



Emergencies and Risk Management

Protecting your family and
property during emergencies
in Cootamundra Shire



Introduction

Emergencies can happen at any time and can create a threat to life, property and the environment. Emergencies are initiated from various types of hazards and in Cootamundra Shire emergencies can be caused by bushfire, flood, storm, earthquake, pandemic or major rail disaster to name a few.

Being prepared for emergencies can make the difference between life and death and can ensure against unnecessary loss of property and the environment. Sound preparation at a household level, coupled with structured management practices at emergency services level will ensure that emergencies are managed in such a way that their impacts are minimised and recovery from emergencies is less stressful.

This booklet provides valuable information about the actions and plans each household should have in place in preparation for an emergency. It is never too soon to prepare.

Also provided is a list of contact numbers in case of emergency. Response to an emergency is quicker if the correct contact numbers are used.

At the back you will find a list of actions that should be undertaken by each household in an evacuation. This list can be added to by each household to include information and actions that are specific to your residence. Keep this in an easily accessible place and ensure all household occupants are familiar with its contents.



Home Emergency Kit

Each residence should have a household *Emergency Kit* readily Available.

Your household *Emergency Kit* should contain the following items:

- Portable radio with spare batteries
- Torch with spare batteries
- Candles and waterproof matches
- First aid kit
- Important papers including a list of emergency contact numbers
- A copy of your Household Emergency Plan (indicating actions to be taken during emergencies)
- A waterproof bag for valuables and mementoes (such as photograph albums, jewellery)
- Rubber gloves



Important Documents could include:

- Insurance papers
- Wills
- House deeds
- Mortgage Papers
- Birth Certificates
- Passports
- Bank Account Details
- Medical Prescriptions

When floods, storms or other emergencies are predicted add the following items to your home emergency kit:

- A good supply of **required medication** (including for your pets)
- Special requirements for infants, the disabled, infirm or elderly
- Fresh Food and Drink
- Basic provisions for your pet
- Strong Shoes



Home Fire Safety

FIRE SAFETY TIPS

- Oil, gas or wood heating units may require a yearly maintenance check
- Only ever use fuses of the recommended rating and install an electrical safety switch

Did you know 45% of house fires start in the kitchen?



MAKE YOUR KITCHEN SAFE

do

- Use cooking oil carefully; heat it slowly
- Turn pot and pan handles inwards so they won't be knocked over
- Install a fire extinguisher and a fire blanket in the kitchen
- If cooking oil catches fire, turn off the hotplate and slide the lid over the pan or use a fire blanket to smother the fire
- Ensure that cooking appliances are turned off after use



don't

- Leave cooking unattended—cooking can cause fires
- Throw water on burning oil or fat—water does not put out oil or fat fires, it can make them much worse





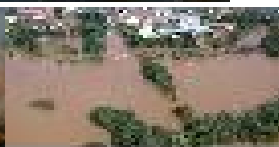
Bushfires

Bushfires can be a source of significant hazard in Cootamundra Shire. The risk of bushfire is increased for those living in rural areas and there are actions residents can undertake to limit the risk of bushfire damage to their property.

HOME PREPARATION

To ensure your home is prepared for a bushfire emergency follow the basic hazard reduction methods below.

- Clean roofs, gutters and downpipes regularly
- Keep wood piles and other combustible material well away from the house
- Cut back overhanging trees and branches and clean up litter
- Do not place tree prunings or grass clippings on reserves behind your property
- Plant trees or shrubs that are less likely to ignite
- Ensure fire hydrants adjacent to your property are clear and readily accessible to Emergency Services
- Maintain a refuge paddock with low fuel load for livestock



Bushfires

IF A BUSHFIRE THREATENS YOUR HOME

In the event that a bushfire threatens your home, there are certain actions you can take to minimise the risk of fire damage in these circumstances.

- To report fires call 000
- Wear natural fibre long sleeves and long pants and sturdy footwear
- Wear breathing protection
- Turn off gas and power (except fridge & freezer)
- Block your downpipes and fill your gutters with water
- Hose down walls and your roof
- Close all windows and doors and block spaces below doors with towels or blankets
- Fill sinks and baths with water to use on spot fires
- Bring spare hoses and fittings inside to avoid damage so they can be used when the fire passes
- Confine animals to a refuge paddock with access to water
- Pets should be restrained or brought indoors with adequate water
- If ordered to evacuate by the Police do so (see evacuation procedures)

IF your house is well prepared for bushfire and you are able bodied with suitable protective gear, your home is more likely to survive the fire if you stay to protect it.



BEFORE THE STORM

- Clean your gutters and downpipes frequently
- Trim overhanging branches
- Keep your yard or balcony free from clutter
- Make sure your roof is in good condition

WHEN A STORM WARNING IS BROADCAST

- Listen to your local radio station, television or internet service for information and advice
- Bring children and pets indoors
- Stay well clear of windows
- Park your car under cover or away from trees
- Put your family emergency kit where you can find it easily
- Have important documents, photos etc readily available



AFTER THE STORM

- Keep listening to your local radio station for information or advice
- Check your house for damage. If you need help from the SES, phone 132 500
- Stay well clear of creeks and drains, fallen trees and power lines and damaged structures
- If you don't need help yourself, check your neighbours



Floods

IF YOU LIVE IN AN AREA THAT FLOODS

- Find out how deep the water could get in and around your property
- Find out if you may need to evacuate or if you could be cut off by flood waters
- In the event that you may need to evacuate, find out the safest route
- Keep your local emergency numbers handy
- Prepare a refuge area for livestock

WHEN FLOODING IS LIKELY

- Stack your possessions on benches and tables, electrical goods on top
- Secure objects that are likely to float and cause damage
- Relocate waste containers, chemicals and poisons well above floor level
- Locate important papers, valuables and mementoes and put them in your emergency kit
- Business owners/managers should raise stock, records and equipment on benches and tables
- Rural property owners should move livestock and farm equipment and relocate pumps to high ground
- Be prepared to evacuate pets. Do not leave animals in areas likely to flood
- If isolation is likely, have enough non-perishable food, **essential medications**, fuel and other necessities to last at least a week
- Be prepared to turn off power and gas supplies

DURING A FLOOD

- Avoid driving or walking through flood water—these are the main causes of death during floods
- Keep listening to a local radio station, television or internet service
- Keep in contact with your neighbours
- Be prepared to evacuate if advised



Evacuation

EVACUATION PLANNING

An evacuation may be necessary in some circumstances to remove residents from a location that is under threat to a safe location. Evacuations are carried out under the authority of the NSW Police Force with assistance from other Emergency Agencies.

Evacuations may involve individual households, neighbourhoods or even whole communities. Evacuations will not always follow a regular pattern or route as the source of the danger will be the dictating factor. However, you should have your home evacuation routes planned and if neighbourhoods or communities require evacuation, follow the directions of the Police or other Emergency Services personnel as they will have the most direct and safe route planned.

Remember once you are evacuated do not return to your house, neighbourhood or community for any reason until advised to do so by the authorities. You will be requested to register at the Evacuation Centre. Please ensure you do this even if you have alternate accommodation planned.

DO NOT GO SIGHTSEEING – ONCE OUT, STAY OUT!

HOUSEHOLD EVACUATION CHECKLIST

- Know two safe ways out of every room
- As you escape close internal doors and windows
- Decide on a safe outside meeting place
- Install smoke alarms and test them regularly
- Practise your escape plan
- In case of fire, evacuate immediately, do not wait, every second counts
- Consider special needs of children the elderly and pets





First Aid Tips

In case of Snake Bite, Spider Bite or Burns follow the procedures below:

SNAKE / FUNNEL WEB / MOUSE SPIDER BITE

1. Check Breathing and Circulation
2. Calm Casualty
3. Apply pressure immobilisation bandage or splint if practical
4. Immobilise Casualty
5. Call an Ambulance—000



RED-BACK SPIDER

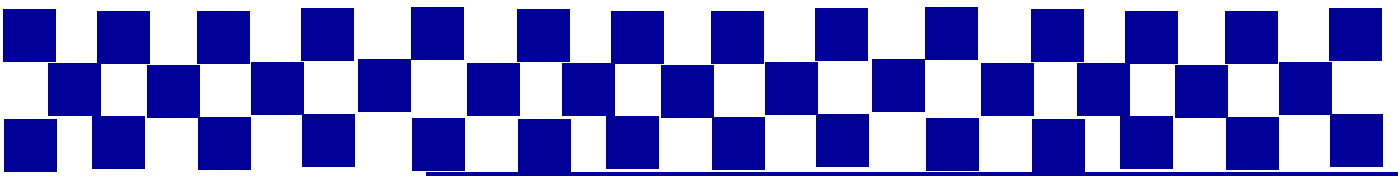
1. Apply icepack to bitten area and seek medical aid



BURNS

1. Remove Casualty from danger
2. If clothing is on fire—STOP, DROP & ROLL—to put out flames
3. Wrap in blanket or similar
4. Cool the burnt area by running under cold water for at least 10mins
5. Remove any constrictions such as clothing/jewellery
6. Cover burn with sterile, non-stick dressing
7. Calm casualty
8. Call an Ambulance—000





Home Emergency Plan

EVACUATION PLANNING

Following is a list of actions you should undertake in case of emergency and/or evacuation. You may add items to this list to reflect the individual circumstances of your household.

Tick as
Collected

- 1. Locate each member of your family (including animals)
- 2. Collect your Home Emergency Kit
- 3. Collect your documents / insurance / passport container
- 4. Collect photos, videos, computer back up container
- 5. Collect **essential medications**
- 6. Collect spare clothes suitable for conditions
- 7. Collect spare blankets and / or sleeping bags
- 8. Collect baby items if required
- 9. Collect non perishable food for 24 hours, can-opener, water and pet food
- 10. Turn off Power and Gas supplies (except Fridge & Freezer) and lock your house
- 11. _____
- 12. _____



Emergency Phone Numbers

AMBULANCE—000

POLICE—000

FIRE BRIGADE—000

RURAL FIRE SERVICE—000

SES—132 500

COUNTRY ENERGY—132 356

GAS EMERGENCY—131 909

COOTAMUNDRA HOSPITAL—6942 0444

DISASTER RECOVERY SERVICES

These are coordinated by the Department of Community Services with assistance from: Australian Red Cross, St Vincent De Paul and the Salvation Army. The relevant telephone number for Cootamundra Shire is 1800 018 444.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Further information on Emergency Management or related issues can be obtained from the following websites

www.emergency.nsw.gov.au

www.nswfb.nsw.gov.au

www.rfs.nsw.gov.au

www.ses.nsw.gov.au

www.dpi.nsw.gov.au

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