

Extreme Weather – ! Storm Warning Alert !

When stormy weather is approaching you need to be prepared

Extreme weather conditions can present at any time of year. Summer and winter, day or night, normal weather patterns tend to be expected and taken for granted; but that doesn't mean they can't change in the blink of an eye. We've all seen news reports of flash flooding and avalanches that have surprised local residents causing property damage and loss of lives. It pays to keep updated on current conditions and not be caught napping, especially when forecasters are predicting the approach of severe storms. Usually TV and radio news programs will broadcast these upcoming events across regions likely to be affected; but I know there are some who never watch the news; and they are the ones who are often disadvantaged when the bad weather hits.

Here in Southwestern Australia we receive RED (dangerous) weather alerts via texts on our mobile phones; and generally the same warnings are posted on local Facebook notice-boards. There are, however, occasions when even the official weather-watchers get it wrong; then anyone in the firing line had better hope they are prepared for the worst.

There are many ways that can be implemented in advance to ensure property and surroundings are less affected by storm conditions:

- ✓ Clear gutters and downpipes of leaves and debris which block the free flow of rainwater. During periods of heat and drought these become fire hazards; so too combustible material left close to buildings.
- ✓ Remove or tie down any loose objects such as metal roofing sheets; and securely anchor temporary shelters and trampolines. In high winds these can become flying missiles.
- ✓ Keep the fuel tank in your vehicle at least a quarter full and place it in an easily accessible spot.
- ✓ Prepare a grab-and-go bag – click on “Your emergency Check List” at the foot of our Home page.

Should a storm hit, ensure you follow the advice below:

- ☠ If outside, find safe shelter away from trees, power lines, storm water drains and streams.
- ☠ Close your curtains and blinds, and stay inside away from windows.
- ☠ Unplug electrical appliances and do not use land-line telephones if there is lightning.
- ☠ If boating, swimming or surfing leave the water.
- ☠ Be alert and watch for hazards on the road such as fallen power lines and loose debris.

- ☠ Keep away from flooded drains, rivers, streams and waterways.
- ☠ Never drive through floods, even on familiar roads; and especially not when water is fast-flowing.
- ☠ Be careful of fallen trees, damaged buildings and debris.
- ☠ Be careful of fallen power lines. They are dangerous and should always be treated as live.

After the event has passed:

Assess your home, car and property for damage. If damage has occurred take photos and contact your insurance company to organise permanent repairs.

Keep the phone number of the Emergency Service Agency for your area handy; and if your home or property has significant damage, like a badly damaged roof or flooding, call them.

For more information read our Focus article F16 – In Case of Emergency. This covers other conditions you may possibly encounter.

For a look at some more informative articles on a variety of subjects just return to the webpage



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