

2010



Local Flood Guide

Myrtleford

Understand, prepare, and respond effectively to your flood risk.



FLOOD STORM
EMERGENCY **132 500**



If life threatening
call triple zero 000

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Victorian State Emergency Service acknowledges Aboriginal Traditional Owners of Country throughout Victoria and pays respect to their cultures and Elders past and present.

Disclaimer: Victoria State Emergency Service assumes no responsibility or liability for any errors or omissions for any of the content in this document.

Content reviewed: March 2025



For more information visit: ses.vic.gov.au/plan-and-stay-safe

Local flood information



There have been 6 significant flood events in Myrtleford between 1974 and 2024.



The largest flood on record was in 1993 when the floodwater reached 7.1 metres at the Ovens River gauge in Eurobin.



Flooding usually affects Myrtleford for two to four days, but this can vary depending on the size of the flood and rainfall.

Why does Myrtleford flood?

Myrtleford is at risk of both **riverine flooding** and **flash flooding**, which can happen separately or at the same time. Both are usually caused by heavy rainfall.

Riverine flooding happens when the Ovens River, Happy Valley Creek, Buffalo Creek and/or Barwidgee Creek rise, and overflow their banks, spilling water onto land. The most common cause is **prolonged** heavy rainfall.

- Myrtleford is located on the Ovens River floodplain, the naturally low-lying areas more likely to be impacted in a flood.
- Rainfall and snowmelt from the Ovens River catchment, an area where water is collected by the natural landscape, can flood Myrtleford.
- Flooding from the Buckland and Buffalo Rivers can contribute to flooding in Myrtleford.

Flash flooding happens quickly and you may not receive an official warning. Although these floods only last short time, they can cause severe damage.

- Nil Gully and bushfire affected areas are more likely to flood in flash flooding.
- Damage from bushfires can cause water to run along the ground and cause flooding rather than being absorbed into the ground

How do floods impact communities?

Even if your home or workplace stays dry, floods can impact you in many ways.



Buildings flooded



Road closures



Drinking water supply and quality affected



Power outages



Mobile and internet network outage

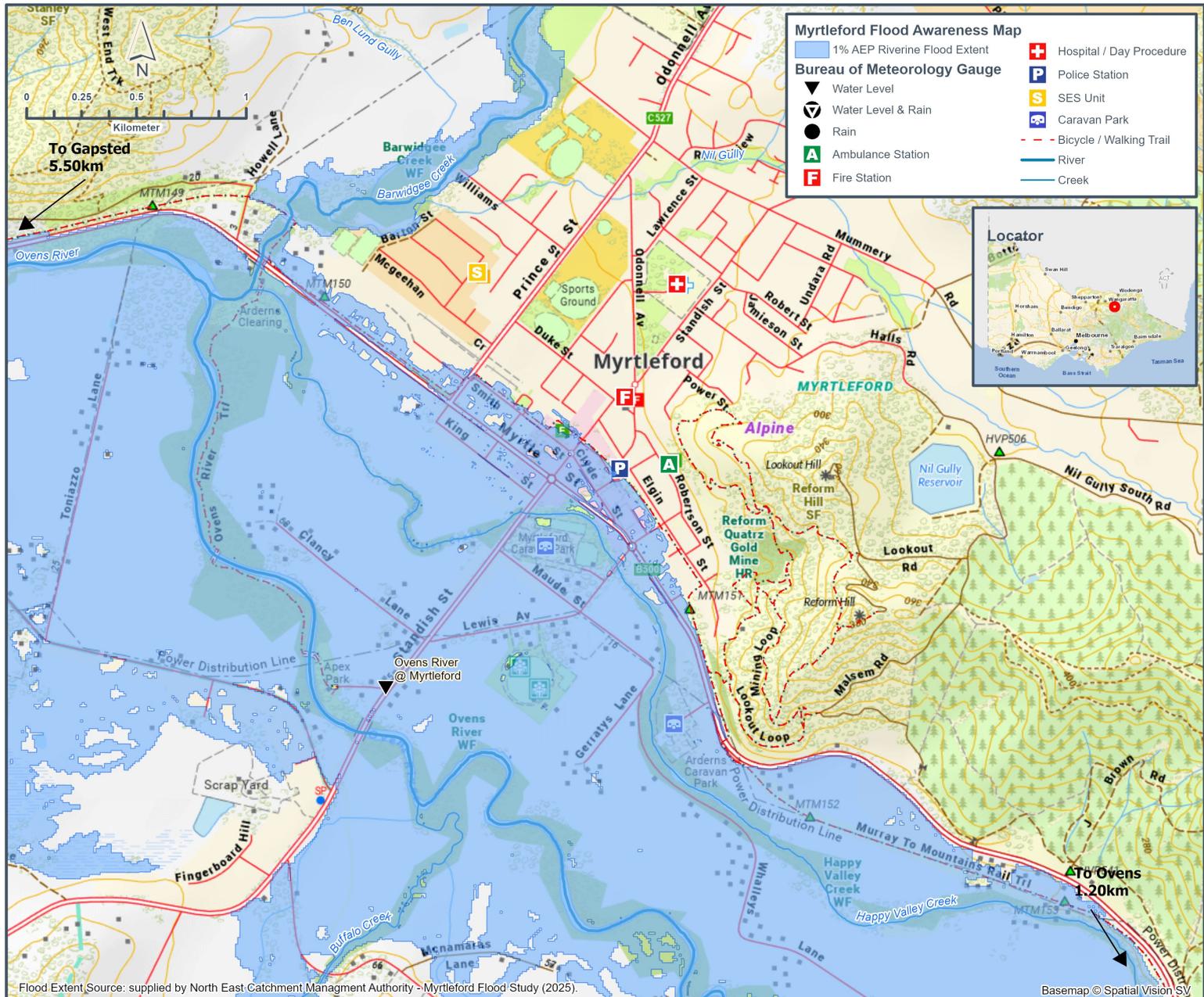


Sewage overflows inside building

Check your home, work, and travel routes for floodwater

If this map shows potential flood risk for you, ensure you take action to **plan and prepare for floods**. See [page 7](#) for more information.

- This map shows the area likely to flood in a significant flood event that would measure at least 7.4 metres high at the Eurobin Ovens River gauge.
- This is referred to as a 1% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP), which means there is a 1% chance of this size flood (or greater) happening in any year.



What might happen in a flood in your area?

Although no two floods are the same and the environment is constantly changing, the below table provides an idea of what to expect at different flood heights.

- **Before a flood:** Use the floodwater heights in the table to help you decide when you will need to act to protect yourself and your property in a flood event.
- **During a flood:** When a warning is issued by [VicEmergency](#), use the predicted floodwater height and warning information to understand what the potential impacts may be for you and

Height (metres)*	Previous flood event impacts and flood class levels
7.40m	Flood height shown on map, see page 4 .
7.10m [^]	<p>October 1993 flood event</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 90 homes and 32 businesses were flooded above floor level. ■ Extensive damage to crops, livestock, pumps, machinery and fencing. ■ 202 properties were cut off by floodwater on their property.
6.90m [^]	<p>September 1998 flood event—300mm of rainfall in 72 hours caused flooding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 112 buildings flooded above floor level. ■ Extensive flooding to properties between Happy Valley Creek and the Ovens River along Whalleys Lane, Maude and Standish Streets and Lewis Avenue. ■ Extensive road closures, Prince Street (Myrtleford to Yackandandah Road) was the only road open into and out of town.
6.83m	<p>September 2010 flood event</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 18 low-lying houses were evacuated. ■ Car park behind Reject Shop (Target) & shops backing onto Happy Valley Creek flooded. ■ Access to Bright was only by emergency vehicles travelling along the rail trail.
6.19m	October 2016 flood event
6.00m	Major flood level
5.73m	<p>December 2010 flood event</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ 19 people were evacuated from the Myrtleford and Arderns Caravan Parks.
5.50m	Moderate flood level
5.00m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The Myrtleford flood diversion channel effectively reduces flooding up to a height of five meters but provides no protection against floods over this level. ■ Arderns Caravan Park and low-lying parts of town start to flood. <p>September 1998 flood event</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Lower areas of Standish Street were under water from Ovens River.
4.90m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Happy Valley Creek overflows near Whalleys Lane.
4.79m	March 2012 flood event
4.50m	Minor flood level
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The Ovens River overflows at Selzers Lane (Ovens) and many other places between the Hop Gardens and Myrtleford. ■ Flooding in Myrtleford is inevitable once the Ovens River overflows upstream of town. Standish Street floodway active.

*The height measurement is at the Ovens River gauge at Eurobin

[^]The height is estimated because the flood event happened before the Eurobin gauge was operational.

What might happen in a flood in your area? (Continued)

Road closures are common in Myrtleford during big floods.

Great Alpine Road

- This can be flooded on both sides of Myrtleford isolating the town.
- The Great Alpine Road at Wabonga Lane (near the deer farm) and the road to the sewage farm are often the first areas to be cut off in a flood.
- Alternative access to Myrtleford maybe possible via Yackandandah-Myrtleford Road.

For current road closures, check [VicTraffic](#). [VicEmergency](#) may include road closures in its warnings, see [page 8](#) for more information.



Stay safe by never driving through flood water. It can take just 15cm of flowing water to float a car, that's the height of an average pen.

What to do if I hear my community siren?

Community sirens, including the existing Myrtleford CFA Brigade siren, are being used as part of Victoria's warning system for all hazards, including flood.



A prolonged, **five-minute signal** will indicate a current emergency has been identified in the local area. You should seek further information from sources such as [VicEmergency](#) and your local emergency broadcasters, see [page 8](#) for more information,

Your local services

Catchment Management Authority

For general advice about flooding and controls on planning scheme amendments.

- **North East Catchment Management Authority**
necma.vic.gov.au | 1300 216 513

Local Council

For relief support after a flood event and general land use planning. And, further emergency information on the First 72 hours program.

[Alpine Shire—The First 72 hours](#)

- **Alpine Shire Council**
alpineshire.vic.gov.au | 03 5755 0555



Floodwater can be very deep, rise quickly and move fast.

Stay safe by avoiding flooded areas.

Plan and prepare for floods

1 How to stay informed

VicEmergency is Victoria's source of emergency information and warnings.

- Set-up a watch zone for your area for alerts when warnings are issued.
- Learn about the three different warning levels.



VicEmergency app
emergency.vic.gov.au
1800 226 226



vicemergency



@vicemergency



2 Make an Emergency Plan

Use information from your Local Flood Guide and your Catchment Management Authority, to help you decide;

- What you will do in a flood emergency
- When you will do it
- Who you will inform



Red Cross RediPlan is a free tool that helps you create a simple emergency plan that supports the flood actions you have chosen.

- Visit redcross.org.au/prepare
- Download the [Get Prepared](#) app

3 Prepare an emergency kit



You may need to stay safe for 72 hours in a disaster before help arrives. Make sure you have safe drinking water, food, and any special needs or medications for all family.



There will be extra items to be added to your emergency kit in an emergency like clothes, a phone and charger.



Watch a video on how to get your Emergency kit ready.

youtu.be/XgyLnKDMkNo

4 Reduce impacts to your property

- Keep gutters and drains clear of debris including leaves and any other items.
- Check your building and contents insurance, what kind of flooding does it cover?
- Move your valuable possessions up high.
- Back up important files and documents to a cloud storage or USB kept elsewhere.
- Identify higher ground on or around your property, away from the danger area.
- Consider buying sand and sandbags ahead of time, refer to our Sandbag Guide for more information.

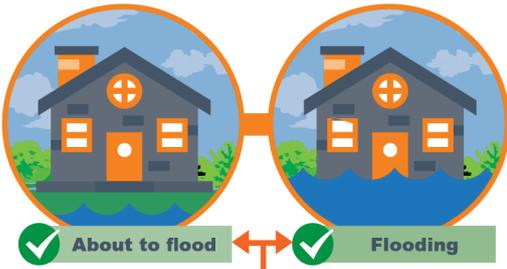


For more details and other tips, visit:
ses.vic.gov.au/flood



What to do in a flood emergency

When to call VICSES



 **Flood emergency assistance call VICSES 132 500**

 **If life threatening call triple zero 000**

Stay Informed

VicEmergency

Emergency warnings will provide information on what is happening and advice of what you should do.

You may not receive an official warning before a flood.



VicEmergency app
emergency.vic.gov.au
1800 226 226



vicemergency @vicemergency



- Set-up a watch zone for alerts for your area.

Bureau of Meteorology



Monitor rainfall, river levels, weather forecasts/warnings.

bom.gov.au/vic/flood/north_east.shtml

Emergency broadcasters



Radio | ABC Myrtleford 91.7FM and 91.9 FM

TV | Sky News

If you expect floodwater at your property

1



Bag it

Sandbag doorways and low-lying windows to slow floodwater entering your home.

2



Block it

Block toilets, bath and drains using a sandbag ideally placed inside a plastic rubbish bag.

3



Lift it

Put your valuables and electrical items as high as possible. Turn off power, gas, and water at the mains.

4



Leave

- Leave **before** the flood arrives.
- Check warnings from VicEmergency for information like evacuation or relief centres, and road closures.
- Travel to the home of family or friends who are in a safe location, away from the flooded area.

Take your emergency kit and add the items below:



Phone & charger



Prescriptions & medication



Clothes for your family



Strong shoes



Pet needs

Never drive through floodwater

Large



A Large 4WD can be moved by water only 45cm deep.

Small



A small car can be moved by water only 15cm deep.



For more details and other tips, visit:

ses.vic.gov.au/flood



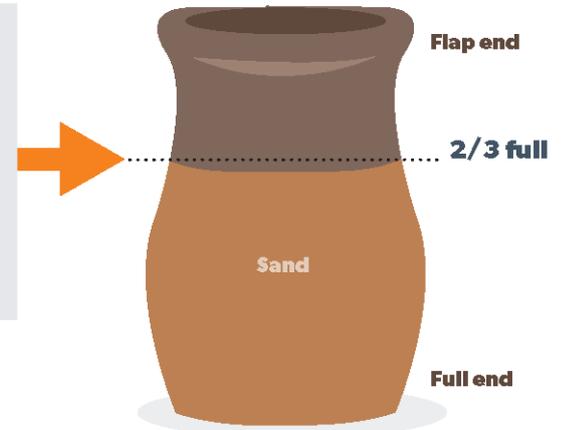
Sandbagging

Protecting your home

Sandbags won't stop the water completely, but can reduce the amount of water entering your home.

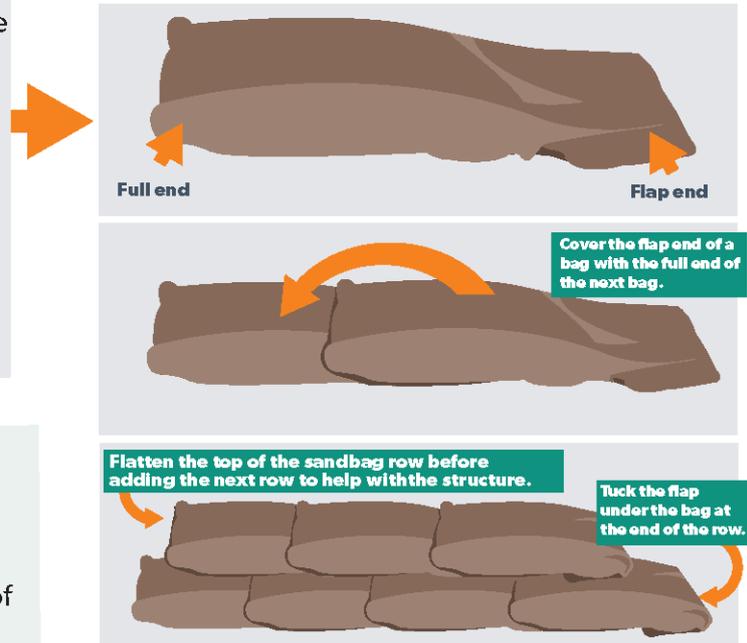
How do I fill a sandbag?

- Only use sand to fill hessian bags. Do not use dirt.
- Only fill sandbag two-thirds full.
- Do not over fill the sandbag as it will be too heavy to carry.
- Do not tie the top of the sandbag.
- Take care when filling and lifting the sandbag, to avoid injury.



How do I lay sandbags?

- Lay sandbags like brickwork. Stagger rows so that the joins do not line up.
- Start at one end and work to the other end.
- Ensure the unfilled part of the bag is covered by the next bag.
- Tuck flap under the bag at the end of the row.
- If the sandbag wall is going to be more than five (5) bags high, you will need to lay two (2) rows wide.



Where do I place the sandbags?

- Place sandbags in plastic bags to cover drainage holes in home (e.g. showers, toilets, sinks) to stop back flow of water.
- Place a small wall across doorways, at least the height of the expected water level. Be careful not to trap yourself inside.
- If available, plastic sheeting may be used under sandbags to reduce the seepage.

Block it

Toilets, bath and all drain holes



What do I do once I have finished with the sandbags?

- Sturdy gloves should be worn when handling wet sandbags as they can contain chemicals, waste and diseases.
- Sandbags that have been in contact with floodwater need to be thrown away.
- Contact your local council to find out how to dispose of your sandbags safely.



Sandbags and sand

Preparing your home

Having sandbag supplies ready can assist you before a flooding emergency occurs.



What supplies do I need to sandbag my home?

- Sandbags
- Sand
- Plastic sheeting
- Gloves and safety goggles
- Shovel or hand scoop

Where can I purchase these supplies?

- Many sandbag supplies can be purchased from hardware stores or garden centers.
- VICSES do not routinely supply sandbags to households.
- During floods, sandbag distribution points may be established in flood-affected areas.

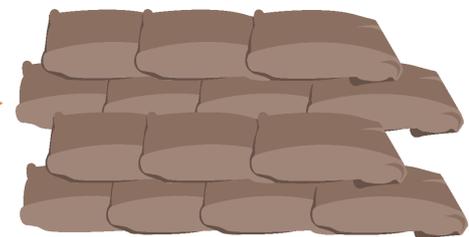


How many sandbags will I need and how much sand?

- Most homes can be protected by less than 25 sandbags.
- The number of sandbags will depend on your local flood risk and availability.
- Sandbags are filled 2/3 full which requires around 15-20kgs of sand per bag.

How do I store my sand and sandbags?

- Filled sandbags only have a short shelf life.
- It is recommended to store sandbags empty.
- Sandbags should be stored in a cool dry area away from UV light.
- Sand should be kept dry and can be stored in water-resistant containers or under a tarp.
- Sand is heavy - ensure it is stored so it can be moved safely.



When should I sandbag my home?

- **You** are best placed to decide if there is a need to sandbag your home, based on local knowledge and past flood events.
- Monitor your local conditions. Stay up-to-date with weather forecasts and warnings by downloading the **BOM Weather** and **VicEmergency** apps, or call the VicEmergency Hotline on 1800 226 226.
- If you think you are at risk, do not wait for an official warning to act.