

WHAT ABOUT STORM SURGE?

When a tropical cyclone moves across or near the coast, it can cause sea levels to rise higher than the normal tide levels. This is called a storm surge and is the result of the strong onshore winds and/or reduced atmospheric pressure. Storm surge may also be formed by intense low-pressure systems.

The peak storm surge level does not necessarily occur as the cyclone crosses the coast but could be reached up to several hours prior to landfall. A cyclone does not need to cross the coast for a storm surge to affect low lying areas on the coast. A storm surge can act like a giant bulldozer, sweeping everything in its path.

People who live in low lying coastal areas need to be aware of storm surge dangers and be prepared to evacuate to higher ground when advised by the Emergency Management Authorities.

The Northern Territory Government has a map that shows areas that may be liable to storm surge – though this is only indicative. These maps may be viewed at:

securent.nt.gov.au/prepare-for-an-emergency/cyclones/storm-surge

or phone: (08) 8999 5511

WHEN IS A TROPICAL CYCLONE ADVICE ISSUED?

A tropical cyclone watch is issued for coastal communities when the onset of gales is expected within 48 hours, but not within 24 hours.

A tropical cyclone warning is issued for coastal communities when the onset of gales is expected within 24 hours, or are already occurring.

Each advice issued for a particular cyclone will be numbered sequentially, starting at Number 1 for the first advice. A tropical cyclone advice may contain a combined watch and warning specifying the area that is under watch status and the area under warning status.

TWO THINGS THAT WILL HELP PROTECT YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY IN A CYCLONE:

1. EMERGENCY PLAN

2. EMERGENCY KIT

CYCLONE SEVERITY CATEGORIES

CATEGORY	STRONGEST GUSTS (KM/H)	TYPICAL EFFECTS
1	Less than 125	Negligible house damage. Damage to some crops, trees and caravans. Craft may drag moorings.
2	125 to 164	Minor house damage. Significant damage to signs, trees and caravans. Heavy damage to some crops. Risk of power failure. Small craft may break moorings.
3	165 to 224	Some roof and structural damage. Some caravans destroyed. Power failures likely.
4	225 to 279	Significant roofing loss and structural damage. Many caravans destroyed and blown away. Dangerous airborne debris. Widespread power failures.
5	More than 279	Extremely dangerous with widespread destruction.

Cover image of cyclone Monica courtesy
MODIS Rapid Response Project NASA/GSFC

WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

FOR EMERGENCY HELP IN A CYCLONE,
FLOOD OR SEVERE STORM CALL: **132 500**

Email: ntes@nt.gov.au

Internet: www.emergency.nt.gov.au
www.securent.nt.gov.au

Postal: PO Box 39764, Winnellie NT 0821

 /secureNT

 /secureterritory



CYCLONES

GET READY GET THRU

NT Emergency Service
www.emergency.nt.gov.au



ARE YOU PREPARED THIS CYCLONE SEASON?

CYCLONES IN THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

The Northern Territory is prone to tropical cyclones from November to May. Cyclones are dangerous; they can produce destructive winds and heavy rainfall with flooding and storm surges, which can cause extensive damage to property and turn debris into dangerous missiles. Cyclones are very erratic, making their path difficult to predict. A tropical cyclone can last for a few days or up to two or three weeks.

To reduce the risks posed by cyclones, the Northern Territory Government provides a level of community safety by implementing a building code and providing an effective counter disaster organisation. However, the protection of your family, your home and your possessions is your responsibility. It is important to be prepared!



1 EMERGENCY PLAN

An emergency plan is essential and may help save you and your family's life or property in an emergency.

An emergency plan should be put together as a household, including children. Make sure you discuss:

- Plans for when family members are and are not home
- Workplace, school or apartment plans that may impact on members of your household
- What you will do to mitigate damage to your home or contents (eg insurance)
- How and where to turn off power, gas and water supplies
- How and where valuables and important documents will be stored
- How and where your household emergency kit will be stored
- Your emergency telephone number list
- What role each family member will take during an emergency
- Ensure your neighbours understand how they should prepare.

An emergency plan can be downloaded from:
www.emergency.nt.gov.au

2 EMERGENCY KIT

An emergency kit is a necessity for every household. Depending on your location, you may need to rely on your own resources to get through until the emergency or disaster has passed or help arrives. The most important thing to remember is to ensure that your kit is able to sustain yourself and every family member for up to 72 hours or more.

Some items you will need:

- Radio with spare batteries
- Torch with spare batteries
- Water (10 litres per person)
- First aid kit
- Waterproof satchel for important documents
- Enough food for three days
- Special medicines and baby needs

Tips for Kits

- Store your kit in a dry area of your household that is easily accessible without electricity
- Make sure every member of your household knows where the kit is stored

A full list is available at: **www.emergency.nt.gov.au**



REMEMBER TO CLEAN UP YOUR YARD!

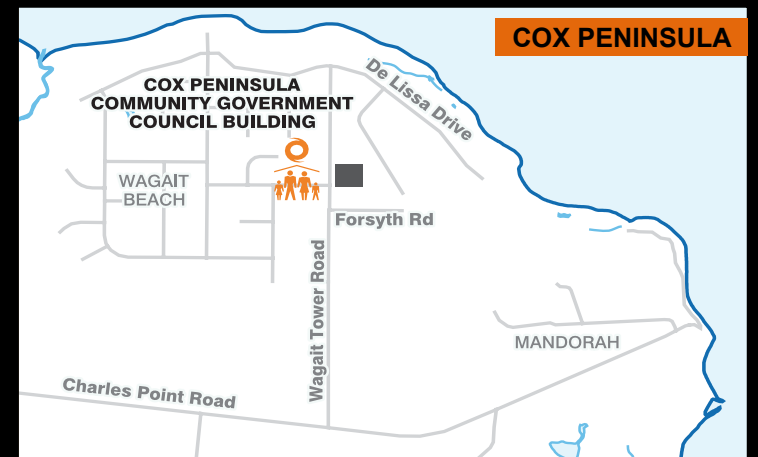
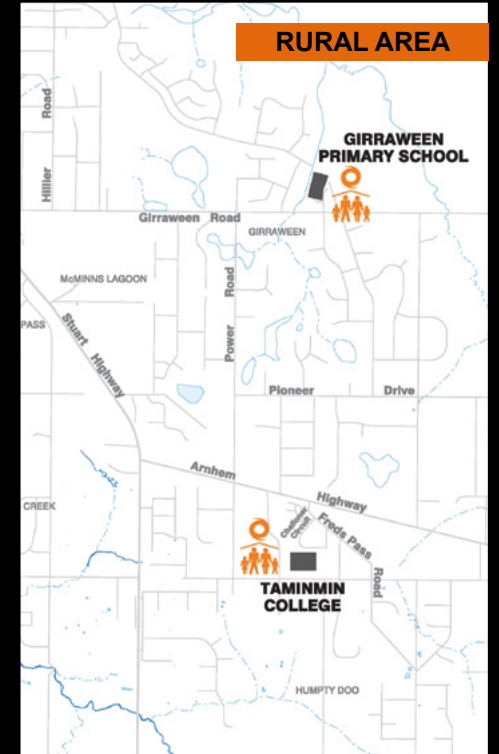
Airborne debris can cause a lot of damage during cyclones. It is in everyone's interest to ensure that backyards and outside work sites are tidied up by removing rubbish and putting away or lashing down equipment.



EMERGENCY SHELTERS

DARWIN, PALMERSTON AND RURAL AREAS

Do not proceed to any of these shelters unless advised to do so.



WHERE IS YOUR EMERGENCY SHELTER?

A good cyclone survival plan includes knowing where you, your family and pets will shelter.

Following the devastation of Cyclone Tracy buildings in cyclonic areas must be constructed to comply with the Building Code of Australia, generally referred to as being “built to code”.

If your house has been built to code and has been well maintained you can shelter at home. You should consider If your house is not to code you should consider sheltering with family or friends who have a house built to code.

It is also necessary to ensure that the building is well maintained and to have your cyclone survival plan worked out before a cyclone hits.

The Northern Territory Government has developed a general guide for the inspection and maintenance of structural elements in buildings. It is not meant to be exhaustive nor substitute for professional building or structural advice.

A copy of the guidelines can be accessed at www.lands.nt.gov.au/building/cyclone



HOW CAN I IMPROVE MY HOME SHELTER?

When sheltering in any home it is important to use the strongest, most protected part of the house. This is usually the smallest room in the house.

The level of protection in your home shelter can be improved by using mattresses or strong tables as a shield. Putting up plastic sheeting or tarpaulins over windows will help protect against water coming into your shelter area.

Remember:

- Central hallways might give greater protection because they are surrounded by the rest of the house
- Rooms with few or small windows are best
- Solid doors with additional securing bolts give greater security than standard doors
- Metal screens or solid shutters provide added protection against flying debris
- Make sure all the people in your shelter area are wearing warm clothing and strong footwear
- Pack away all loose household items in cupboards to prevent them becoming dangerous flying missiles in high wind – secure cupboard doors if possible
- Have your cyclone emergency kit with you
- Pack valuables, electrical equipment and clothing in plastic (garbage bags), and place in suitcases and/or cupboards
- Wrap other valuable items in plastic and tape up securely



EMERGENCY SHELTER FACILITIES

The Northern Territory Government provides emergency shelter facilities for residents who are at risk from storm surge, live in caravan parks or other non-coded homes.

Remember:

- They have a limited capacity and do not guarantee safety in all circumstances
- They do not allow animals
- They are mainly staffed by voluntary personnel with a police and medical presence
- They do not provide meals or special baby needs
- They might become welfare assembly centres after the cyclone
- They are used at your own risk - the Northern Territory Government accepts no liability for any loss, injury or death arising from use by the public during a cyclone

Note: A number of underground car parks have been identified as places where residents can shelter in their cars with their pets provided pets are properly restrained. These car parks whilst being built to code are not built as cyclone shelters, do not have supporting staff, are not fully enclosed and do not have debris screens.

WHAT IF I CHOOSE TO EVACUATE INLAND?

If you choose to evacuate, you should leave early.

Remember:

- Evacuate well before strong winds affect your area
- Allow time to secure and protect your property
- You may need to sustain yourself and your family for a few days, so go prepared
- Listen to radio broadcasts and only return when the all clear is given
- Advise friends of plans and confirm your safe return
- Check the conditions on where you are travelling to ensure a safe journey