**

The Victoria State Emergency Service (SES) is a volunteer organisation dedicated to helping Victorian communities during storms, floods, earthquakes and other emergencies.

SES crews are trained to rescue people who are trapped or injured, carry out emergency repairs and aid other emergency service providers such as Police, Ambulance and Fire Brigade. Other emergency service providers work closely with SES during major emergencies.

Emergency assistance may not be immediately available. It is important you are prepared.

## Preparation



**Step 1**  
Prepare your  
emergency plan



**Step 2**  
Prepare an  
emergency kit



**Step 3**  
Prepare your home  
and business



**Step 4**  
Tune into  
warnings

Call 132 500 for SES emergency assistance

[ses.vic.gov.au](https://ses.vic.gov.au)

## Step 1

### Prepare your emergency plan

Involve all household members in developing your plan so that they all know what to do, who to contact and where to go. Good emergency planning includes:

- Researching hazards and emergency arrangements in your community.
- Thinking about what you will do before, during and after an emergency.
- Thinking about how you can reduce the impacts on your property for example, cleaning gutters and trimming branches.
- Discussing possible scenarios and responses with your household or co-workers.
- Teaching children how and when to dial Triple Zero (000).

## Step 2

### Prepare an emergency kit

A basic emergency kit includes:

- Battery operated radio and torch (with spare batteries).
- First aid kit.
- Gloves – sturdy leather or garden gloves and rubber gloves.
- Copy of home emergency plan and important documents.
- Non-perishable food and drinking water for up to three days.

If you evacuate or if a warning is issued, place the following items in your kit and have it ready to take with you:

- Mobile phone and charger.
- Prescriptions and medications.
- Pet needs – food, leash etc.
- Clothing and strong shoes.

## Step 3

### Prepare your home and business

#### Don't think it won't happen to you

- Always keep your gutters clean and your yard clear of objects that could be blown away.
- When warnings are issued, conduct final home preparations – disconnect electrical appliances, secure outdoor items including furniture and sandbag internal drains and toilets to prevent sewage backflow (floods only).

## Step 4

### Tune into warnings

**Tune in. Log on. Listen out. Act.**

- **Tune in** – Listen to your emergency broadcaster for weather and warning updates. Emergency broadcasters include ABC Local Radio, designated commercial and community radio stations and SKY NEWS television.
- **Log on** – see the websites in the useful contacts section of this handbook.
- **Listen out** – the Standard Emergency Warning Signal is a wailing siren sound used at the beginning of serious warnings on radio and television.
- **Act** – Act quickly on advice provided and activate your evacuation arrangements if required.

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## Tsunami warnings

Tsunami warnings are issued to advise the community that a tsunami threat does exist, and advise people what actions they should take. Tsunami warnings have two categories of threat:

- Marine Environment – the tsunami will mainly affect the marine environment for specific coastal areas.
- Land Inundation Threat – the tsunami may cause land flooding, dangerous waves and strong ocean currents for low-lying areas.

## Marine and immediate foreshore warnings

- If at the beach, swimming or close to the shore you need to get out of the water and move away from the water's edge.

- Boats in harbours, estuaries and in shallow coastal water should return to shore – secure your boat and move away from the waterfront.
- Vessels already at sea should stay offshore in deep water until further advised.

## Land inundation warnings

- Check that your neighbours and others around you know about the warning.
- Go to higher ground or inland, well away from beaches and rivers.
- Do not go to the coast to watch the tsunami, as there is the possibility of dangerous, localised land inundation of the immediate foreshore.
- If possible, walk to safety to avoid traffic jams.
- If you cannot leave the area, take shelter in upper stories of a sturdy building.
- Take only essential items that you can carry.

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There is no way to predict an earthquake, so it is very important to prepare and know what to do when one strikes. Having a stocked emergency kit is vital. During an earthquake:

## Drop, cover and hold on

- If indoors stay there, drop to the floor, keep clear of windows and overhead fittings, take shelter under a table or desk and do not use elevators or lifts.
- If outside, keep clear of trees, powerlines and buildings. If in a vehicle, park in a clear area. Listen to the radio for updates.
- Be aware that aftershocks may occur.

## After an earthquake in your area

- Listen to local radio and follow emergency advice.
- If safe, check damage to walls, chimneys and roof. If damage is found, turn off electricity, gas and water at mains and evacuate.
- Expect aftershocks.
- Avoid driving unless for an emergency.
- Don't go sightseeing.
- Avoid using the telephone. Only call Triple Zero (000) if it is a life-threatening emergency.

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## When a storm warning is broadcast

- Get your emergency kit ready.
- Check that neighbours know about the warning and are prepared.
- Bring children and pets indoors.
- Move outdoor furniture or toys to a secure place.
- Tie down loose items such as trampolines.

## During a storm

- Stay inside and keep away from windows.
- Listen to your emergency broadcaster for storm updates.
- If outdoors, find safe shelter – away from trees, powerlines or metal structures.
- Use a torch instead of candles if there is a blackout.

## Once the storm has passed

- Check on your neighbours if safe to do so.
- Do not go sightseeing as this will delay emergency response and cause accidents.

- For life-threatening emergencies, call Triple Zero (000) immediately.
- For emergency assistance during floods and storms call 132 500 for help from SES.

## Flash flooding

- Usually results from heavy rainfall falling over a short time during a severe storm.
- Occurs so fast that it is often difficult to provide a detailed warning, or any warning at all.

## During flash flooding

- If you decide to evacuate, do so well before flooding begins.
- If you do not leave early enough and become trapped by rising floodwater inside your home or business, stay inside your building and seek the highest part. Stay there and call Triple Zero (000) if your emergency is life-threatening.



## Warnings and Emergency Advice

Never rely on getting a warning – flash floods can happen very quickly with little time for warning so watch the weather and be prepared to act quickly.

### Types of flood warnings

- A **Flood Watch** is issued 24-36 hours before any likely flooding. People living, camping or working along rivers or streams should regularly check weather forecasts, rainfall totals and river levels and be ready to take action.
- A **Flood Warning** is issued when flooding is about to or is already happening. People in areas prone to flooding need to take action to stay safe and protect property. Flood warnings may be issued as minor, moderate, major or as a general warning.
- In major emergencies, the “Emergency Alert” telephone warning system (text message to mobile/recorded voice message to landline phones) may be used to alert high-risk communities.

## During a flood

- In life-threatening emergencies, call Triple Zero (000).
- Never drive, walk, swim or play in floodwater– you can’t always see what is under the water, how deep it is or how fast it is moving.
- Never allow your children to play in floodwater.
- Raise electrical and valuable items onto benches and tables.
- Block toilets and drains to prevent sewage backflow.
- Stay away from waterways including drains and culverts.
- Stay away from fallen powerlines.
- Keep listening to emergency broadcasters for updated warnings information and advice.
- Keep in contact with neighbours.

## When you leave – What to take – Where to go

- Turn off the electricity, gas and water at the mains.
- Take your emergency kit.
- Take your pets.
- Take any special needs with you such as medications.
- Let other people know where you are going.
- Lock doors and windows.
- Move to the home of friends/family or to a Relief Centre if advised by authorities. If staying with friends/family report to a Relief Centre so that you can be tracked.



## Evacuation

During a flood, Police, SES and other emergency services may advise you to evacuate. There are two types of evacuation notices that may be issued during a flood:

- **Prepare to evacuate** – means you should act quickly as there is a threat to lives and property. Prepare to leave your property.
- **Evacuate immediately** – you must leave immediately as there is a risk to lives.

**Never**  
Drive, Ride or Walk  
Through Floodwater

# Emergency and useful contacts

<b>Life-threatening emergency</b> Police/Fire/Ambulance	<b>Triple Zero (000)</b>
<b>SES flood, storm, tsunami, earthquake emergency assistance</b>	<b>132 500</b>
<b>Victoria SES Information Line</b> (only operates during large-scale emergencies)	<b>1300 VIC SES</b> <b>1300 842 737</b>
<b>National Relay Service NRS:</b> dial <b>1300 555 727</b> or <b>133 677</b> then ask for <b>132 500</b> or Triple Zero (000) or <a href="http://iprelay.com.au/call/index.aspx">iprelay.com.au/call/index.aspx</a> and enter <b>132 500</b> or Triple Zero (000)	
<b>Australian Tsunami Warning Centre</b> current warnings	<b>1300 878 6264</b> <b>bom.gov.au</b>
<b>Bureau of Meteorology</b> weather forecasts, warnings, storm radar etc.	<b>1300 659 217</b> <b>bom.gov.au</b>
<b>Department of Health</b> recovery and safety advice	<b>health.vic.gov.au</b>

<b>Department of Human Services</b> DHS relief, recovery and health advice	<b>dhs.vic.gov.au</b>
<b>Department of Environment and Primary Industries</b> Catchment information	<b>depi.vic.gov.au</b>
<b>Geoscience Australia</b> Natural hazard facts and information	<b>ga.gov.au/hazards</b>
<b>VicRoads Traffic Hazard</b> Reporting and advisory service	<b>13 11 70</b> <b>vicroads.vic.gov.au</b>

## Other important numbers

<b>Local Council</b>	
<b>Water</b>	
<b>Electricity</b>	
<b>Gas</b>	
<b>Vet</b>	

