

This Toolbox Talk is to assist you in leading a discussion around preparation for heatwaves and the upcoming storm season at your site and provide information employees can use at home for the safety of their family.

This toolbox talk is to be delivered by all managers of sites.

### Be prepared for the unexpected



Prolonged hot weather can affect anybody. It may make existing medical conditions worse and can cause heat-related illness. In some cases, heat effects may be fatal. It may also change community infrastructures such as power supply and other support services. So, it is essential to know how to stay healthy in hot weather.

Severe storms with heavy rain, multiple lightning strikes, large hail and high winds can strike at any time over the summer months, causing major flooding or damage to property, as well as serious injury and even loss of life. If you're in an area that is highly susceptible to floods or storms, the

#### **'Preparation for the storm season' Safety**

**Bulletin** provides an overview of items to help you in your preparations.



The official cyclone season runs from the beginning of November to the end of April. **It is important to be prepared for a cyclone prior to the commencement of the season.** The **'Cyclone season - be prepared' Safety Bulletin** provides an overview of items to be completed before the cyclone season commences.

Bushfires are generally most severe during Summer and Autumn (December - March). Storms generally produce high winds that can fan a bushfire causing the fire to jump containment lines. This year, due to conditions being drier than normal with hot and windy days, the potential for bushfire is greater right now. Therefore, sites that have a higher propensity for impact by a bushfire, need to be prepared now!



## What do you need to do for a Heatwave?

1. Site and Service Managers should review and familiarise themselves with Section 44.0 of the **Emergency Response Manual (QD 4200)**;
2. If your site or service is susceptible to Heatwaves, ensure you have developed a **Heatwave Management Plan (QF 4200.05)** specific for your site.

## What do you need to do for Storms?

1. Site and Service Managers should review and familiarise themselves with Section 43.0 of the **Emergency Response Manual (QD 4200)**;
2. If you are susceptible, ensure you have developed a **Flood or Storm Damage Management Plan (QF 4200.04)** specific for your site;
3. Educate and re-assure new staff and residents on thunderstorms and what to expect. This is important if they are new to the area;
4. Ensure all emergency contact information is available and up to date;
5. Tidy up external work areas; remove excess waste/rubbish/unused items;
6. Store loose items/equipment inside or in a position that can be easily secured in the event of a storm warning when issued by the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM);
7. Inspect treetops and branches; organise trimming or clearing, if required;
8. Conduct a visual inspection of the building including walls, roof, eaves and fences. Ensure they are secure;
9. Check the roof guttering for leaves and debris; organise cleaning out, if necessary;
10. Prepare or review your emergency kit; refer to **Emergency Kit Checklist (QF 4200.29)**;
11. In case of a storm surge/tide warning, or other flooding, know if your site/service or travel path is "at risk" and may require evacuation – consult with your local council or local State Emergency Services. Download your site-specific flood plans from the local council website.

## What do you need to do for Cyclones?

1. Site and Service Managers should review and familiarise themselves with Section 42.0 of the **Emergency Response Manual (QD 4200)**;
2. Educate and re-assure new staff and residents on what a cyclone is and what to expect. This is important if they are new to the area;
3. Ensure all emergency contact information is available and up to date (NOTE: With the introduction of the NBN, consider your communication options during a power outage);
4. Tidy up external work areas – remove excess waste/rubbish/unused items;

5. Store loose items/equipment inside or in a position that can be easily secured in the event of a cyclone alert;
6. Inspect treetops and branches – organise for them to be trimmed or cleared of the site/service if required;
7. Conduct a visual inspection of the building including walls, roof, eaves and fences. Ensure they are secure;
8. Check the roof guttering for leaves and debris, arrange for clean out if necessary;
9. If you have any queries or need assistance with the management of your building, contact your Regional Asset Manager;
10. Prepare an emergency kit (where required) – refer to [\*\*Emergency Kit Checklist \(QF 4200.29\)\*\*](#);
11. In case of a storm surge/tide warning, or other flooding, know if your site/service is “at risk” and may require evacuation – consult with your local council or local State Emergency Services. Download your site specific flood plans from the local council website;
12. Ensure you have completed the [\*\*Cyclone Preparedness Checklist \(Appendix 1 – Cyclone Management Plan QF 4200.03\)\*\*](#);
13. Ensure you have a copy of the [\*\*Emergency Response Manual \(QD 4200\)\*\*](#) and [\*\*Cyclone Action Plan \(Appendix 2 – Cyclone Management Plan QF 4200.03\)\*\*](#) printed out for quick access and reference in the event of a cyclone emergency.

## What do you need to do for Bushfires?

1. Review your [\*\*Bushfire Safety Management Plan \(QF 4200.02\)\*\*](#), and ensure it is up to date and your teams are aware of how to prepare and respond if required.
2. On days of Catastrophic or Extreme fire risk, the Evacuation Coordinator / Chief Warden must initiate ‘Leave Early’ procedures.

## Food for thought!

As summer approaches, with the days getting longer and with the drought continuing, snakes will be on the move looking for water.

Common places snakes will find water around the home are pet water bowls, pot plant saucers, swimming pools, etc.

- Snake bites occur when people try to catch or kill snakes so DO NOT attempt to do either of these.
- If you see a snake inside your home or workplace, observe it from a safe distance, and call the professionals.



## Need more information?

The following websites provides information about storms, warning services, cyclones and preparation advice:

- <https://getready.qld.gov.au/natural-disasters/storms/>
- <http://www.bom.gov.au/cyclone/>

### Bushfires

- New South Wales - <http://www.rfs.nsw.gov.au/>
- Queensland - <https://www.ruralfire.qld.gov.au/>
- Victoria - <http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/>

### Snakes

24 hour Snake Catchers Directory is listed at

<http://www.snakecatchers.com/snakeremoval/queensland> or more information may be obtained from here <http://www.snakecatchers.com/index.html>

## Questions?

Contact your WHS Business Partner for further advice.

