ZONTA INTERNATIONAL AUSTRALIA

ZONTA SAYS NOW TO GENDER-EQUAL CLIMATE ACTION



Guide to Disaster Management

Developed in collaboration with the Australasian Women in Emergencies Network

This document is designed to be read onscreen





You may need to leave your home quickly for many reasons. The trigger could be a bushfire, storm, flood, earthquake, home fire, violence, or a vehicle crashing into your home. No matter the cause, the result is the same. You need to get out fast – but how prepared are you, your household and community?

One in three Australians will experience a disaster in their lifetime. Many emergency services agencies and not-for-profit organisations like the Australian Red Cross have a range of resources to help you before, during and after a disaster.

1 Before a disaster

- Make sure you can receive emergency warnings and information using your local emergency apps. Understand what your local risks are.
- Create your own preparedness plan, like the Red Cross Rediplan. Use the interactive template to list your emergency information including important numbers, medications, insurance details, neighbours and where you will go in an emergency. Print this out and store it somewhere where everyone in your house can see it – and if your phone is flat or there is no power, you can access the information quickly.
- Download the Get Prepared app. This will keep your emergency plan close at hand.
- Think about what is important to you and build your survival kit. What will you put in your 'go bag'? If you live in a high-risk fire zone, you may consider storing valuables off-site for the bushfire season.
- Think about what you will do with your pets and other animals.

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- Get to know your neighbours. Neighbours may be the first people you call upon for help. Use the Connecting to the Social Grid cards (on page 35) to introduce yourself.
- Get Psychological First Aid or emergency volunteer training so you can help yourself and others work through the disaster process.

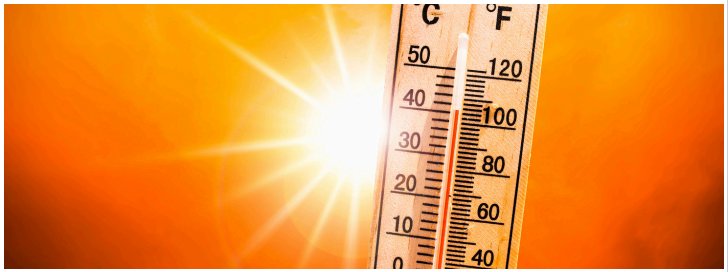
2 During a disaster

- Keep up to date with information broadcast from authorised agencies and follow instructions about evacuation and returning home.
- Connect with your support networks and community.
- Let others know you are safe. Use your mobile phone to send out a message on Facebook or email. Be aware of the Register.Find.Reunite program managed through the Australian Red Cross that lets family, friends and emergency services know that you are safe.

3 After a disaster

- Be guided by the Recovery Basics. This focuses on your mental health and how you can help others.
- Clean up. The Cleaning up after an emergency booklet has many tips to clean up, dry out and repair your home after wind or water damage.
- Provide help. Too often donations of clothes or goods end up in landfill so the best way to help is by donating money. Information about donations is made available during disasters.







3 How prepared is Australia for a disaster?

Australia takes a shared responsibility approach to disaster management. Emergency, government, and not-for-profit agencies are involved in disaster management in Australia at the local, state, and national levels. They all play an important role, alongside communities and households.

Internationally, Australia adopted the United Nations Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction in 2015. This outlines targets and priorities to prevent new and reduce existing disaster risks and informs the Australian National Strategy for Disaster Resilience and the National Disaster Risk Reduction Framework.

Australia's latest Sendai progress report showed that the increased frequency and duration of extreme weather events means there is no longer an 'off-season' for disasters. Governments at all levels are working to better harmonise their actions and share resources to meet the increasing challenges ahead.

Government preparedness

At the Federal level, the National Emergency Management Agency – oversees disaster coordination and funding. It administers the

- Disaster Ready Fund to help communities build disaster resilience and reduce their risks before disasters occur;
- AusAlert national emergency warning messaging system sending voice messages to landlines and cell broadcasts to mobile phones;
- National Emergency Management Stockpile to roll out critical goods and services quickly where support is needed.

Disaster Recovery Payments may be payable in declared natural disasters. The Department of Home Affairs records declared natural disasters through its Disaster Assist webpage, which maps affected local government areas.

State/Territory governments implement emergency management plans through coordinated programs for disaster prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery. Most emergency management agencies have useful resources and maps of local warnings and incidents. Some also offer apps where you can sign up for emergency alerts and notifications.

NEMA provides links to all State and Territory agencies that can help you to prepare, respond and recover from an emergency.

Every State and Territory also has an urban and rural fire service and a State Emergency Service.

- In a flood or storm, SES-trained volunteers can provide non-life-threatening emergency relief. Most often, this includes temporarily fixing damaged walls, windows, or roofs; removing fallen trees blocking access; and halting rising floodwaters.
- Call 132 500 to access the local SES from anywhere in Australia.
- For life-threatening emergencies, call 000.

Local Governments have emergency management plans that identify hazards, assess risks, and include arrangements to protect their communities.

- Check with your local government to see what arrangements are in place to evacuate the community safely and where the nearest evacuation centres would be for people and animals.

4 Other Information

- Gender and Disaster Australia has guidelines, videos and other resources to promote the prevention and control of violence, abuse and discrimination against women, children and LGBTIQA+ people and men's self-harm and suicide, before, during, and after emergency and disaster situations.
- The Australian Institute for Disaster Resilience has an impressive Knowledge Hub and provides networking, professional development, and volunteer leadership training to strengthen disaster resilience. It also has an annual photography award.
- The Bureau of Meteorology provides weather warning notifications, enables you to track storms on its radar maps, and has information about long-range weather and climate impacts.
- Emergency Plus uses a smartphone's GPS functionality to help a triple zero (000) caller provide the critical location details needed to mobilise emergency services. The app includes a What3Words address to make it easier to describe your location.
- The myID app can confirm your identity by validating key documents such as your driver's licence, passport, birth certificate and Australian citizenship. It enables you to securely prove who you are when accessing government online services. Useful to set up before an emergency.

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