

About the Todd River

The Todd River is a normally dry, sandy river bed in Alice Springs. The Todd River has a catchment area located mainly to the North of Alice Springs. When heavy rainfall occurs in and around this catchment area the Todd River will usually flow. If heavy rainfall occurs in Alice Springs, and not in the catchment area, the Todd River will usually only reach a trickle flow.

Alice Springs experiences its heaviest rainfall during the summer months from November through March, generally as a result of equatorial troughs moving inland across Central Australia. Heavy rainfall, together with the rocky terrain and steep river slope of the catchment area, can sometimes cause flash flooding in the Todd River.

When will we receive flood warnings?

Flood warnings will only be issued if flooding is predicted. Several Northern Territory Government agencies combine to provide information on flow levels, weather conditions and flood forecasts to the Counter Disaster Planning Committee. This information does not cover flows or flooding of creeks and stormwater drains, which are unpredictable.

When flooding is predicted in the Alice Springs Region, the Counter Disaster Planning Committee is activated. It operates under direction from the Northern Territory Counter Disaster Council to ensure that information bulletins and flood warning messages are issued for Alice Springs and outlying areas. Counter disaster response measures may include the evacuation of people in cases of major flooding (refer to map for areas prone to flooding).

How can we be prepared for a major flood?

Start by running through this checklist with your family:

- have we looked at the Alice Springs Flooding Map?
- do we live in a flood-prone area?
- is our insurance up-to-date and does it cover floods?
- what's the family's plan of action?
- is there one friend or relative who can act as a point of contact?
- do we have a friend or relative on higher ground?
- do we have a pet plan?
- have we done our emergency shopping?
- is the car's petrol tank full?
- which is the nearest emergency shelter?
- where will we leave the car?
- do we have spare cash?
- have we removed debris and checked that the house is sound?
- what items should be secured in plastic?
- if we have a boat, could authorities use it?

Flood shopping list

Imagine your house without a fridge, a stove, a kettle to boil water, an electric tin opener or lights, then consider buying:

- battery operated torch (and spare batteries)
- tinned and dry food
- battery operated radio and lots of batteries
- fresh water and containers
- first aid kit
- manual can opener
- camping stove and spare gas bottles
- coals or gas for the barbecue
- masking tape and plastic bags or bin liners
- disinfectants and other cleaning material

Personal papers

Make sure valuable papers are stored together in a waterproof bag or container, including:

- birth, death and marriage certificates

- citizenship papers, wills and passports
- bank books and credit cards
- tax, social security and insurance papers
- medical records
- precious photos or records
- education and trade documents

Checklist for leaving or evacuation

When a flood is imminent, listen to your radio or television for information from authorities and follow their directions.

- to avoid congestion, stay off the phone unless it's important
- if you are leaving, it's best to go early
- take warm clothes, sleeping bags, swags, tents and good footwear
- turn off mains power and gas and secure gas cylinders (they float)
- empty the fridge (it won't smell so bad later)
- take with you:
 - personal papers and valuables in a watertight bag or container
 - medication and first aid kits
 - glasses and hearing aids
 - baby, toilet and sanitary needs and toiletries
 - any tools you might need
- raise items left behind as high as you can
- drive carefully, especially if roads are under water
- take some games to keep yourself and your children occupied
- sandbag the toilet and other internal drains to stop it overflowing
- advise relatives outside of Alice Springs of your movements

When you leave home

Some things to consider before you leave home include:

- checking on your neighbours' welfare
- if you live in a flood prone area, leave in plenty of time
- know the safest, driest route to your nearest emergency shelter or highest dry ground
- it's best to head to a friend or relative's home on high ground – if not, head to an emergency shelter
- make sure someone knows you are safe and where you are
- secure your property
- perhaps leave a note attached to the front door for emergency services to say where you've gone and if there is a pet left at your house

Don't forget to register on arrival at any emergency shelter.

Checklist for coming home

- don't return home until advised it is safe to do so
- watch for electric wires on the ground or in the water
- watch for potholes and washouts in the road
- watch for snakes which may have sought refuge under debris
- don't drink flood-contaminated water
- don't eat food which has been in contact with flood water
- if toilets have backed up or water has come through the floorboards, clean with disinfectant
- don't use gas or electrical appliances which have been flood affected until they have been safety checked by a licensed tradesperson
- if your car is flood damaged, don't try and start it—let a mechanic look after it

Make sure you DO:

- look after yourself and your neighbours – that's the basis of community self-help
- keep emergency kits safe and dry
- listen to the radio and television for information
- drive slowly through flooded sections to reduce wave action and possible damage to property.



Make sure you DON'T:

- go sightseeing – that is best saved for good weather and safe conditions
- use phones unless it's an emergency

How can I find my relatives?

Please don't add to the disaster by panicking and racing off to look for relatives. For example, you may have relatives in another part of Alice Springs. If you risk your life looking for them, you may make things worse.

People will be registered at emergency shelters. For major incidents, the National Registration and Inquiry Service (NRIS) is activated. Run by the Northern Territory Police and Red Cross, NRIS keeps track of registered evacuees. Worried relatives will have their inquiry logged. If you have registered as an evacuee, this information will be matched with the inquiry.

Cars, boats and caravans

People living in caravans should tow them to high ground, if possible.

If you own a boat, ensure it is reliable and ready for use by the authorities. Register the boat at the police station. Telephone 131 444.

Pets and major floods

Pets are one of the greatest causes of anxiety in a flood and can lead to loss of life when people refuse to be evacuated or risk flood waters to search for lost animals. Remember that the authorities' number one concern is rescuing people. There may not be room for pets in flood boats—and frightened pets can be dangerous.

If you live in a flood prone area, the best thing you can do for pets is to plan ahead and consider the following:

- all dogs in Alice Springs must be registered (it makes it easier to reunite you with your pets if they are found)
- ensure you stock up with plenty of pet food
- mend holes in fences in case animals panic and attempt to escape

If you are taking your pet with you ensure you remember:

- identification papers and vaccination records (in a waterproof container)
- a muzzle or gauze bandage – dogs can become aggressive when frightened
- plenty of canned or dry food
- a manual can opener
- water bowls and fresh water
- paper towels and plastic bags to clean up waste
- leashes and cages (keep a spare leash in the car)
- a favourite toy

If you feel it is safe to leave your pet/s behind, keep in mind that it may be several days before you return home, and always consider the following:

- don't tie your pet up or confine them where they may drown
- free poultry and move them to a higher place
- leave your pet with adequate food and water and let them look after themselves (dry food is best as wet food will go off)
- ensure they have collars or nametags on to help identify them
- leave a note for emergency services describing your pets
- if leaving pets inside, leave them with access to fresh water
- leave food and water above predicted flood height

We realise how traumatic it is to leave pets behind, however they cannot be taken to emergency shelters for hygiene and space issues, animals may fight each other or create additional noise and cause stress.

Pets are like humans after a disaster, they are likely to experience trauma, confusion and anxiety. If you are reunited with a pet after a major flood, please consider that fear can make pets aggressive, so approach them cautiously.

If you are reunited with your pet after a major flood, remember the following:

- know your pet's favourite hiding place
- check for injuries
- be careful about letting pets outside too quickly as familiar scents and landmarks may be altered, causing your pet to become confused or lost
- let your pet have plenty of uninterrupted sleep to recover from the stress

Standard Emergency Warning Signals (SEWS)

The media may be asked to play SEWS to alert people of significant warning messages that are about to be announced. SEWS were formerly used only for cyclones in the Northern Territory, but are now used for all major emergencies, including major flooding. If you hear the SEWS on the radio or television, stop what you are doing and listen to the message.

What media should I listen to for updates?

The Northern Territory Police, Fire and Emergency Services will coordinate regular media and communication updates during emergencies.

Newspapers lack the immediacy of electronic media, but when published will carry important information. Local radio stations will generally have the most comprehensive and up-to-date local information.

During an emergency in Alice Springs we recommend you listen to:

AM Band	ABC Radio	783
	8HA Radio	900
FM Band	SUNFM	96.9
	CAAMA Radio	100.5

Television stations may carry information along the bottom of the screen, or interrupt telecasts with important messages. The evening news will usually be informative.

Contact numbers

Please listen to radio or watch television for regular updates during an emergency, and call the following numbers only if you need help or additional information.

Alice Springs Police	131 444
Department of Primary Industry, Fisheries and Mines (DPIFM)	8951 8111
Alice Springs Town Council	8950 0500

Emergency contact numbers

Alice Springs Police	131 444
St John Ambulance	8951 6620
Northern Territory Fire & Rescue Service	8951 6688
Alice Springs Hospital	8951 7777
NT Power and Water (emergency number only)	1800 245 090
RSPCA	8953 4430
Northern Territory Emergency Service	8951 9300
Alice Springs Town Council	8950 0500

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Flooding in Alice Springs



A community guide to preparation and response

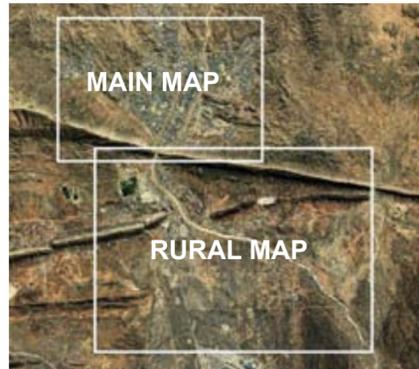


Alice Springs Flood Map

About the Alice Springs Flood Map

The Alice Springs Flood Map pictured on the right highlights the different flow and flood categories that affect the community of Alice Springs.

The main map is of the Town Area, highlighting in the different flow and flood levels in different shades of blue. The inset map is of the Rural Area, located on the Southern side of Heavitree Gap.



People are encouraged to establish where their homes are located on the maps provided, and plan for how each flow and flood level may affect your home and family.

Through effective preparation, you can ensure your family can have adequate supplies, or move to safe ground, in case of major flooding.

Emergency Shelters

The decision to open Emergency Shelters, and when, is made by the Regional Counter Disaster Controller.

Shelters will be crowded and should only be used if accommodation cannot be found elsewhere – if you can find shelter with family or friends, this would be the better option.

There are five designated emergency shelter locations, which are highlighted on the Alice Springs Flooding Map. The media will broadcast which emergency shelters are open in plenty of time to allow people to proceed to safety.

Emergency shelters in Alice Springs are located at:

Town Area

- 1 Alice Springs High School
Milner Road, Gillen
- 2 Centralian College
Grevillea Drive, Sadadeen
- 3 Braiitling Primary School
Head Street, Braiitling
- 4 Larapinta Primary School
Albrecht Drive, Larapinta

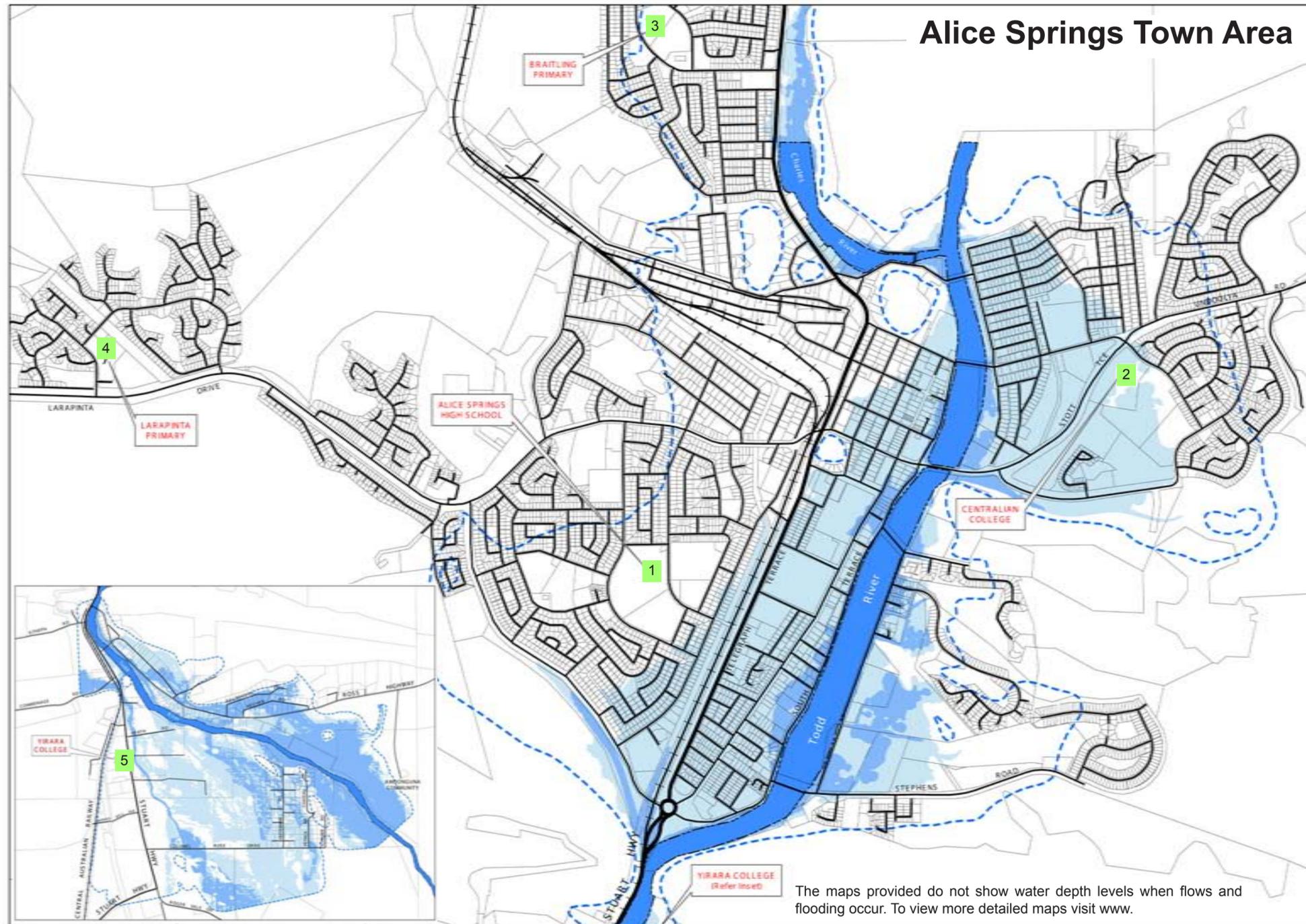
Rural Area

- 5 Yirara College
Stuart Highway

Other evacuation centres may be established, depending on need.

Alternative arrangements should be made for pets as they are not permitted at emergency shelters (except for guide dogs). See overleaf for more information.

The possession of alcohol and illegal drugs is not permitted in emergency shelters.



Todd River flow & flood categories

The Todd River flow and flood categories are defined in five different categories – Level A, B, C, D & E. It is important to understand these levels, as flow and flood warnings will use these to indicate what the community should expect.

The pictured Alice Springs Flood Map shows the different categories, as follows:

MINOR Levels A & B

Level A and Level B mean water will be contained mainly within the banks of the Todd River.

These levels occur most frequently in Alice Springs, and although they can disrupt some river crossings, these levels do not impact greatly on the community.

Flow Level A may sometimes close river bed level causeways.

Flow Level B will always close river bed level causeways and water may overtop the Casino causeway.

MODERATE Levels C & D

Flow / Flood Level C will always close the Taffy Pick Crossing (Casino Causeway), and minor flooding may occur along South Terrace and other nearby roads.

Flood Level D has the potential to cause disruptions, and will cause flooding in the lower reaches of town, and may include areas such as:

- residences along South Terrace, Leichardt Terrace and Barrett Drive
- the Stuart Highway at Heavitree Gap

When water exceeds Flood Level D it is referred to as a “one in twenty”, or “1:20”, flood. This is a statistical prediction of the frequency with which this flood will occur. Statistically a 1:20 flood could occur once every 20 years, however this is not to be used as a guarantee that this flood won't occur more times during this period.

MAJOR Level E

Flood Level E is a major flood. In addition to all elements faced in Level D flooding, the river level may overtop the Wills Terrace footbridge (pictured on the front cover) and may cause the closure of the Stott Terrace Bridge.

There will also be widespread local flooding, some of which will be increased from stormwater runoff and drains. In the case of a Stott Bridge closure, access to and from Eastside will cease.

All residents in Alice Springs should be prepared for Level E flooding. If Level E flooding does occur it may be days to weeks before regular access to supplies is reinstated.

The Flood Level E outlined in this map is what experts refer to as a “one in one hundred”, or “1:100”, flood. This is a statistical prediction of the frequency that this flood will occur. Statistically a 1:100 could occur at least once every 100 years, however this is not to be used as a guarantee that this flood won't occur more times during this period.

----- Probable Maximum Flood

The Probable Maximum Flood (PMF) is the largest possible flood that can occur. It is said to have a flood risk of 1:10,000 to 1:10 million.

