



**Edition 157**

**Date 02/03/2022**

## Staying Safe After Storms and Floods



Following storms and floods sickness and injury can still occur. Avoid walking/driving in floodwater. It is likely to be contaminated and hiding dangerous debris. Underground or downed power lines can also electrically charge the water.

When flood waters disappear, other hazards appear - damage to roads, bridges, fallen powerlines/trees, fences, mold etc. Water, mud, and debris can become contaminated if public services (power, sewerage & water supplies) break down, increasing the risk of disease during clean up.

### **Injuries & Illnesses can include:**

Slips, trips, falls, cuts and bruises, electrical burns/shock, diarrhoeal disease, respiratory infections and mosquito-borne diseases, bites, and stings from animals (snakes, spiders, escaped pets, displaced wildlife); sun burn and more

### **Endeavour Foundation Group sites/services**

Storm and Flood damage, repairs and cleaning at Endeavour Foundation Group sites/services is to be reported to and coordinated by AMU. Staff and local management can contact the CBC Helpdesk for urgent repairs on (07) 3900 5460, 24/07 and raise a MEX, report all hazards and incidents via Riskman. Your local WHSBP is also available to assist.

This safety bulletin provides information to assist our people (staff, supported employees and customer families) when storm or flood damage occurs at their homes (**not EFG sites**) or volunteer to help those affected by storm and floods.

### **CLEAN UP PREP**

- Keep children and pets away. Don't let children play in mud or floodwater.
- Check if the authorities have deemed the property unsafe and if so, do not enter
- Look for hazards – live wires, burst gas pipes, asbestos, or dangerous chemicals.
- Contact your local council to arrange collection of hazardous waste and 000 for emergencies e.g., chemical/gas contain bulging under pressure, leaking or in a precarious position
- Personal protective equipment e.g. rubber-soled enclosed shoes (good grip), study gloves, hats, sunscreen, insect repellent, protective clothing (long sleeve shirts and trousers), masks when cleaning mold and other contaminated debris
- Organise first aid, clean drinking water, hand hygiene station, access to toilets etc.
- Arrange communications (mobile phone) so can call for help, supplies, equipment, or order lunch
- Work in teams & look out for each other's safety
- Avoid climbing on objects/surfaces and use appropriate equipment
- Make sure there is adequate light – battery operated torches/lanterns
- Take photos to help with any insurance claims



## **GAS AND ELECTRICAL SAFETY**

- Make sure the site is safe before starting any clean-up work - electricity and gas turned off.
- Electrician &/or gas technician inspections may be required before electricity or gas are connected or used.
- Identify, report, and stay away from any fallen powerlines & trees, damaged streetlights etc.
- Stay away and don't touch damaged switchboards & solar power generating systems
- Solar systems will generate electricity when the sun is out. Always treat the system as live.
- Water-damaged electrical/gas appliances intended to re-use (AC, stove, washing machine) are checked by an electrician/technician. This may be required before the power/gas supply is reconnected.
- Power from generators can be dangerous too - connect the generator correctly, do not exceed the load rating and follow the manufacturer's instructions
- Run the generator outdoors and in a well-ventilated area.

## **BIOLOGICAL HAZARDS**

- Good hand and personal hygiene are critical. Wash hands well after contact with mud, flood water, contaminated items/equipment, and before eating and drinking.
- Clean and cover cuts and wounds. Avoid flood water and mud if you have broken skin/wounds.
- Where contact with flood water and mud is unavoidable wear enclosed footwear, gloves, and suitable clothing.
- Take precautions to avoid mosquito and insect bites – insect repellent, fly screen doors and windows are keep closed particularly if you are living near recently flooded areas.
- There is increased risk of wound infection, diarrhoea, conjunctivitis, ear/nose/throat infections from polluted waters. Diseases like Leptospirosis can be caught from flood water
- If you get a cut or become sick check in with your GP - a tetanus booster or other treatment may be needed

## **FOOD & MEDICATION**

- Dispose of any food and medications that had contact with flood water
- Toss out food that has perished in the fridge and freezer and canned foods that are open, bulging, or damaged
- Bin medications that are no longer safe to use - not refrigerated, damaged etc.

## **DISPLACED ANIMALS**

- Check in/under objects first! Snakes, spiders, and other wild animals maybe sheltering there.
- Startling animals (possums) may cause them to become aggressive and attack.
- Do not attempt to kill or move snakes & other animals – call a wildlife catcher
- Damaged/broken fences can lead to other animals like dogs, cats, horse, cattle roaming streets, parks etc. – call the local council or RSPCA

# Safety Bulletin



Imagine  
what's  
possible

## MANUAL TASKS

- Use mechanical aids like wheelbarrows, trolleys, earth-moving equipment.
- Use long handled equipment such as shovels and brooms.
- Check the equipment is in good working order.
- Many hands make light work and take rest breaks.
- Place rubbish skips close to where the work is being done.
- Consider team lifts as a last resort - ensure enough people involved, good communication & a leader to direct the lift
- Organize the work to consider the physical capacity of your people.

## CLEAN BUILDINGS AND YARDS

- Open windows and doors to air the building/s
- Clean mould with household detergent or white vinegar solution then rinse with hot water
- Clean all hard surfaces, utensils, crockery, children's outdoor play equipment etc. with hot water and detergent, rinse with a diluted bleach solution, then rinse with hot water
- Empty and remove containers in the yard where mosquitoes may breed
- Let mud in the yard dry out before using the yard



## WASTE

- Confirm the local council's requirements/services
- Identify waste and place on the footpath e.g., furniture and household goods that can't be cleaned (carpet, mattresses, soft toys) broken and damaged items.

## PSYCHOLOGICAL STRESS

- The emotional impacts of natural disasters may not come to the surface for a little while.
- Benestar is available for staff and their families please take advantage of the information and supports available - **Ph: 1300 360 364; Web: www.benestar.com**

## Other services are available

For emergency assistance in floods and storms call the State Emergency Service (SES) on 132 500. If the situation is life-threatening, immediately call triple zero (000).

Endeavour Foundation Group has set up a helpline if you need support to manage the impact of flooding on you or your home, call **1800 112 112**

### For more information and Help in your local area:

<https://www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/community-and-safety/community-safety/february-2022-severe-weather-event-council-updates-and-impacts/mud-army-20>

<https://www.gympie.qld.gov.au/flood-recovery>

<https://disaster.frasercoast.qld.gov.au/>

<https://www.frasercoast.qld.gov.au/disaster-management-recovery>

<https://disaster.sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au>

<https://www.qld.gov.au/community/disasters-emergencies/disasters/rebuilding-cleaning>

<https://dashboard.cityofgoldcoast.com.au/>

<https://www.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/guides/emergency-advice-storms>

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