

How can I find out if I have a flood risk?

The following services can assist you in understanding your flood risk:

- **FloodWise Property Report** – Obtain your free FloodWise Property Report from Council. This includes defined flood levels specific to your property.
- **Inspection by engineer** – Engaging a qualified engineer to assess your property will assist you in identifying potential flood hazards, especially overland flow and run-off.
- **Observation and local knowledge** – View the property to identify potential flood hazards and talk to locals who have been in the area for a while.



By observing how close your property is to a creek or waterway you can better understand your flood risks.

What features should I look for to identify possible flood hazards?

- **Proximity to water** – Waterways such as a river or creek near your property could indicate a potential flood risk.
- **Extensions that enclose underneath a house** – In the past, some houses were purposely designed in such a way that the habitable areas were raised above ground level on stumps or built above brick garages so flood waters could flow freely underneath. Newly renovated, habitable rooms at ground level in these types of homes may be prone to flooding.
- **Overland flow paths** – Sloping land could also be a flood indicator, particularly if land slopes towards a doorway or garage, or where there is inadequate drainage. This could also include large concrete areas or patios that mean there is less ground to absorb water.

Am I covered by my household insurance?

Many house and contents policies do not contain cover for flood damage, or they have specific limitations on the definition of flood. Storm damage is usually included however the level of cover varies from insurer to insurer. You need to carefully read your policy to ensure that you are covered. For further information about flood insurance visit the Insurance Council of Australia website www.ica.com.au or talk to your insurer.



Radar image showing heavy band of light to moderate rain on 9 March 2001. This resulted in flash flooding and major disruption to some areas of Brisbane.
Image courtesy of Bureau of Meteorology.

Where can I find out about flood warnings?

Channel	Access	Contact information
Internet	Visit the Bureau of Meteorology website.	www.bom.gov.au
Radio	Tune your radio to a relevant station.	Local AM and FM stations, especially radio ABC (612 AM)
Television	Watch out for televised weather updates.	All free-to-air channels and also The Weather Channel (Foxtel/Austar)
Telephone	Listen to the Bureau's Telephone Weather Service. Local call charges apply.	Severe weather and flood warnings: 1300 659 219 Tropical cyclone warnings: 1300 659 212

Who do I contact if my property is flooded?

There are a range of services available to support the community during and after a flood.

Community support services

- Crisis Care – phone 1800 177 135 to find out what assistance is available to you.
- Community organisations – such as the Salvation Army, Red Cross, Rotary and church groups may provide assistance. Contact your local branch.

Personal contacts

You are likely to need to contact a range of people and services for assistance such as:

- service providers (plumber, electrician, gas and electricity provider, vet)
- medical providers (doctor or hospital, health fund)
- financial providers (bank, insurance provider, real estate).

Get your Be FloodWise Emergency contact card to record important phone and policy numbers from one of Council's regional business centres or customer service centres.

What other information is available?

The following information is available from Council's regional business centres or customer service centres, by phoning Council on (07) 3403 8888, or by visiting the Be FloodWise web pages at www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/floodwise.

Publication name	Overview of contents
Be FloodWise – A guide for residents	This booklet provides information on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • preparing and coping with a flood • checklists and forms to assist in planning for a flood.
Be FloodWise – A guide for businesses	This booklet provides information on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • preparing and coping with a flood • checklists and forms to assist in business planning (e.g. flood cost estimator and emergency kit contents checklist).
Be FloodWise – Flooding facts for industry	This fact sheet provides information on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • flooding in Brisbane • industry specific information for property, construction, conveyancing and insurance professionals.
Be FloodWise Emergency contact card*	This wallet-sized card can be used to record important phone numbers and policy details.
FloodWise Property Report*	Council can issue you with a free FloodWise Property Report. This report provides: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • property-based information about flood levels • habitable floor levels for building • information useful in determining flood risks associated with a particular property.
Be FloodWise bookmark	The bookmark issue general information on flooding and a range of tips to assist in preparing your property for a flood.

* only available from Council's regional business centres and customer service centres.

Be FloodWise tips

- Keep valuable and important possessions in a safe and high place.
- Clean out gutters and stormwater pipes regularly.
- Remove potential debris from your yard such as building materials and tree prunings.
- Secure all household appliances under your house (such as washing machines) to prevent them from becoming dislodged in a flood.
- Don't allow children to play in or around flood waters.
- Don't drive through flood waters. Turn around – don't drown.

Be FloodWise

Understanding your flood risk, preparing your property and family, and recovering after a flood.



Now is the time to Be FloodWise

FACT SHEET



Many properties in Brisbane are located around the river, creeks and waterways.

Brisbane is a sub-tropical city with a climate and topography that makes some areas of the city susceptible to flooding. The city has historically experienced a high average annual rainfall (approximately 1100 millimetres).

Over the past decade however, weather patterns have been highly variable and Brisbane has not received its normal annual rainfall. Throughout Australia, we have experienced weather extremes such as severe drought, storms and cyclones. If we look at our history, we know that floods and droughts are closely related and often follow each other. So now is the time to Be FloodWise.

This fact sheet provides information on flooding in Brisbane, actions Brisbane City Council is taking to manage Brisbane's flood risk and steps residents, including property owners and tenants, can take to be prepared.

Be FloodWise is another way Council is achieving our vision for the city's future.

Why is flooding an issue in Brisbane?

The city of Brisbane has evolved around its many rivers and creeks. A number of properties across Brisbane are located in close proximity to the Brisbane River, creeks or Moreton Bay.

Over the past 100 years, Brisbane has experienced more than 25 flood events, causing considerable disruption to the community. Flooding is generally caused by a number of factors including heavy or prolonged rainfall in a concentrated area or catchment, overloaded stormwater drainage systems and storm tides in Moreton Bay.

How could flooding affect me?

There are several types of flooding that affect Brisbane – each with different triggers and warning timeframes. You will hear these terms in weather forecasts so it is important that you are familiar with what they mean.

Flooding type	Trigger	Possible effects
River flooding	• occurs when widespread prolonged rain falls over the catchment area of the Brisbane River	• substantial damage to infrastructure, property, fittings and furniture • road closures, service disruption, property isolation and evacuation
Creek flooding	• occurs when the capacity of a creek is exceeded as a result of localised rainfall	• water damage to property, fittings and furniture • road closures, service disruption, property isolation and evacuation
Local flooding and overland flow	• occurs when parts of the stormwater drainage system (such as pipes and gully inlets) are blocked or capacity is exceeded • natural flow and run-off of water across land	• water damage to property, fittings and furniture • pooling of water in backyards, surface depressions, natural gullies and outdoor areas • liability for damages may apply if the building or filling on a property increases or worsens flooding to a neighbouring property
Flash flooding	• occurs after intense bursts of rainfall in a local area over a short period of time • can affect creeks and other watercourses	• rapid flooding causing significant damage to property, fittings and furniture • flooded carparks, damage to vehicles, road closures and service disruptions
Storm tide	• occurs from a combination of high tides and heavy seas usually associated with tropical storms	• flooding of coastal property, causing water damage to property, fittings and furniture • fast moving water can have devastating effects on property and life

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For more information
visit www.brisbane.qld.gov.au
or call (07) 3403 8888

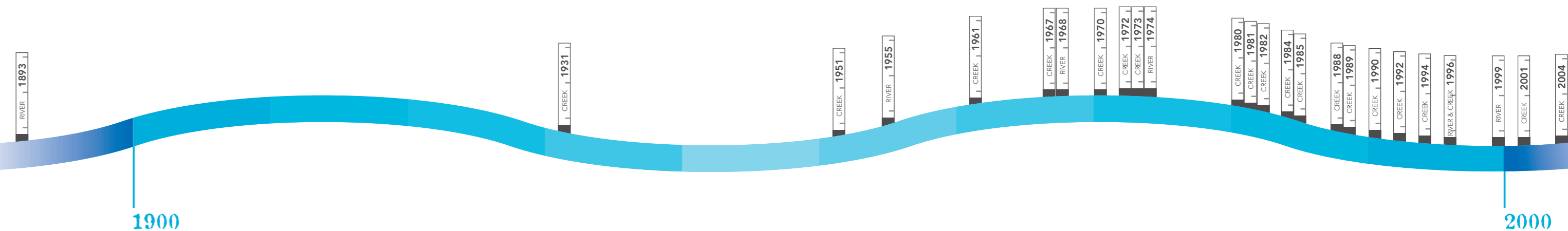


Dedicated to a better Brisbane

Be FloodWise

Brisbane's flood history

Source: Lord Mayor's Taskforce on Suburban Flooding



Local creeks and waterways can flood from relatively short and intense bursts of rainfall in a concentrated area.

Doesn't flooding only happen in the wet season?

Flooding can occur at any time of the year, particularly creek flooding and flash flooding. An example of this occurred in May 1996, when flood levels in some locations such as Oxley Creek, were the highest recorded since the 1974 flood. July 1988 and April 1989 are other examples of floods throughout Brisbane's history that have occurred outside the traditional wet season (December to March).

Hasn't Wivenhoe Dam fixed Brisbane's flooding problems?

Wivenhoe Dam hasn't eliminated flooding, but it has reduced the potential impact of a river flood for Brisbane. Wivenhoe Dam is located in the upper catchment of the Brisbane River, west of the city. Apart from acting as the primary water supply for Brisbane, the dam also assists in reducing the potential for a Brisbane River flood through its additional storage capacity and ability to hold back flood waters. It is therefore only effective in collecting rainfall in the upper catchment of the river, not suburban creeks and waterways.

What is Council doing to help Brisbane Be FloodWise?

Council's *Water for Today and Tomorrow Strategy* provides a holistic and integrated approach for total water cycle management. It outlines guidelines for:

Building and maintaining the city's 2000 kilometre long stormwater drainage network

Council uses a range of strategies to reduce stormwater run-off and pollution. This includes the installation of artificial wetlands, use of stormwater quality improvement devices, enforcing pollution by-laws, reducing sewer overflows and educating the community. These initiatives prevent flooding by reducing the potential for blockages, controlling sediment and erosion, assisting in litter management and enhancing the overall health and ecology of Brisbane's waterways.

Managing waterway vegetation and health

Council regularly clears rubbish such as shopping trolleys and other man-made debris from waterways as they reduce the water carrying capacity, interfere with the ecology of creeks and can cause flood hazards.

Vegetation such as reeds and bullrushes, which is often seen as weeds and obstructions, may not be removed as it prevents erosion by acting as anchors for soil, provides shelter for fauna that lives around creeks and acts as a filter to prevent pollutants and sediments from entering the waterway. This vegetation is generally flattened by the water current and does not obstruct the flow of water.

Managing floodplain development

Development within or near waterway corridors (such as the river and creeks) is managed through Council's town planning scheme – *City Plan*. Council is reviewing and strengthening land use planning controls where necessary to ensure that future development does not increase or create the potential for flooding.

Providing flood information to the public

Council has a range of resources available to residents, businesses and industry professionals to assist in improving community awareness and preparedness. These include a free FloodWise Property Report, and a range of Be FloodWise booklets, fact sheets and online information (visit www.brisbane.qld.gov.au/floodwise).



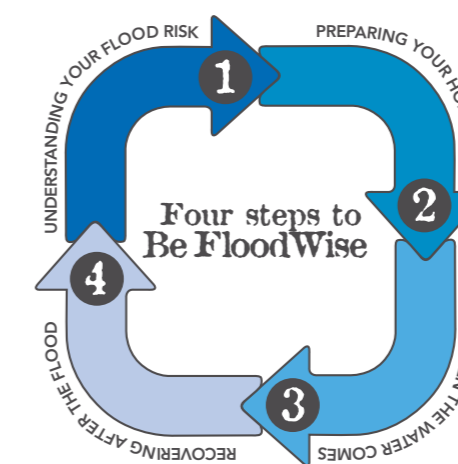
Council invests in mitigation works to minimise flooding in Brisbane.

Participating in disaster response during floods

Council undertakes response and recovery activities during a flood to assist in minimising community impacts. It does this via a range of operations and disaster management strategies in partnership with other state government agencies and local authorities.

In addition, Council is implementing key priority actions from the Lord Mayor's Taskforce on Suburban Flooding including:

- installing and upgrading telemetry gauges in creeks (rainfall and water-level measurement devices)
- implementing and upgrading the city's stormwater drainage network
- installing early warning signage on several flood-affected roads
- undertaking a voluntary home purchase scheme for high risk properties
- delivering a Be FloodWise awareness and information campaign to assist Brisbane residents and businesses to prepare for a flood.



What can I do to Be FloodWise?

Minimising flood damage is a community-wide responsibility. While Council has an important role to play, residents and businesses can take steps to be prepared. You can reduce your own risk by planning ahead, and understanding how any changes and renovations around your home or business can impact on your flooding exposure.

Four steps to Be FloodWise

Step 1: Understanding your flood risk – Find out all you can to determine if your property has a flood risk by obtaining a free FloodWise Property Report from Council, talking to people who have lived in the area a while, observing the property to identify flood hazards or consider engaging a qualified engineer.

Step 2: Preparing your home – people and property – There are a number of things you can do to prepare your home. These include checking that all safety precautions have been taken, storing valuable items such as photo albums well above likely flood levels, insuring your home and contents for flood, learning where to access warning information, removing potential flood hazards from your property and preparing an emergency kit.

Step 3: Responding when the water comes – As the water rises, further protect your home where possible with sandbags and plastic. Prepare for possible evacuation and listen to your local radio station for warnings and advice. Don't swim, walk or drive through flood waters.

Step 4: Recovering after the flood – After a flood, cleaning up can be a difficult process. Be alert for hazards such as unsafe electrical wiring, contaminated water and stray wildlife.

Council has produced two comprehensive booklets which provide residents and businesses with Four steps to Be FloodWise. Ask for the Be FloodWise guides from Council's regional business centres or customer service centres or phone Council on (07) 3403 8888. Phone this number for assistance with translation services for flood-related information.