

Consistent storm safety messages

Storms - Did you know? Facts (source Bureau of Meteorology)

- Severe thunderstorms can occur at any time of the year.
- On average, a severe thunderstorm can produce approximately 6,000 lightning strikes every minute.
- Each year, on average, severe storms are responsible for more damage (as measured by insurance costs) than tropical cyclones, earthquakes, floods or bushfires.
- Most thunderstorms do not reach the level of intensity needed to produce flash floods, cyclones, wind gusts or hail, but they all produce lightning which can cause death, injury and damage.
- Storms do kill people. In Australia, lightning accounts for five to 10 deaths and more than 100 injuries annually. More deaths occur when strong winds cause tree limbs to fall, debris to become projectiles and small boats in open water to capsize.
- Average lightning bolts carry a current of 10,000 to 30,000 amps. An average radiator draws 10 amps.

Before a storm

- Check your storm season preparations
- Ensure mobile phone batteries are fully charged and have a phone WITH a cord on hand – cordless phone base stations don't work without electricity
- Have a battery-operated radio and lots of batteries on hand
- Turn your fridge to its coldest setting. If the power goes out, this will help keep food fresh longer.
- Stay indoors as the storm approaches and ensure pets are secured safely under shelter
- Turn off and unplug electrical appliances. Leave one light switch turned on so you know when power is restored
- If your garage door is electric, ensure you know how to open it manually
- Ensure a list of emergency contact numbers are kept on hand, including emergency services, xx and xx

During a storm

- Stay inside and stay clear of windows and doors
- Listen to a portable radio for weather and power updates
- Stay well away from fallen powerlines. Always assume they are live and dangerous. Report them immediately to our faults line on xxx
- Use a torch to find your way around
- Don't use electrical appliances that are wet or damaged
- Don't use a landline phone during a storm. In emergencies use a mobile phone
- If you are without power, turn all power points off at the wall and leave one light switch turned on

After a storm

- Stay well away from fallen powerlines. Always assume they are live and dangerous. Report them immediately.
- Warn children not to swim in floodwaters – there may be live electrical wiring or fallen powerlines in or around the water
- Listen to a portable radio for official advice and power restoration information.
- Alert neighbours if you think there may be any danger
- Don't connect a portable generator to the electrical wiring of your house or office unless an isolating switch has been permanently installed by a licensed electrical contractor. Appliances can be plugged directly into the generator.

- Don't use any electrical appliances that have been wet or damaged. Have them checked by a licensed electrical contractor.
- Take extra care around your switchboard if it is outdoors, wear synthetic or rubber soled shoes. If you are in any doubt about the switchboard's safety, call your licensed electrical contractor.
- If your house or business sustains damage preventing the reconnection of power, have a licensed electrical contractor repair electrical damage.