

Cyclone Shelter and Evacuation Options.

**for residents of the
Whitsunday Regional Council**

Everybody living in a cyclone-prone area should have a household emergency plan, which includes evacuation and shelter considerations. Residents should plan and prepare to shelter in a safe and secure structure either at home or with family and friends, or relocate to outside the warning area.

It is critical that you and your family have thought through and planned for your family's safety before the cyclone season. You need to develop your household emergency plan so you can make safe decisions and preparations at the beginning of the season, especially about where you and your family will shelter during a cyclone.

You will need to be prepared to look after yourself and your family. In the initial stages leading up to a tropical cyclone, emergency services will be engaged in essential disaster management tasks and assisting residents who may not be capable of evacuating themselves.

Evacuation and Shelter Options

The best option for most people during a tropical cyclone is to shelter in their homes (shelter in place). However, if your home is located in an evacuation zone or is an older building that is not in good condition or you have special needs, you need to plan and prepare now so you can evacuate and seek shelter in a safer place.

Find out if it's safe for you to plan and prepare to shelter in place:





SHELTER IN PLACE

If your home is safe, then plan and prepare now to shelter in place.

If you answered no to all three questions in the diagram (on left), this is your best option.

- You will be more comfortable sheltering in your own home and can keep your pets with you. You can even offer to shelter your friends and family.
- You still need to plan and prepare now – by following these steps:
 - » Prepare an emergency plan, emergency kit and prepare your home – refer to the Whitsunday Region Emergency Action Guide.
 - » Identify the strongest room in your home. This is usually the smallest room with the least number of windows and external walls.
 - » Identify your best options to Tune into Warnings (see contacts and resources listed on the back of this leaflet).
 - » Following these steps will assist you and your family's preparations for a cyclone



EVACUATE & SHELTER IN A SAFER PLACE

If your home is not safe, then plan and prepare now so you can evacuate to a safer place.

If you answered yes to any of the questions in the diagram (on left), your best options are to:

- » Pre-arrange to evacuate and shelter with family or friends that live in a safer place – outside the evacuation zone, in a well maintained building/ home, or
- » Pre-arrange to leave the area altogether and shelter in another town outside of the warning area (motel, family or friends).
- Check now if you will be able to take your pets with you and determine what emergency supplies and valuables you will need to prepare and take with you in your evacuation kit;
- Consider how you will get to your safer location and when you will need to leave . Remember it is better to leave early before wind and storm surge impact your local area; and
- Enact your evacuation plan (when required) and move to your safer location. Remember it is better to leave early and not wait to the last minute.

Public Shelter Options

Public Cyclone Shelters must be considered as the **last option** for residents that live in an evacuation zone, have exhausted all other shelter options and are unable to leave the warning area. Public Cyclone Shelters are intended as a short term shelter option (up to 18 hours) and have very basic amenities.

You and your family will be much more comfortable sheltering at home, or at a family members' or friends' home located in an area outside local evacuation zones or with family, friends or at a motel in a location outside the warning area.

Residents in evacuation zones with no other sheltering option will be advised when the Public Cyclone Shelter is activated, via local radio and on councils' website and facebook page (Whitsunday Disaster & Emergency Information). The location of these centres will be included in this advice.

Limitations of Public Cyclone Shelters:

These facilities have limited capacity and will be used to accommodate as many people as possible. This means that there will be limited space and you will need to be aware of the following limitations and conditions:

- **You will need to be seated in a chair and will not be able to lie or sit on a mattress or stretcher** (there is not enough space for bedding);
- **Domestic pets and other animals will not be allowed in the shelter** and you will need to make other arrangements for sheltering your pets prior to cyclone season. Note: Assistance animals are permitted to enter the shelter and stay with owners;
- **All personal belongings are to be kept within a backpack or small bag able to fit under a chair.** You will need to be self sufficient and support yourself and your family for the duration of the shelter period, so you need to include personal medications, essential non-perishable food and refreshments, identification papers and essential personal items. Anything deemed oversized and / or unnecessary will not be permitted into the Shelter;

- There are no cooking facilities, limited bathroom facilities, and limited medical support provided;
- There will be limited transport and parking options; and
- **When using a Public Cyclone Shelter: You may be in the facility for up to 18 hours or more.** During this time the building will be “locked down” for a period when the cyclone is passing. To ensure the structural integrity of the building and the safety of occupants during this time, there will be no ability to enter OR leave the shelter.

Prohibited items

It is a condition of entry that prohibited items must not be brought into the shelter, these include:

- All alcohol;
- All weapons including knives or similar edged items;
- All illicit drugs and associated items; and
- All aerosols (except personal medications such as asthma puffers etc.)

People seeking entry to the shelter will be required to surrender any prohibited items. You and your belongings may be searched by a Queensland Police officer if officers have a reasonable belief that such items have been taken into the shelter.



Public Cyclone Shelter Conditions of Entry

Everyone seeking entry to a Public Cyclone Shelter will be required to agree to conditions outlined in the Public Cyclone Shelter Code of Conduct (see below).

Any person unable or unwilling to abide by these conditions will need to make alternate sheltering arrangements (e.g. sheltering with family or friends located outside the storm tide evacuation zone or leaving the area that is subject to the cyclone and storm tide impacts).

Shelter occupants who do not comply with the Code of Conduct prior to lock down may be required to leave the facility. Occupants who do not comply with the Code of Conduct after lock down may be prosecuted.

Public Cyclone Shelter Code of Conduct

All persons occupying the Shelter will:

- Provide the required registration details to the Shelter staff prior to entry to the shelter;
- Comply with directions of the Shelter staff;
- **Not use anything that is dangerous or interferes with the health and comfort of yourself and others** (this includes the consumption of alcohol, illicit drugs or tobacco products/smoking). Non-compliance with this requirement may result in prosecution;
- Be mindful of the large number of people in a small space. Keep calm and respect others by not shouting, yelling or using loud obscene language;
- Not intentionally cause damage to the Shelter building, furniture, fittings and fixtures and immediately report any accidental damage, incidents of vandalism, theft and / or other illegal activity to the Shelter staff;
- Supervise children closely. Children remain the responsibility of parents or guardians and must be accompanied to the toilets and showers by a parent or guardian;

- Wear appropriate rubber or soft-soled footwear at all times for safety and hygiene reasons;
- Occupy the seat allocated to them by the Shelter staff and stow personal items below that chair. Occupants are responsible for the security of their own valuables;
- Keep walkways and emergency exits clear;
- Remain within the main area of the Shelter and not enter storerooms, kitchens or office space unless requested or permitted by the Shelter staff;
- Use earphones to listen to battery operated personal music / electronic devices. Volume levels are to be kept to a minimum to avoid disturbing others;
- Not use electronic devices with Shelter power outlets unless approved by Shelter staff;
- Only use shower facilities at the direction of the Shelter staff;
- Maintain cleanliness and dispose of rubbish in the bins provided; and
- Notify the Shelter staff of any medical emergency or other critical incidents.

Post event support for impacted residents:



Depending on the scale of the event, local Evacuation Centres and Recovery Centres may be established following the event to support impacted residents with short term accommodation and a range of recovery services.

Advice on the activation and location of such centres will be provided by local authorities at the appropriate time.

For further information:

Council Resources and Contacts:

- www.whitsunday.qld.gov.au
- Customer Service Centre phone (general enquiries):
07 4945 0200
- Disaster Coordination Centre phone:
1300 972 006 (diverts to Customer Service Centre when Coordination Centre is not activated)
- Social media: [www.facebook.com/ Whitsunday Disaster & Emergency Information](https://www.facebook.com/WhitsundayDisaster&EmergencyInformation)

Local radio:

- Bowen:
 - » ABC Local Radio – Broadcast on AM630
 - » 4TO Townsville – Broadcast on AM774
 - » GEM FM - Broadcast on FM95.1
- Proserpine:
 - » ABC Local Radio – Broadcast on FM101.1
 - » Zinc FM - Broadcast on FM101.9
 - » Hot FM - Broadcast on FM100.3
- Whitsunday Coast:
 - » ABC Local Radio - Broadcast on FM89.9
 - » Zinc FM - Broadcast on FM91.5
 - » Hot FM - Broadcast on FM94.7

Other Resources and Information:

- www.qld.gov.au/getready
- www.QldAlert.com
- Twitter: [www.twitter.com/QldSES](https://twitter.com/QldSES) or /QPSmedia
- Facebook: www.facebook.com/QldSES or /QueenslandPolice
- Bureau of Meteorology - QLD Tropical Cyclone Warnings:
 - » 1300 659 212
 - » www.bom.gov.au/qld/warnings

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