

FACT SHEET

Cyclone

What is a cyclone?

A cyclone is a violent storm characterised by high winds rotating about a calm centre of low atmospheric pressure that can produce winds in excess of 200 km/h which can cause extensive damage and result in death or injury caused by flooding, buildings collapsing or flying debris.

Cyclone warnings

The Bureau of Meteorology issues a cyclone warning when a cyclone is expected to hit within 24 hours. Warnings identify communities likely to be hit, the name of the cyclone, its position, intensity, severity and movement. Communities under threat will be advised to take certain steps.

Category 1 - wind gusts less than 125 km/hr

Category 2 - wind gusts 125 to 169 km/hr

Category 3 - wind gusts 170 to 224 km/h

Category 4 - wind gusts 225 to 279 km/hr

Category 5 - wind gusts more than 280 km/hr

What you can do to prepare for cyclone season

- Know your community cyclone plan and how the cyclone warning system works;
- In case of a storm surge warning, identify your nearest safe, high area in advance;
- Check that your house, particularly roof, is in good condition;
- Trim tree branches clear of house and clear property of debris and equipment; and
- Create an emergency kit (*emergency phone numbers, portable radio, torch, spare batteries, first aid kit, strong plastic bags for medicine, tinned food, clothing, valuables and plastic sheets, timber strips, hammers and nails for temporary repairs*).

What you can do when a cyclone approaches

- Listen to a local station on your portable radio for cyclone advice and warnings;
- Board windows, store loose items inside, lock up pets, and fuel car and place under cover;
- Check your emergency kit and put spare clothing and shoes in plastic bags;
- Switch off electricity and gas at supply points; and
- If advised to evacuate, lock your house, take your emergency kit and follow instructions from emergency personnel.

What you can do when a cyclone strikes

- Stay inside and shelter in strongest part of the house (e.g. bathroom or cellar);
- Protect yourself with a mattress or blanket, and get under a strong table or bench; and
- Beware the calm 'eye'. Remain indoors until advised that the cyclone has passed.

What you can do after a cyclone has hit

- Don't go outside until advised officially that the cyclone has passed;
- Listen to your radio for further information and advice;
- If you had to evacuate, don't go home until advised. Use recommended routes; and
- Beware of fallen powerlines, damaged buildings, trees and flooded watercourses.

For further information please contact your local council or go to the following websites:

www.disaster.qld.gov.au; www.emergency.qld.gov.au/ses; www.ema.gov.au; www.bom.gov.au

Need help from your local SES during a flood or storm emergency? Phone 132 500