



PREPARING FOR FLOOD AND RECOVERY 2024 GUIDE

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Acknowledgement of Country

Golden Plains Shire spans the Traditional lands of the Wadawurrung and Eastern Maar Peoples. Council acknowledges them as the Traditional Owners and Custodians and pays its respects to both Wadawurrung and Eastern Maar Elders past, present and emerging. Council extends that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People who are part of Golden Plains Shire.

Disclaimer

The purpose of this document is to provide a quick reference guide of information to assist the Golden Plains Shire Community with emergency planning for flood and disasters.

Golden Plains Shire acknowledges the following organisations for their assistance in providing content for this booklet: VICSES, CFA, City of Greater Geelong, Australian Red Cross, ABC, RSPCA, Agriculture Victoria, Emergency Recovery Victoria, Victorian Government, Emergency Management Victoria and the State Emergency Management Plan (SEMP).

Published May 2024

Important Contacts

Phone numbers

Police/Fire/Ambulance
000

VICSES
132 500

VicEmergency Hotline
1800 226 226

Lifeline
13 11 14

Kids Helpline
1800 551 800

NURSE-ON-CALL
1300 606 024

Golden Plains Shire Council
5220 7111

Translating and Interpreting Service
131 450

National Relay Service
1300 555 727

Radio

ABC Radio
774AM

Apps

VicEmergency App
Free download for Apple and Android

Emergency + App
Free download for Apple and Android

Get Prepared App (Red Cross)
Free download for Apple and Android

Download the
VicEmergency app



Websites

VicEmergency
emergency.vic.gov.au



Vic Roads Traffic
traffic.vicroads.vic.gov.au



Bureau of Meteorology
bom.gov.au



VICSES
ses.vic.gov.au



Roles in an Emergency Event

Council

In an emergency event, Golden Plains Shire Council will support the community through:

- Serving as a conduit for key information on the event from emergency service providers. For example; SES, fire, police, ambulance and VicEmergency.
- Regular posts on Council's website, social media and local communication channels with important information about the emergency event.
- Activating Emergency Relief Centres to provide immediate and basic services to people affected by an emergency.
- Partial/full local road closures, information and determination of alternative routes communicated through Council's website, social media and other communication channels.
- Post the emergency event, Council will undertake the assessment, restoration, clean-up and rehabilitation of roads, bridges and tunnels, and culverts that are Council owned and managed.
- A supply of sand may be provided in a predicted flooding event where possible.

Emergency Services

Police/Fire/Ambulance – If anyone's life is in danger, call 000.

VICSES provides emergency assistance to minimise the impact of emergencies. VICSES is the control agency for flood, storm, landslide, tsunami and earthquake emergency.

Contact VICSES on 132 500 if you are seeking emergency help in a flood or storm because:

- A tree has fallen (tree down) and caused structural damage to your home or vehicle.
- There is damage to your roof or it is leaking significantly.
- A tree or large branch has fallen and is preventing you from entering or leaving your home.
- Your property is flooded or about to flood.

Australian Red Cross assists communities before, during, and after emergencies. Through preparedness, community resilience services and programs including Psychosocial Support Services to affected people and communities.

Country Fire Authority (CFA) operates to reduce the occurrence and impacts of fire and other emergencies.



Types of Flooding

Riverine flooding

In riverine flooding high water levels overflow above the banks of a river, creek or stream.

Rivers have a maximum capacity to carry water. If this capacity is exceeded, the river will eventually rise higher than its banks and flow out into areas next to the river.

Golden Plains Shire Council has several rivers and creeks that may flood during times of heavy rain.

Check your local VICSES flood guide for more information on flooding in your area.

To find out what type of flooding affects you visit the VICSES Local Flood Guides at www.ses.vic.gov.au/plan-and-stay-safe/flood-guides

Flash flooding

Flash flooding is caused by heavy rain over a short period of time and is generally defined as developing in six hours or less from rainfall to the onset of flooding.

Flash flooding can sometimes cause storm water drains to overload leaving the water with nowhere to go.

Water associated with flash flooding can rise and move quickly along roadways and parklands.

Flood Warnings

When an emergency is likely to impact you, warnings will be issued. The warnings will provide you with information about what is happening and advice on what you should do. The warning level is based on severity, conditions and the likelihood that the emergency could impact on the community. A **Flood Warning** means flooding is about to happen or is already happening.

Warning levels:



Advice (Yellow):

An incident has started. There is no immediate danger. Stay up to date in case the situation changes.



Watch and Act (Orange):

There is a heightened level of threat. Conditions are changing and you need to start taking action now to protect you and your family



Emergency Warning (Red):

An Emergency Warning is the highest level of warning. You may be in danger and need to take action immediately. Any delay now puts your life at risk.

Additional messages that may be issued

Prepare to Evacuate/ Evacuate Now

- An evacuation is recommended or procedures are in place to evacuate.



Community Information

- A newsletter containing updates for communities affected by an emergency.
- Can also be used as notification that an incident has occurred but there is no threat to community.



Remember that you may not receive any official warning. If you think you are at risk, do not wait for an official warning to act.

To learn more about what to do in an emergency situation visit www.ses.vic.gov.au/plan-and-stay-safe/what-to-do-in-an-emergency

Preparing for Floods

Taking the time to learn about the kinds of emergencies likely to occur in your area, and making a plan to respond, will help you when the time comes to act.

Emergencies can happen at any time, preparing your property is one of the actions you can take to minimise the impacts on you during an emergency.

Actions:

- Complete and be familiar with your emergency plan.
- Prepare an emergency kit.
- Trim back overhanging tree branches around your home.
- Clear gutters of all leaf litter and other debris.
- Ensure your property is clearly numbered.
- Know where your utilities are and how to turn them off.
- Keep your property in good repair, replace broken gutters, downpipes, roof tiles and windows.
- Ensure you have the appropriate insurance.

Never drive through flood water

Driving on flooded roads is dangerous, and it doesn't take much for your car to become unstable, lose traction or wash away.

Water across roads can hide hazards and dangerous debris such as rocks and branches, and road surfaces that have been washed away. You can easily get caught and trapped.

Stay safe by never driving through floodwater.

Find alternative travel routes if roads or underpasses are flooded.

Be aware of driving hazards, such as mud, debris, damaged roads and fallen and damaged trees.

If driving conditions are dangerous, safely pull over on higher ground, away from trees.

Did you know...

- A **small car** can be moved by water only 15cm deep.
- A **mid-sized car** can be moved by water only 30cm deep.
- A **four-wheel drive** can be moved by water 45cm deep.





Preparation for an Emergency Flooding event

Prior to a flooding event there are several things you can do to prepare home:

- Disconnect water tanks to avoid contamination.
- Remove fallen branches and debris from around your property.
- Tie down loose outdoor items.
- Bring inside any smaller loose items.
- Turn off gas, water and electricity.
- Refer to your septic tank manual for actions.
- Sandbag your home. You may need to purchase sand and sandbags from your local hardware store.
- Block any toilets and drains inside your home.
- Lift valuables and furniture off the floor.



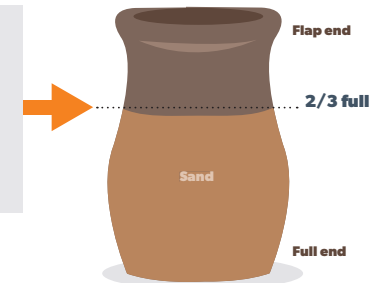
Sandbagging

Protecting your home

Sandbags won't stop the water completely, but can reduce the amount of water entering your home.

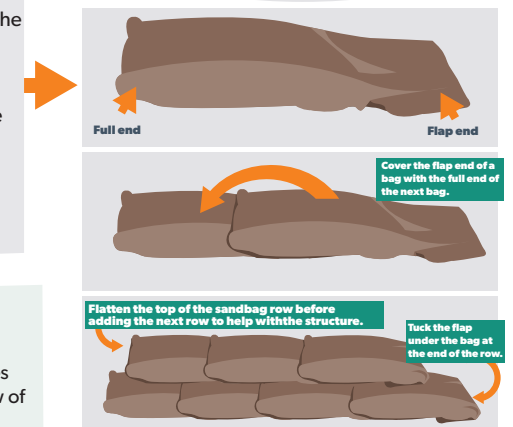
How do I fill a sandbag?

- Only use sand to fill hessian bags. Do not use dirt.
- Only fill sandbag two-thirds full.
- Do not over fill the sandbag as it will be too heavy to carry.
- Do not tie the top of the sandbag.
- Take care when filling and lifting the sandbag, to avoid injury.



How do I lay sandbags?

- Lay sandbags like brickwork. Stagger rows so that the joins do not line up.
- Start at one end and work to the other end.
- Ensure the unfilled part of the bag is covered by the next bag.
- Tuck flap under the bag at the end of the row.
- If the sandbag wall is going to be more than five (5) bags high, you will need to lay two (2) rows wide.



Where do I place the sandbags?

- Place sandbags in plastic bags to cover drainage holes in home (e.g. showers, toilets, sinks) to stop back flow of water.
- Place a small wall across doorways, at least the height of the expected water level. Be careful not to trap yourself inside.
- If available, plastic sheeting may be used under sandbags to reduce the seepage.



What do I do once I have finished with the sandbags?

- Sturdy gloves should be worn when handling wet sandbags as they can contain chemicals, waste and diseases.
- Sandbags that have been in contact with floodwater need to be thrown away.
- Contact your local council to find out how to dispose of your sandbags safely.



Council's Emergency Plan Document

Golden Plains Shire Council has developed a Family and Household Emergency Plan available on Council's website. Alternatively, please contact Council for a copy of the plan.



www.goldenplains.vic.gov.au/community/fire-flood-and-emergencies/emergency-management

Emergency Plan

Complete an emergency plan for you and your family. Familiarise yourself with your plan and prepare an Emergency Kit in the event that you need to leave your home.

The kit should include important items and documents that you and your family will need in an emergency.

- Battery operated torch
- Battery operated radio
- Extra batteries
- First aid kit
- Drinking water
- Non-perishable food
- Medical supplies
- Toiletries
- Chargers for electronics
- Protective clothing and woollen blankets
- Pet food and your pet's medical supplies
- Personal belongings (e.g passport, drivers licence)
- Money
- Family mementos
- Entertainment
- Copy of your emergency plan

Planning for Pets

Include your pets and livestock in your emergency plan.

Preparing pets for an emergency

Ensure your pets can be clearly identified with a collar tag and microchip. Make sure your contact details are correct with both your local Council and your microchip registry.

Items to include when evacuating with pets:

- Prepare adequate transport including collar, lead, carrier, harness and trailer.
- Water and bowl
- Food (non-refrigerated)
- Medication
- Bedding
- Waste disposal (litter and waste bags)
- Check that the evacuation location caters for your pets.



Planning for Livestock

Preparing livestock for an emergency event

- Move livestock to a safe area, away from potential flooding.
- Provide food and water.
- Provide shelter where possible.

Ensure all animals are properly registered and tagged.

Horses and large animals

- Large pets like horses will need to be evacuated well before the emergency situation occurs.
- Horses can be housed for a short time on an oval or in a paddock as long as there is adequate fencing, water and food and any pasture is fit for horse consumption.

If you cannot evacuate, you're unable to make it home or are forced to leave your pets behind, there are a few things you can do:

- Leave your pets untethered and provide food and water in multiple places.
- Leave information about your pet on the front door or mailbox, so that emergency services know what animals they will encounter, how many and where.
- Make sure that they can escape if needed. Don't tie them up.
- Ensure that multiple shelter sources are available.

Choose a trusted neighbour, family member or friend and give them a key to your house in case they need to access your pets. Make sure this person is comfortable and familiar with your pets.



Recovery after a Flood

After a flood, ensure that you and your family, friends and neighbours are safe, and seek help if you need it. Call 132 500 for emergency assistance from VICSES in the event of flooding.

Once you arrive home

- Check your home and property for damage.
- Stay safe by avoiding dangerous hazards, such as floodwater, mud, debris, damaged roads and fallen or damaged trees.
- Stay away from fallen powerlines – always assume they are live.
- Ensure your pets or stock are safe and out of danger. Assess their condition and seek veterinary advice if needed.
- Take photos and document damage.
- Wear strong boots, gloves and protective clothing while cleaning up.
- Remember that electricity, gas and water supplies may be disrupted. If your property has been damaged, have all utilities checked and tested by a licenced technician before you use them.
- Call your insurance company to organise any insurance matters.
- Ensure areas contaminated by sewage are disinfected professionally.

For more Information

Red Cross

Recovery after an emergency
www.redcross.org.au/emergencies/coping-after-a-crisis/cleaning-up-wind-water



Better Health Channel

After a flood – returning home safely
www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/After-a-flood-returning-home-safely



Wellbeing and Mental Health Support

The aftermath of a natural hazard can be devastating. It's normal to have a range of feelings after a crisis. Remember these feelings – even the most intense ones – will usually only last for limited periods.

Some common feelings you may experience include:

- Shock and disbelief
- Numbness
- Fear
- Helplessness
- Shame
- Disappointment
- Hope
- Anger
- Frustration

These feelings are common and expected. Allowing yourself to express them will help with healing. Sometimes people block feelings fearing they are too painful, often by being busy. Constantly pushing feelings and memories out of your head may lead to loss of memory or concentration and fuzziness of the mind.

You may not be able to express or deal with your feelings immediately – you may take months or even years to fully experience them. The earlier you are able to deal with your feelings, the sooner healing can begin.

Support Services

There are a number of services that may be helpful to yourself, family, neighbour or friend:

- **Lifeline** – 13 11 14
- **Kids Helpline** – 1800 551 800
- **NURSE-ON-CALL** – 1300 606 024
- **Beyond Blue** – 1300 22 4636
- **1800RESPECT** – 1800 737 732

If you or a loved one needs extra support, speak with your local doctor, a mental health professional, counsellor or psychologist. It can also be helpful to talk to someone who is independent but still understanding.

Getting to know your Neighbours

Getting to know your neighbours is an important part of planning for an emergency as you or your neighbours may need extra assistance in an emergency. Your neighbours can include those in your street or community.

Being able to support each other before, during and after an emergency can assist you and other people to cope better with future emergencies.

Notes



GOLDEN PLAINS SHIRE

2 Pope Street, Bannockburn, VIC 3331 1
19 Heales Street, Smythesdale, VIC 335
PO Box 111, Bannockburn, VIC 3331

☎ 5220 7111
@ enquiries@gplains.vic.gov.au
🌐 goldenplains.vic.gov.au

CUSTOMER HUB HOURS

Golden Plains Civic Centre
8.30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday

The Well, Smythesdale
8.30am to 5pm, Monday to Friday

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