



KNOW YOUR RISK • GET PREPARED • STAY INFORMED



CYCLONE SMART



Version 3 – August 2021



DFES
Department of Fire &
Emergency Services

01

KNOW YOUR RISK

A cyclone could affect your community this year. Cyclones cause death, injury and major structural damage. They cause disruption to essential services that you and your family rely on like electricity, water and gas.

When a cyclone comes through it's likely there will be extensive road closures, loss of communications, airport and port closures, food shortages, vegetation damage and soil erosion.

A cyclone is a low-pressure system that forms over warm tropical waters and has wind gusts of more than 90km/h around its centre. When the wind gusts reach 165km/h, it's a severe cyclone.

Winds can – and do – exceed 280km/h. In these conditions, small objects become deadly missiles. Whether out at sea or moored in harbours, boats will be in danger due to extreme sea conditions.

Flooding and storm surges cause the most deaths during cyclones.

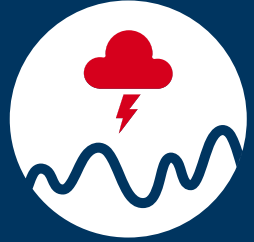
A **storm surge** is a large, quick moving body of water that piles up against the shore when a cyclone hits the coast. It can damage and destroy your home and outbuildings, wash away access roads and run ships aground. It's a **dangerous, unpredictable and unstoppable force that can kill.**

Flooding can occur when cyclones bring heavy rain. **You and your family could drown in flood water.** Heavy rain can continue as a cyclone moves over land, so flooding is possible over widespread areas. It doesn't have to be raining in your area for flooding to occur. You and your family could be stranded for days until the water subsides. Some remote areas can be isolated for months by floods.

The coastal stretch from Exmouth to Broome has the **highest incidence of cyclones anywhere in Australia.**

Cyclones of varying intensity generally occur between November and April each year. The chance of very dangerous category 3, 4 or 5 cyclones is highest in March and April.

Cyclones are most likely to affect the Pilbara and Kimberley communities. Later in the season, the area at risk extends further south along the coast.



Cyclone category system



Category	Strongest wind gust	Typical wind effects
1	Less than 125km/h "Damaging" winds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negligible damage to homes. • Limited damage to some caravans, crops and trees. • Boats could drag moorings.
2	125-164km/h "Destructive" winds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minor damage to homes. • Significant damage to caravans, signs and trees. • Heavy damage to crops. • Risk of power failure. • Small boats may break moorings.
3	165-224km/h "Very destructive" winds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant roof and structural damage to homes. • Some caravans destroyed. • Power failure likely.
4	225-279km/h "Very destructive" winds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant roof and structural damage to homes. • Many caravans destroyed and blown away. • Dangerous airborne loose items. • Widespread power failures.
5	Over 280km/h "Very destructive" winds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extremely dangerous with widespread destruction. • A lot of damage to homes and structures.



Cyclone behaviour

Cyclones can be unpredictable and can intensify rapidly. A Category 1 cyclone can become a severe Category 3 cyclone within a day.

You and your family need to prepare yourselves, your property and your pets for impact even if it doesn't look like its coming your way.

Standard emergency warning signal (SEWS)



SEWS is a distinct warning sound used on radio and television, and sometimes through car-mounted speakers by the State Emergency Service (SES) during a cyclone.

It means official information is about to be broadcast. It's usually used in an area where a Category 2 cyclone (or stronger) is expected to affect a community within 12 hours.



Cyclone tracking

The Bureau of Meteorology uses cyclone forecast tracking maps to depict watch and warning zones, and areas of very destructive winds. You can find this map at www.bom.gov.au/weather/cyclone

At the evacuation centre

If you plan to shelter at your nearest evacuation centre, you need to go there **before a Red Alert is issued.**

At the evacuation centre you will be offered emergency accommodation, registration of your whereabouts and support services. **Pets (except guide dogs) may not be allowed,** so you'll need to make alternative arrangements for their shelter.

The centre will try to accommodate your cultural needs but this may not always be possible.

If you have specific needs like medication, you need to bring them with you.





02

GET PREPARED

Cyclones can cause death, injury, major structural damage and disruption to essential supplies that you and your family rely on like electricity, water and gas. Getting yourself and your family prepared is your responsibility.

Between May and October is the time that everyone gets their home ready inside and out.

During a cyclone:

- You will be **inside for many hours.**
- A cyclone will sound like a **roaring train or jet engine.** It may be so loud that you can't hear each other speak.
- **Day will turn to night.**
- Walls and windows can move.
- Strong winds could tear off wall cladding or the roof.
- **Loose objects will turn into missiles** and may damage your roof or walls.
- Windows can blow in.
- Horizontal rain can get in under doors and windows and between joints and gaps.
- The wind will blow sand at force causing injury and damage.
- **Assistance could be hours away.**



You need to be able to think clearly to keep safe during a cyclone. Drinking alcohol will impair your ability at a time when your family need you. Alcohol is banned at evacuation centres. If you're drunk you may be refused entry. Police will conduct random breath testing of drivers both before and after cyclones.

Are you mentally prepared?

No matter how many cyclones you've been through, being in a severe cyclone will be frightening and traumatic. You and your family need to prepare for the stress of a cyclone.

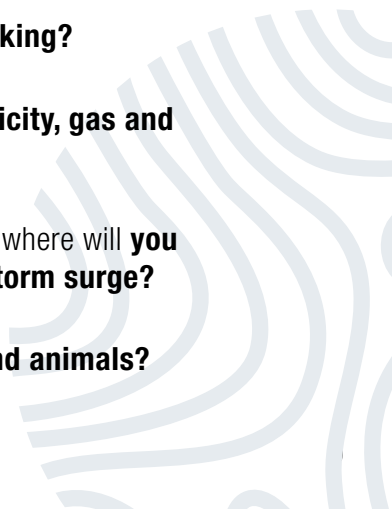
Ask yourself: "Will I be able to cope? Would my family cope in this situation? What if friends or relatives are visiting at the time – how would they deal with this?"

10

simple questions to ask yourself



- 1 Have you prepared a **cyclone plan and an emergency kit & relocation kit for you and your family?**
- 2 How will you secure **boats, caravans, trailers, garden sheds, rainwater tanks, LPG bottles and solar panels?**
- 3 Does your home meet **local council cyclone standards?**
- 4 Are the **walls, roof and eaves secure?**
- 5 Does your **building insurance cover you for cyclones?**
- 6 Are **branches and treetops trimmed** around your home?
- 7 Are your **shutters and locks working?**
- 8 Where will you turn off your **electricity, gas and water supplies?**
- 9 If your home is in a low lying area, where will **you and your family go in case of storm surge?**
- 10 What will you do with your **pets and animals?**



Emergency kit



You and your family need an emergency kit to survive in a cyclone, whether you decide to shelter at home or relocate to a safer place.

People who have prepared an emergency kit before the cyclone season increase their chances of survival for themselves, their families and their pets.

Your emergency kit needs to include:

- A waterproof bag containing important documents like passports, ID and insurance documents.

- Portable, battery operated AM/FM radio.



- Waterproof torch.



- New, spare batteries.



- First aid kit with manual.



- Medications, toiletries and sanitary supplies.

- Special requirements for infants, elderly, injured and disabled people, and pets.



- Mobile phone and charger (or phone card).



- Cash and bank cards.

- Emergency contact numbers.

- Spare house and car keys.



- Drinking water – at least 12 litres per person.



- Canned food – enough for 4 days.

- A can opener, cooking gear and eating utensils.

- Portable gas stove or BBQ.



- Container for storing washing and cooking water

If you decide to relocate you need to add in:

- Sleeping bags, blankets and towels.
- Waterproof ponchos.
- Spare clothing.
- Tent or tarpaulin.
- Pen and paper.
- Books, playing cards or games.

Pets and animals



If you have pets and animals, you need to plan what you'll do with them during a cyclone. **You may not be able to take them to an evacuation centre. Contact your local council for more information.**

You need to:

- Decide **where** your pets and animals will shelter during the cyclone.
- Decide **when** you'll relocate your pets and animals.
- Find out if your pets' tags and **registrations are up to date** so they can be identified.
- Pack **extra food, water and bedding** for them.



Your family cyclone plan



When a cyclone happens, **there won't be time to think**. So, **everyone in the household** needs to know what to do. You will have a better chance of surviving if everyone in the family **agrees on a plan before cyclone season**.



- This cyclone plan is for:
(list all household members)

- If you can't make it home,
where will you shelter?

- When will we put this plan
into action?

- Where is our emergency kit kept?

- Who will collect the children
from school?

- Where do we turn off our
supplies? (Electricity, Gas, Water)

- Who will get cash out? Where is
your nearest ATM?

- Who will be responsible
for turning off these supplies
and when?





- Where will we find:
 - Sandbags
 - Tape for windows,
 - Tie down materials

- Where will our pets and other animals go?

- Where will we take shelter in our house?

- Where is our nearest evacuation centre?

- What route will we take to get there?

- What items like boats, caravans, trailers, garden sheds, rainwater tanks and LPG bottles will we need to secure? How will we secure them?

(You can find more information about securing your caravan on www.dfes.wa.gov.au)



A satellite view of Earth showing a large cyclone or storm system over the ocean. A large red circle is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing the text '03 STAY INFORMED'.

03

**STAY
INFORMED**

You can find alert information:

- On your local ABC radio and other local media
- On the Emergency WA website **www.emergency.wa.gov.au**
- On the DFES Facebook page **facebook.com/dfeswa**
- On the DFES Twitter feed **twitter.com/dfes_wa**
- On the DFES Public Information Line
13 DFES (13 3337)
- On the Bureau of Meteorology Cyclone Information Line
1300 659 210

DFES issues alerts when a cyclone is coming. There are four stages of alerts: Blue, Yellow, Red and All Clear. You need to know what the alerts mean so you can keep yourself and your family safe.



BLUE ALERT

Get ready for a cyclone

You need to prepare for dangerous weather.



YELLOW ALERT

Act now to stay safe

You need to get ready to shelter from a cyclone.



RED ALERT

Shelter now

Shelter immediately. It is too late to leave.



ALL CLEAR

Be careful

The threat has passed but there may be dangers caused by cyclone damage.



BLUE ALERT — Get ready for a cyclone

Prepare for dangerous weather.

Here are the five most important things to do during a blue alert:

1. Keep up to date with the latest cyclone information through radio, television and online.
2. Remind everyone in the household of the cyclone plan they committed to.
3. Ensure your emergency kit and relocation kit are complete.
4. Secure items like boats, caravans, trailers, garden sheds, rainwater tanks, outdoor furniture, loose material, LPG bottles and rubbish around your home and work.
5. Check in with friends and neighbours to make sure they're getting prepared too.





YELLOW ALERT – Act now to stay safe

Get ready to shelter from a cyclone.

Here are the six most important things to do during a yellow alert:

- 1.** Keep up to date with the latest cyclone information through radio, television and online.
- 2.** Put your plan into action. Go to your nearest evacuation centre if you have planned to. If sheltering in place, make sure your supplies and emergency kit are with you. Find a place you can shelter for an extended period of time.
- 3.** Put fuel in your vehicle and move it undercover.
- 4.** Fasten all cyclone screens or board up exposed windows. Close your curtains and lock your doors.
- 5.** Ensure pets and animals are in a safe area.
- 6.** If you live in a low-lying coastal area and the cyclone will create a storm surge, you are advised to relocate now.



RED ALERT – Shelter now

Shelter immediately. It is too late to leave.

Here are the five most important things to do during a red alert:

- 1.** Stay inside and shelter in the strongest, safest part of your house or evacuation centre.
- 2.** Keep your emergency kit with you.
- 3.** Keep listening to your portable radio for cyclone information. Mobile networks may be down so don't rely on your mobile phone.
- 4.** Turn off all electrical appliances and gas supply valves.
- 5.** Stay inside until the ALL CLEAR is given.



ALL CLEAR – Be careful

The threat has passed but there may be dangers caused by cyclone damage.

Here are the most important things to do after an all clear notice:

1. Check that your family and pets are safe and well.
2. Listen to the radio and follow advice from authorities.
3. Be careful of fallen powerlines and trees, damaged water and sewerage pipes, loose roof sheeting and other materials.
4. If your property has sustained serious damage and you need help, call the SES on **132 500** for assistance. For life threatening emergencies, call **000**.
5. If you're returning to your home, follow the routes recommended by authorities. Drive slowly and do not drive into water of unknown depth and current.
6. When you're clearing up around your home, stack loose material clear of water meters, valves and telephone lines.
7. Use a torch when entering a building. NEVER use matches, cigarette lighters or naked flames, as there may be a gas leak.
8. Take photographs for insurance purposes.
9. Keep electricity and appliances off until checked by an electrician. If you have solar panels that are damaged, do not turn on your power supply. Have gas appliances inspected before use.
10. Check in with your neighbours to make sure they're safe.





After the cyclone



Cyclones and floods disrupt households and communities. Power, water, sewerage and gas services may not be working. There could also be road and airport closures and loss of communications.

You might find after a cyclone or flood you need emergency accommodation, welfare support services, money, food or water. Emergency assistance is available through the Western Australian Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (WANDRRA). WANDRRA is for families or individuals to help with the personal hardship or distress after a cyclone. For more information, contact wandrara@dpc.wa.gov.au

These simple steps will help you and your family get back to normal:

- Seek support from local welfare agencies.
- Talk to your family, friends and neighbours about their experience.
- Rely on official information from the authorities.
- Get involved in community activities when you feel comfortable.
- Try to get your children back into their normal routine as quickly as possible.

EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS



Police, Fire, Ambulance (for life threatening emergencies): **000**

State Emergency Service (SES) assistance: **132 500**

Local GP / Doctors surgery

Local shire / council

Hospital

Neighbour

Out of area family contact

School

Work numbers

Insurance company

Where to stay informed

ABC Radio – frequency:

Emergency WA website:

www.emergency.wa.gov.au

DFES Facebook page

facebook.com/dfeswa

DFES Twitter feed

twitter.com/dfes_wa

Bureau of Meteorology

Cyclone Warning Line:

1300 659 210

Bureau of Meteorology Land

Weather and Flood Warnings:

1300 659 213

Weather and cyclone forecasts:

www.bom.gov.au/cyclone/

Road conditions (Main Roads):

138 138 or travelmap.mainroads.wa.gov.au/

DFES Emergency Information:

13 DFES (13 3337)

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