



DISASTERS DO HAPPEN – ARE YOU PREPARED?

Far North Queensland enjoys a tropical climate, with two distinct seasons: the dry season from May to October with mild temperatures; and the wet season from November to April with warmer temperatures. During the wet season, cyclones and flooding pose a threat to our region; Cyclone Larry in March 2006 directly hit the Cassowary Coast area causing extensive damage. Every one of us has a responsibility to themselves and their families to be prepared. Emergency services and those with a role in disaster management do the best they can to assist during and following disaster events, however, residents and visitors also need to take charge of their own safety by heeding the warnings and taking the necessary precautions; remember help may not reach you for a number of days.

CYCLONE PREPAREDNESS

Don't leave things to the last minute.

- Check your house and roof are in good condition.
- Trim tree branches well clear of your house.
- Clear your property of loose material that could cause injury and damage during extreme winds.
- In case of storm tide warning – know your nearest safe high ground and the best access route.
- Prepare an emergency kit and evacuation kit (hold ready in home)

UPON CYCLONE WARNING

- Listen to local radio/TV for further information
- Batten down house; secure doors, board, tape or paper paste windows (flour or starch glue works)
- Turn off gas and water
- Have enough money to last you a couple of days; ATMs do not operate during power outages.
- Store loose items inside, place documents, photos, valuables and clothing in plastic bags.
- Lock up pets.
- Fill water containers; store enough non perishable food for at least 3 days.
- Prepare an evacuation kit (in small bags), include your emergency kit.
- Ensure your vehicle is full of fuel in case an evacuation is necessary and secure vehicle undercover.

DURING THE CYCLONE

- Keep calm, **STAY INSIDE** – heed warnings & advice.
- Shelter in the strongest part of the house – perhaps bathroom, internal toilet or passageway.
- If the house starts to break up, protect yourself with a mattress, rugs or blankets. If possible anchor yourself to strong fixtures such as water pipes or get under a strong table or bed.
- Beware the calm 'eye': Don't assume the cyclone is over – violent winds will soon resume from the opposite direction

AFTER THE CYCLONE

- Listen to your radio for any further warnings such as flooding.
- Do not make unnecessary demands on emergency services
- Do not turn on power or gas if damaged until checked by authorities
- Do not touch wet switches
- Do not drink any water that may be contaminated
- Do not go sightseeing – you will only hinder emergency services trying to do their jobs.
- If you need to use the telephone, make the call brief.
- If it is safe to do so check on your

neighbours; they may need assistance.

EMERGENCY SITUATION

If you have a medical or life threatening situation phone 000. Other serious problems such as losing a roof phone SES on 132 500 or the Disaster Coordination Centre on 1300 188 505

FLOODS

Talk to neighbours and long term locals to see if your property has a history of flooding. Visit Council's Flood Awareness website to see if you are within the study area:

<http://maps.cassowarycoast.qld.gov.au>

The website presents Council's flood modelling data showing the height above mean sea level and extents of flooding for the Johnstone & Tully Rivers. Using the information supplied on the website and from Council is the first step you can take to preparing for a flood in your area.

If you do live in a flood prone area there are a number of simple things you can do to minimise the impact a flood could have on you and your property.

- Listen to your local radio station for warnings and advice.
- If possible move vehicles, garbage, outdoor equipment, poisons or chemicals to higher locations.
- Consider which indoor items you can raise (e.g. furniture, clothing, electrical goods etc.) or empty refrigerators and freezers if water threatens to enter your home.
- Consider what you will do with your pets.
- If it's safe to do so turn off gas, electricity and water supplies
- Be prepared to evacuate your home

EVACUATION

Evacuation centres are NOT cyclone shelters. Unless you have been advised to evacuate, **ALWAYS STAY INSIDE** and listen to your local radio station for further warnings or advice. Information regarding declared evacuation will be broadcasted.

Be prepared; consider the possibility of evacuation by Police or Emergency Services. If you don't have transport make prior arrangements with a neighbour. If you are asked to evacuate only use the recommended route. Proceed with extreme caution and stay calm. Wear strong clothing and footwear. Turn off the electricity, gas and water services and lock up your dwelling. Remember evacuation centres will not allow animals, alcohol or weapons. Temporary evacuation centres will only be activated as needed. Do not forget your emergency and evacuation kit

EMERGENCY KIT

Your emergency kit should contain the following items

- Battery operated radio and spare batteries
- Tinned food for at least 3 days
- Water in containers for at least 3 days

- Torches or candles, waterproof matches
- Spare clothing for at least 3 days, wrapped in plastic...even a blanket and pillow.
- Essential medications
- Self contained cooking gear e.g. Portable gas camping stove
- First aid kit

EVACUATION KIT

Your evacuation kit should contain the following items

- Emergency kit
- Strong footwear (not thongs) to protect against cut feet
- Important items wrapped in plastic e.g. marriage certificate, passport, insurance papers, photos, valuables, back up of your computer files etc
- Any medical equipment you may need e.g. oxygen bottle

REMEMBER YOUR PETS

Plan ahead for your pets; evacuation Centres cannot accept pets due to Council's health and safety regulations. The best option is to get a friend or relative outside the evacuation area to take your pets, and preferably you, too. If you stay at home;

- Prepare an easily cleaned room such as the bathroom or laundry for your pets.
- Keep a good supply of newspapers; for your pet's sanitary needs.
- For each pet, have two weeks supply of medication, food and water.
- Keep a leash handy at all times.
- Keep with you a current photograph of your pet, in case your pet is lost.

After the event:

- Take care when releasing animals, their environment may have been severely damaged and the animals may be very disoriented, frightened or aggressive.

For further information on disaster preparedness contact your local SES, Cassowary Coast Regional Council or visit: www.emergency.qld.gov.au

Life Threatening Emergency.....000

State Emergency Services

Flood & Storm Assistance.....132 500

Main Road Closures.....13 19 40

Down Power Lines.....13 16 70

Power Failure.....13 22 96

Other requests for assistance such as water, waste water, council roads, drains, environmental health or trees down on council roads, buildings or land etc

Council Disaster

Coordination Centre.....1300 188 505