

# Cyclones

## BE PREPARED

Like other natural disasters, a cyclone is dangerous and unpredictable. There are a few things you need to know to ensure the safety of you and your family.

### Are you in a cyclone prone area?

You can find out if you are in a cyclone-prone area by asking Cairns Regional Council, checking their website at <http://www.cairns.qld.gov.au/disaster> and asking your family and other community members.

The most cyclone-prone areas of Australia include the coastal regions of Queensland, Western Australia and the Northern Territory.

Hurricanes and cyclones form over most of the world's tropical waters between about 50 and 220 latitude (in the Indian, Pacific and Atlantic Oceans) and that the most intense hurricanes and cyclones occur in the north-west Pacific.

### Preparing for cyclones

As the cyclone season approaches, there are a few steps you and your family need to take to ensure your safety and to prevent damage to your home and the community.

#### Steps to take

- ▶ Ask the adults in your house for help to check your home is in good condition, with a safe and secure structure, and no loose tiles on the roof.
- ▶ Clear the property of loose items or secure them. This reduces flying debris.
- ▶ Locate a safe place nearby. Find where your nearest safe higher ground is in case of evacuation.
- ▶ Assemble your emergency survival kit: tinned food, water, medicines, important documents, torches, candles and matches, portable radio and batteries.
- ▶ Discuss your emergency plan with your family. Decide on the safest places in the house in the event of a cyclone, and ensure that your emergency kit is easily accessible to all family members. Make sure a list of emergency contacts is clearly visible and a copy is in the emergency kit.

### Household emergency kit

Assembling a household emergency kit is important for your survival during a cyclone. Find out what you should include.

### Warning signs

The tracking and monitoring of cyclones has improved with technology and communication. Meteorologists will notify the appropriate authorities if they find that a cyclone is forming and give it a name and category.

The authorities and media will then alert communities at risk and let them know what steps they should take to ensure their safety, including:

- ▶ Continue listening to the local radio/watching TV for updates and more warnings
- ▶ Board or tape your windows
- ▶ Fill water containers
- ▶ Ensure your car is fuelled and is undercover
- ▶ Check your emergency kit and gather extra clothing and shoes.

If you choose to leave your home well before the cyclone hits your region, remember to turn off gas and electricity, take your household emergency kit with you and lock your home.

### During the cyclone

During the cyclone, ensure you:

- ▶ Stay inside and shelter in the strongest part of the house (e.g. bathroom)
- ▶ Protect yourself with mattresses and blankets
- ▶ Keep listening to the radio for information and instructions
- ▶ Remain indoors until the cyclone has passed. Remember there is a brief period of calm in the eye of the cyclone, before the cyclone continues.

### After the cyclone

Remain indoors until you are advised that it is safe to leave.

When you do go outside, be aware of debris, buildings and trees may be unstable and powerlines may have fallen.

If you are travelling use recommended routes to avoid accidents, flooded rivers and roads, and debris.

