Preparing for cyclones

**Be prepared**
- Listen to your radio (ensure you have spare batteries)
- Check your Emergency Kit is ready and nearby
- Tie down or pack away all outdoor items and furniture
- Cover windows/doors with timber sheeting, or tape across the glass with masking tape and close all doors
- Make sure your vehicle is full of fuel and park undercover if possible
- Ensure your boat and/or caravan is garaged, or if not, make every effort to secure it with strong ropes to a dependable anchor point
- Evacuate from caravans and tents
- If visiting the area, talk to your accommodation provider about what you should do and where you can go
- Fill drinking containers and your bathtub and wheelie bin with water – this water can be used to flush toilets if water supplies are affected
- Freeze drinking water in case of power failure
- Place important documents and valuables in plastic bags or other waterproof containers and put in a safe place
- Turn off and unplug all non-essential electrical equipment

**Emergency kit checklist**

- Battery-operated radio and spare batteries
- Torch and spare batteries
- Candles, lighter and waterproof matches*
- Water in sealed containers (10L per person)
- Non-perishable food – enough for 3–4 days
- Portable gas stove with fuel*
- Can opener and utensils
- Combination multi-tool
- First aid kit and manual
- Medication
- Toilet and sanitary supplies
- Change of clothes and strong shoes
- Special need items for infants, the elderly and people with disabilities
- Pet food, water and other animal needs*
- Cash money (ATMs may not be available)
- Personal documents (insurance certificates, photographs etc)
- Strong plastic bags (for clothing and valuables etc)
- Emergency phone numbers

**DURING THE CYCLONE**
- Continue to listen to your battery-powered radio for all warnings and advice
- Stay safe inside and keep yourself and your family calm
- Shelter in the strongest part of the building, this is often the bathroom, toilet or hallway
- Mattresses and blankets may protect you
- Beware of the calm eye/centre of the cyclone – stay inside!

**AFTER A CYCLONE**
- Stay inside until officially advised on the radio that the cyclone has passed
- Stay well clear of fallen lines! Always assume that fallen powerlines are ‘live’
- Stay out of floodwaters

**Listen**
- Tune into your local radio station
- ABC Cairns 801 AM, 106.7 & 95.5 FM
- ABC Cairns (Mossman & Port Douglas) 609 AM, 90.1 FM
- Zinc Cairns 102.7 FM
- 4CA AM 846 AM
- Hot FM 103.5 FM
- Sea FM 99.5 FM
- 4AM Port Douglas 1422 AM
- Port Douglas FM 90.9 FM
- Community 88.1 FM
- Bumna Bippera Media 98.7 FM

**Information for residents and visitors**
- For information BEFORE a cyclone 4044 3044
- For information DURING a cyclone 4044 3377

**COUNCIL’S EMERGENCY CONTACTS**
- Police / Ambulance / Fire 000
- State Emergency Service (SES) 132 500
- Ergon Energy 132 296
- Main Roads 131 940

**REAL TIME NEWS AND UPDATES**
These channels are open as soon as there is a warning for cyclone, severe weather or natural disaster.

For more info visit: www.cairns.qld.gov.au/disaster
A cyclone is a violent tropical storm with very strong winds and heavy rain which can cause extensive property damage. The ‘eye’ or centre of a cyclone is an area made up of light winds and often clear skies. However beware, this is not the end of the cyclone. Very destructive winds from the other direction are to come. Stay inside!

**What is a cyclone?**

**Cyclone categories**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Categories</th>
<th>Strongest Gust</th>
<th>Typical Effect of Cyclones</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>90-124 kph</td>
<td>Negligible house damage; damage to some crops, trees and caravans; craft may drag at moorings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>125-164 kph</td>
<td>Minor house damage; significant damage to signs; trees and caravans, heavy damage to some crops, risk of power failure, small craft may break mooring.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>165-224 kph</td>
<td>Some roof and structural property damage; some caravans and crops destroyed; power failure likely.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>225-279 kph</td>
<td>Significant roofing loss and structural damage; many caravans destroyed and blown away, dangerous airborne debris; widespread power failures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>More than 280 kph</td>
<td>Extremely dangerous with widespread destruction.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CYCLONE WATCH**

The Bureau of Meteorology issues a Cyclone Watch 48 hours before a cyclone’s predicted landfall. Information is updated every 6 hours.

**CYCLONE WARNING**

A Cyclone Warning is issued as soon as stronger winds are expected to affect coastal or island communities within 24 hours. It will tell you where the cyclone is, its movements, how strong it is and predict the areas that are being threatened. Forecasts of heavy rainfall, flooding and storm surge are included where necessary. Residents and visitors to Cairns should take immediate precautions to safeguard their lives and property.

**About storm surges**

A storm surge is a rise in the ocean level associated with cyclones.

Storm surge is caused by high winds pushing on the ocean’s surface and lower than normal air pressure from the storm. As a cyclone reaches the coast the huge winds whip up the sea and push the dome of water over low-lying coastal areas, causing flooding, damaging buildings and cutting off evacuation routes.

Storm Tide Property Search and detailed maps indicating storm surge zones for the Cairns Regional Council area are available on the Council’s website and are included in the Storm Guide Evacuation Guide available from the Cairns Regional Council.

**About storm surges**

**Evacuation procedures**

- Unless you have been advised to evacuate, always stay safe inside and keep yourself and your family calm.
- Listen to your radio and other media for evacuation information.
- If you are in a storm surge zone you are encouraged to make pre-arrangements for safer temporary accommodation with family or friends in ‘higher places’, should the need to evacuate arise.
- Place of refuge will be activated for people with no alternatives, if an evacuation has been ordered. Pets, alcohol and weapons are not permitted.
- If an Evacuation order is issued, emergency service workers may door knock your street to direct you to a safer place.
- Take your Emergency Kit with you plus bed linen and towels.
- Register your details on the National Registration and Inquiry System by phoning 1800 727 077 or on line at www.redcross.org.au.