

## **Avon River Catchment**

Briagolong, Bushy Park, Boisdale, Stratford, Valencia Creek



# How to plan and prepare for floods



# Are you at risk of flood?

The Avon River has a large funnel-shaped catchment that fills the river quickly.

It flows through Valencia Creek, Bushy Park, Boisdale and Stratford before joining the Gippsland Lakes at Lake Wellington. Along the way, it is fed by the Freestone and Valencia Creeks near Briagolong, Bushy Park and Valencia Creek.

Rain in the hills can cause the Avon to flood even if there is little or no rain lower down. This can catch you unawares, so pay attention to weather forecasts for higher in the mountains.

The creeks in the foothills north of Briagolong and Valencia Creek can fill, isolating properties. If you live or travel in these areas, you will need a well-stocked Home Emergency Kit. In a major flood, you may not have access out of the area for days.

It is dangerous to drive across flooded causeways and creek beds, even in four wheel drive vehicles. Shallow fast-flowing water can tip a car or push it off the edge of a narrow causeway. You won't see obstacles under the water or know if the road is damaged.

Stratford sits on the Princes Highway between Sale and Bairnsdale. In major floods, the highway may be cut at the railway bridge on the Sale side. Apex Park and other parts of Stratford along the Avon River and Blackall Creek may also flood.

High water in Lake Wellington at the lower end of the catchment can slow flood water from draining and spread it over a wider area. This results in people below Stratford being flooded by a backwater effect rather than by direct flooding.

Floods are a part of life in the Avon River area. If you live, work, travel or camp there, take the time to plan ahead.

## **Understanding Warnings**

Flood Watches & Flood Warnings are issued by the Bureau of Meteorology to tell people about possible flooding.

A Flood Watch means there is a developing weather pattern that might cause flooding in one or two days.

Flood Warnings mean flooding is about to happen or is already happening. There are Minor, Moderate or Major flood warnings.

VICSES will give local information about how the flood water is affecting people and properties. This includes safety messages to remind you what to do.

Severe Weather Warning or Severe Thunderstorm Warnings are issued when damaging winds, possible hail and FLASH FLOODING is expected.

Flash Flooding happens when heavy rain causes a very fast rise of water on low-lying land or a rush of damaging water downhill on steep properties. There may be little or no warning time.



Emergency Alert may be used to send emergency messages to your mobile phone or landline. If you receive an emergency alert, pay attention and take it seriously. Act immediately.

## NEVER ...

Never walk, play, ride or drive in floodwaters.

This is the main cause of death and injury during floods.

As little as 20 centimetres of fast flowing water can knock you off your feet !

## How SES can help you

The State Emergency Service is a volunteer organisation trained to manage floods, storms & other emergencies.

SES volunteers may help by:

- · giving advice on how to plan and prepare
- · helping to protect properties
- · rescuing people from flood water
- protecting essential services like hospitals and powerstations
- · helping with temporary repairs to reduce danger



#### Evacuation

During a flood, the SES and other emergency services may advise you by Emergency Alert, radio broadcast or door-knock to prepare to leave your home.

- · listen to warnings and advice act early
- be aware conditions can change rapidly roads or escape routes may close or become dangerous

When you evacuate, report to a relief centre. If you choose to shelter with a friend or relative, tell authorities where you are staying. Do not return home until advised it is safe to do so.

## A well-prepared community can reduce flood damage by up to 80%.

Be prepared for floods by having an Emergency Plan:

- understand your flood risk
- know what to do and when to do it
- where to get emergency updates
- have a safe evacuation route

## What you can do now

Find out if you live or work in a flood-prone area. Contact your local Council or SES unit. Ask your neighbours.

### Get prepared:

- keep a list of emergency numbers by the phone & in your mobile
- put together an Emergency Kit
- develop an Emergency Plan make sure everyone in your family and workplace knows what to do

### Home Emergency kit

- a copy of your Home or Business Emergency Plan
- · battery powered torch and radio/spare batteries
- · water and food for three days
- first aid kit, duct tape, matches, phone charger
- rubber and strong leather gloves
- important papers, mementoes, photos
- · medications and scripts
- special needs for infants, disabled, the elderly & pets



## Need more information ?

- current emergency information
- advice on planning and preparing for floods and storms
- help with home and business emergency plans

Visit the VICSES website at <u>www.ses.vic.gov.au</u>

BEFORE THE FLOOD:	
Check your home and contents insurance cover	r for flood
Keep a list of emergency numbers near the tele your mobile phone	phone and in
Put together an Emergency Kit and prepare a H Business Emergency Plan -see: www.ses.vic.go	
When you hear a FloodWatch or weath   Listen to local radio and SKY News for warnings   Notice what is happening outside   Check your Emergency Plan and Kit and take the you evacuate	s and advice
When flooding may be imminent (a Flooding Make sure family members and neighbours are situation	
Be ready to evacuate if advised by emergency s	services
Secure valuables and important documents as	high as possible
Turn off water, gas and electricity at the mains	
Secure objects likely to float and cause damage Raise chemicals and oils well above floor level.	<u>.</u>
Move machinery, pumps and livestock to known	n higher ground.
If necessary, lay sand-filled bags to help protect	your property.
If you are likely to become isolated, make sure y supply of food, water and medications	/ou have a good
DURING THE FLOOD	
For emergency assistance, call 132 500 for VIC	SES
DO NOT drive, ride or walk through floodwaters	i
NEVER allow children to play in floodwaters	
Stay well clear of fallen trees, fallen power lines structures or buildings	and damaged
Listen for updates and stay aware as conditions	can change
AFTER THE FLOOD	
If your property has been flooded, call your loca support	al municipality for
Have electrical/gas equipment professionally te Check your smoke alarms are still working.	sted prior to use.
Go to www.health.vic.gov.au for health warning: protective clothing requirements and advice on	

food and water

## FloodSafe Contacts

Life threatening Emergency police fire ambulance	000
Victoria State Emergency Service (VICSES) flood / storm emergency calls	132 500
VICSES Flood & Storm Information Line operates during major flood / storm events	1300 842 737 1300 VIC SES www.ses.vic.gov.au
Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) Weather information, forecasts, warnings	1300 659 217 www.bom.gov.au
VicRoads - Road closures & hazard reporting service	131 170 www.vicroads.vic.gov.au
Dept of Health Clean up, personal health, safe food handling, advice on clean water	www.health.vic.gov.au
Dept of Human Services (DHS) Financial support, housing, counselling	www.dhs.vic.gov.au
Dept of Primary Industry (DPI) Recovery information: rural & agricultural	136 186 www.dpi.vic.gov.au
LOCAL CONTACTS	
Wellington Shire - general	1300 366 244 www.wellington.vic.gov.au
SP Ausnet Power - faults	1300 360 795
TruEnergy	131 799
Origin Energy Gas - faults	1800 676 300
Southern Rural Water - faults	1300 139 510
LOCAL RADIO	
ABC Gippsland Sale - Bairnsdale	100.7 FM & 828 AM
3TR & Star FM	1242 AM & 99.5 FM
LIFE FM	103.9 FM
FLOOD STORM SES EMERGENCY	103.9 FM

132 500



LOCAL FLOOD INTELLIGENCE based on The Channels Gauge north of Valencia Creek RECENT MAJOR FLOODS - 1990, 1998, 2007 MAJOR Flood - 7.5m Princes Highway cut at the railway bridge in Stratford; Maffra-Stratford Rd cut west of Stratford; Briagolong-Boisdale Road cut east of Boisdale; Briagolong-Valencia Creek Road cut east of Valencia Creek and west of Marathon

Boisdale may flood at the Boisdale-Briagolong turn-off & into the town if the Freestone Creek and Avon River are both high or if the Channel Gauge goes above 8.0m - only short term evacuation is needed as water clears within 12 hours

Blackall Creek, that runs on the western edge of Stratford, may effect properties , including the Avon Caravan Park

#### **MODERATE Flood - 6.9m**

Road, Briagolong

Small communities in foothills north of Valencia Creek and Briagolong isolated due to flooded creek crossings; dirt road and driveway damage likely in steep country

Weir's Crossing on Stewart's Lane north-west of Stratford can can be cut and may carry shallow water for some weeks.

Heavy local rain in Briagolong can cause temporary creek which flows from Victoria Street between Smith & McLean; across the intersection of McLean and Rosstrevor; through private property across Cahill and Avon Streets between McLean and Landy; then down Station St to cross Forbes St and into the paddock opposite the tennis courts

#### **MINOR Flood - 5.0m**

Rural properties may be effected - property owners should move pumps & stock to higher ground

#### FLOODWATCH

August 2011

Weather system developing which may cause flooding, generally low pressure system from southern NSW or Central Australia - watch for these patterns & plan ahead

Listen to local radio & SKY News for information updates Keep in touch with neighbours