



StormSafe Week 20th-26th August 2012 **"Prepare now or pay later"**

Storms can happen anywhere at anytime of the year and are the most frequent emergency that affects Victoria.

Storms can bring torrential rain, damaging winds, large hailstones and lightning.



Storms can result in flash flooding, un roof buildings, damage trees, bring down powerlines and can pose a significant safety risk to people, animals, households and businesses.



Storms over the last few years have resulted in hundreds of millions of dollars in damage.

What is in this storm guide:

1. Storm Warnings, including Facebook and Twitter
2. How to stay StormSafe
3. StormSafe Resources
4. What to do BEFORE a storm
5. What to do DURING a storm
6. What to do AFTER a storm
7. How to make an Emergency Plan
8. How to put together an Emergency Kit
9. StormSafe Week competitions

1. Storm warnings

The Victoria State Emergency Service (SES) and the Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) work together to warn the community about storms. Severe thunderstorm and severe weather warnings for Victoria can be found on the **Bureau of Meteorology** website www.bom.gov.au.

Severe Thunderstorm Warnings

While we experience many thunderstorms each year, some more intense thunderstorms are classified as severe thunderstorms, due to their potential to cause significant damage in the local area.

- Severe thunderstorms can cause damage through damaging wind gusts, large hail, tornadoes or flash flooding.
- Severe thunderstorm warnings are issued by the Bureau of Meteorology to alert communities of the threat of these more dangerous thunderstorms.

Severe Weather Warnings

These warnings are issued by the Bureau of Meteorology when severe weather is expected that is not directly related to severe thunderstorms, tropical cyclones or bushfires.

- Severe weather can include: land gales, squalls, flash-flooding, dangerous surf or tides.
- Severe weather warnings are issued by the Bureau of Meteorology to alert communities to the threat of this severe weather.

SES Social Media warnings, NEW in 2012!



In 2012, SES will also use Facebook and Twitter to automatically send out current emergency information. During large-scale emergencies, the SES Facebook page and Twitter feed may also include additional information.

Facebook: go to **www.facebook.com/vices**

Twitter: from Aug 2012 go to **www.twitter.com/viceswarnings**

2. How to stay StormSafe

There are a number of simple things that you can do to make sure you and your property stay safe during storms. Keep reading through each section below!

If you need help,

For storm emergency assistance from the **SES call 132 500**.

For life-threatening emergencies call triple-zero **000**.

3. SES StormSafe Resources



There is a range of resource materials available, including storm safety information in 30 community languages as an audio voice recording and brochure.

For more information about storm safety or to download or request a copy visit the VICSES website:

www.ses.vic.gov.au



4. What to do before a storm

It's better to be StormSafe than Sorry - *You can prepare now* before a severe storm arrives:

- Develop a home or business **Emergency Plan** (see section 7 below)
- Put together an **Emergency kit**: torch, radio, spare batteries, first aid kit (see section 8 below)
- If it is safe to do so, clean your gutters, downpipes and drains to make sure they are not blocked by leaves, bird nests etc
- Make sure roofing material and gutters are in good condition
- Trim branches that overhang homes or buildings
- Tidy your yard and porch to make sure loose items do not become flying objects: outdoor furniture, shade umbrellas, children's toys, trampolines. Put them away or tie them down.

- Park your car undercover and away from trees and powerlines.



5. What to do during a storm

Make sure you:

- Bring people and pets indoors. Stay away from windows.
- If outdoors, shelter away from drains, gutters, creeks and waterways. Never shelter under a tree.
- Be prepared for power outages. Stay clear of fallen powerlines: always assume they are live and dangerous
- Floodwater is dangerous – never drive, walk or ride through floodwater. Heavy rain can turn into a flood in a flash. Flash floods can be fast moving and powerful
- Floodwater is toxic – never play or swim in floodwater.

If you need help,

**Call 132 500 for SES flood or storm emergency assistance.
Call 000 for life threatening emergencies**

6. What to do after a storm

Make sure you:

- Check your home and property for damage from the ground. Injuries happen when people fall from a ladder or roof top
- Keep clear of damaged buildings (watch out for asbestos), powerlines and trees.
- Be aware of road hazards such as floodwater, debris, fallen powerlines, damaged roads or bridges.

- Do not drive through affected areas unless it is necessary.
- Contact your insurance company as soon as possible. Make a list and take photos of damage

If you need help,

**Call 132 500 for SES flood or storm emergency assistance.
Call 000 for life threatening emergencies**

Call 132 500 if you want to **cancel** your request for SES assistance

7. How to make an Emergency Plan

Even though it's easy to think that disasters won't happen to you, emergency situations can happen anywhere, at any time. It's important to have a plan, and to know what to do in an emergency.

Experience shows that those who plan and prepare for emergencies can reduce the impact of the emergency, and can recover quicker afterwards.

Taking the time to think about emergencies and making a plan helps you to think clearly, have a greater sense of control, and make better decisions when an emergency occurs.

Emergency Plans

Making an Emergency Plan for your home or business takes very little time and may help save your life and reduce property damage during an emergency. SES have created a comprehensive guide to help you create your Emergency Plan, which will guide you step-by-step through the process.

 Go to the SES website:

[www.ses.vic.gov.au/prepare/resources/home emergency plan](http://www.ses.vic.gov.au/prepare/resources/home%20emergency%20plan)

8. How to put together an Emergency Kit

Your home or business emergency kit should include everything that you and your family (or the people at work) need to cope in an emergency.

SES have created a simple flyer that can help put together your own emergency kit.

➡ Go to the SES website: www.ses.vic.gov.au/prepare/resources

A basic emergency kit should contain:

- Portable radio with spare batteries
- Torch with spare batteries
- First Aid kit
- A copy of your emergency plan
- Clean drinking water (eg. bottled)
- Enough non-perishable food for three days
- Rubber and strong leather gloves
- Food and special requirements for pets



If an emergency occurs, add the following items to your emergency kit:

- Important documents such as passports, birth certificates, photos and insurance papers (copies of business records for a Business kit)
- Mobile phone and charger
- Strong boots or shoes
- Medicines and prescriptions

If you evacuate or leave for a safer area, take your emergency kit and pets with you.

9. StormSafe Week Competitions

Share your storm stories can WIN tickets to Scienceworks!

During StormSafe Week, we want to share your stories of how you've been affected by storms and what you're doing to prepare for storms now.

If you have experienced a storm, have pictures of some nasty weather near you or would like to share your tips on storm readiness, let us know.

Stories will be published on our website and Facebook page in August, and everyone whose stories or pictures are published will go into the draw to win tickets to ScienceWorks and items for your Home Emergency Kit!

Email us at **media@ses.vic.gov.au** to share your experience and do your part to keep Victoria StormSafe.

Colour in Trevor and Bob from Li'l Lkarrikins



Many local and regional newspapers have this colouring competition for your chance to WIN a Paddy Platypus mascot. You can enter by downloading an entry form from the SES website www.ses.vic.gov.au/StormSafe Week and then posting your entry to:



StormSafe Week Competition,
c/o SES Region Headquarters: 27 Wedge St, BENALLA 3672

For more about StormSafe Week and tips on storm safety

➔ go to the SES website www.ses.vic.gov.au

Be prepared for storms, be StormSafe

