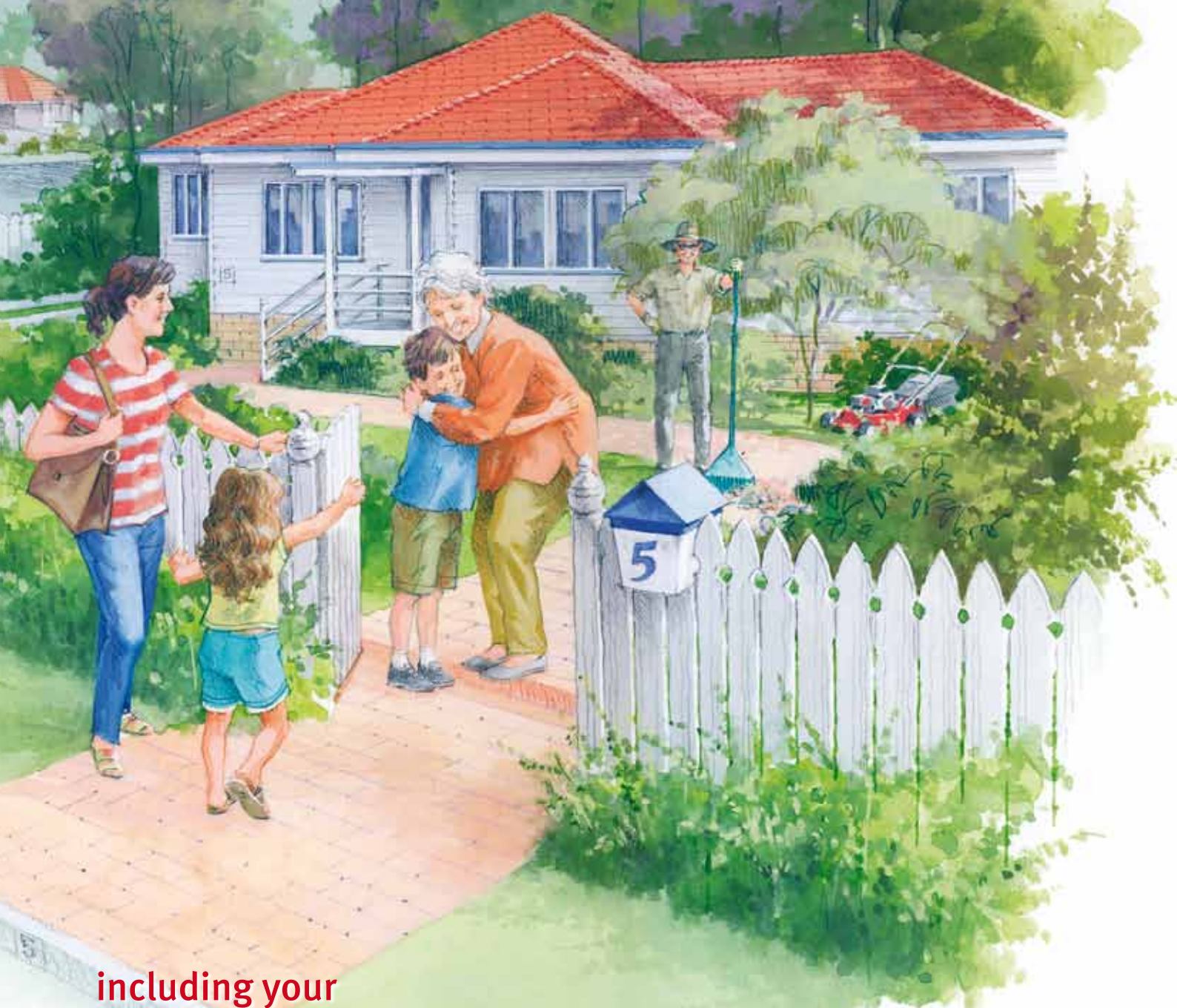


# Senior and **Safer**

Practical tips for a safer home



including your

- Home Escape Plan
- Emergency Phone List



Queensland  
Government



## Minister's Message

We each have an important role to play in making our homes and local communities safer.

That is why the Department of Community Safety has produced this booklet; to specifically share expert advice about how seniors can decrease their risk of injury, and prepare for, and respond to, emergencies.

The Department's three operational arms - Queensland Fire and Rescue Service, Queensland Ambulance Service and Emergency Management Queensland, have combined their wealth of knowledge in an easy-to-read, relevant and practical format.

And while the messages are particularly directed at Queensland seniors, they are also very good advice for everyone else.

It is important to always have safety in mind, and the Department of Community Safety is pleased to be able to present this information. I hope you find this booklet informative.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Neil Roberts'.

**Hon Neil Roberts MP**  
**Minister for Police, Corrective Services**  
**and Emergency Services**

# Senior and Safer

## Table of contents

Minister’s message .....	2
Welcome to the front yard.....	4
Making living areas safe .....	5
Reduce electrical shocks .....	5
Greater fire risk in the kitchen.....	6
Learn to use fire safety equipment.....	6
Stovetop oil or fat fires/first aid for burns .....	7
Bedrooms – plan a safe sleeping area .....	8
Heat related illness .....	9
Laundry – keep the path clear .....	10
Bathroom – a high risk fall area .....	10
Steps to safety in a house fire.....	11
First aid treatment for smoke inhalation .....	11
Working smoke alarms save lives .....	12
Balancing security against safety.....	13
The backyard – simple steps for safety .....	14
Care with flammable items and household chemicals .....	15
Fire safe your caravan or mobile home.....	16
Natural disasters / Action guide .....	17-21
Pets in emergencies .....	21
Emergency and first aid kits .....	22
Emergency plan.....	23
Learn CPR.....	23
Book a Seniors Fire Ed presentation .....	23

**Front Cover:** Simple safety measures on the home front – a clearly marked street address and an uncluttered path leading to secure handrails on the front porch.

**Inside Back Cover:** Home Escape Plan and Emergency Information List.

**Back Cover:** Final home safety checklist; contact details for community programs.



# Welcome to the front yard

The advice in this home safety booklet, designed to reduce the risk of injury to yourself, loved ones and visitors, begins at the front gate. For example, a wet path, covered with grass clippings or with a hose lying across it, has the potential to cause a fall. Check these safety tips:

- Make sure your street number can be clearly identified day and night
- Keep pathways clear of obstructions such as hoses and plant material
- Check branches overhanging power lines. Ask for advice from relevant electricity authorities; seek help in cutting back the branches
- At night, make sure the outside lighting on your house is bright enough so occupants and visitors can see. If necessary, install sensor lighting along well-used pathways
- Make sure pets can be secured during an emergency.

## Entry to your home

While a security door may keep intruders out, it can also trap occupants during an emergency and prevent access by emergency services. Check these safety tips:

- Make sure the location of the security door key is known and accessible to all occupants so people inside can leave quickly or allow swift access by emergency services
- Check that steps to the house are in good order with handrails on both sides. Fix non-slip strips to the steps to reduce the risk of falls
- Minimise clutter on the front verandah, patio or porch for ease of access or exit.

In the entry area, shiny, slippery floors, wrinkled carpet runners or dim lighting can cause a fall. Therefore, consider your family, emergency services personnel and others who make regular house calls, such as Meals on Wheels and Blue Care, so they are not at risk.



## Making living areas safe

Reducing clutter in the living area goes a long way towards creating a safer place. Check these safety tips:

- Rearrange furniture so pathways are clear
- Secure top-heavy items such as entertainment units to the wall so they do not topple onto someone
- Check for sharp corners or edges on furniture (senior people's skin is very vulnerable and easily torn, or the body can be bruised more easily)
- Place anti-slip strips on the back of mats lying on polished floors
- Place a metal firescreen in front of an open fireplace to contain burning embers
- Carefully stub out cigarette butts in a solid ashtray to reduce the risk of fire
- Check the furniture for cigarette butts and ashes before going to bed. Cigarette embers can smoulder unnoticed and later burst into flame
- Keep furniture and curtains at least one metre from heaters
- Dry clothes in a clothes dryer, not in front of a heater
- Allow plenty of ventilation around home entertainment equipment so heat can escape and turn off electrical appliances when not in use
- Never run electrical cords under mats or carpets or across a room
- Maintain electrical appliances as per manufacturers' instructions; always have repairs carried out by an authorised agent or electrician
- Do not load up power points with double adaptors – use power boards; those with an overload switch that meets Australian Standards are recommended.



## Reduce electrical shocks

To reduce the risk of electrical shocks or fire, make arrangements for an electrician to fit an earth leakage safety switch (these are already fitted in homes built after 1992). Ask your electrician to make sure any extra needs, such as air conditioners do not overload the mains power board.



## Greater fire risk in the kitchen

The kitchen, the heart of a home, can become an area of potential fire risk. In fact, Queensland Fire and Rescue Service reports that one third of all house fires begin in the kitchen.

However, there are some simple solutions to minimise the risk of both fire and injury – check these safety tips:

- Plan a clutter-free kitchen – make sure frequently-used items are within easy reach
- Do not allow curtains, blinds or other combustibles near cooking appliances
- When cooking, avoid wearing garments with long, loose-fitting sleeves
- Make sure frying pan/saucepan handles are turned away from the stove's front edge
- Turn off hotplates when you leave the kitchen or when the phone rings. When all cooking is finished, turn off the stove safety switch (where fitted)
- Wipe up spilt water and food immediately to avoid slipping
- Turn off electrical appliances at the wall before cleaning
- Make sure you have a fully stocked and regularly maintained first aid kit (see page 22)
- Have a fire blanket and extinguisher available and know how to use them
- In case of fire, ALWAYS have a clear escape route.

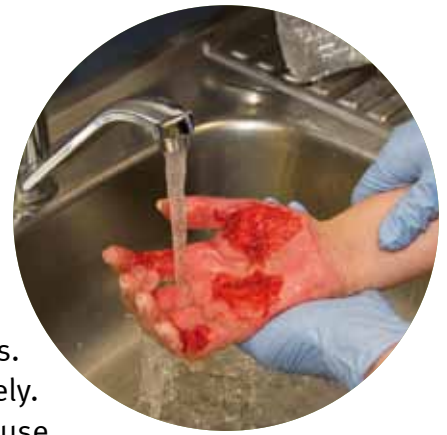
## Learn to use fire safety equipment

Place fire safety equipment\* (e.g. extinguisher or fire blanket) in the kitchen between the stove and exit so you can reach them without getting too close to the fire, while ALWAYS being in a position to escape. Learn how to use an extinguisher/fire blanket before an emergency occurs.

*\* This equipment can be purchased from most hardware stores or through 'Fire Protection Equipment and Consultants' in the Yellow Pages.*



## Stovetop oil or fat fires



Stovetop fires are often the start of a blaze that destroys homes. If the fire has spread beyond the stovetop, evacuate immediately. Phone triple zero (000) from a mobile or from a neighbour's house.

If oil or fat catches fire in a pot or pan, turn off the heat (if possible) and use a correctly fitting lid to smother the flames. If the lid is not available, a fire blanket (the larger the size the better) can be used. A domestic fire extinguisher can also be effective if you follow the manufacturer's instructions. Under no circumstances remove the lid or fire blanket or move the pot, until the pot has fully cooled down.

Before fighting any fire, always consider the size of the fire, the tools you have available to fight it and your physical capabilities. ALWAYS have a clear escape route behind you.

Don't forget to regularly clean the filter/s in the rangehood above the stove as these may ignite and take the flames through the flue into the ceiling.

## First aid for burns and scalds

Contact with any excessive heat source may lead to a burn or scald. Prompt first aid will help the healing process and assist in a full recovery. Check these safety tips:

- Cool the affected area immediately with cold running water from a tap or shower and continue for at least 20 minutes
- Do not remove any clothing that is sticking to the skin or wound at the burn site. Remove any rings, watches or other jewellery as quickly as possible due to likely swelling of the affected area
- After cooling the injured area, apply a sterile non-stick dressing
- If the burn is larger than the palm of the hand, phone triple zero (000).

### Remember:

- Do not apply ice directly to the burn
- Cool the burn area only with water for 20 minutes
- Do not break blisters or remove peeled skin
- Do not try to remove any clothing that is stuck to a burn
- Do not apply creams, ointments, lotions or gels to a burn injury
- Elevate burned limbs where possible
- Maintain the injured person's body temperature
- Rest and reassure the injured person
- Monitor breathing until medical help arrives.

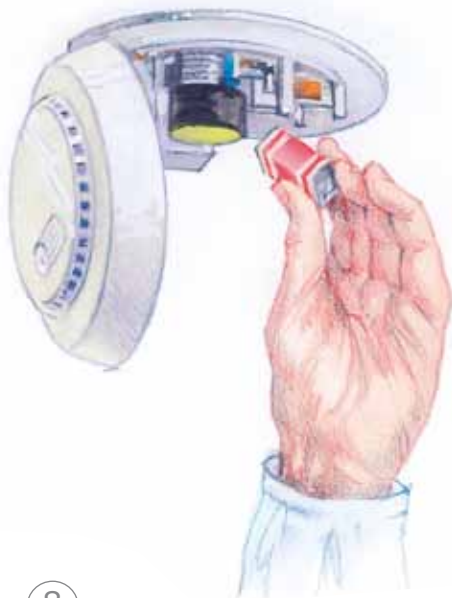
# Bedrooms – plan a safe sleeping area

Injuries can occur in bedrooms so it is important to plan for future physical needs.

Not all measures require a huge outlay. Changes may include simply reducing clutter on the bedroom floor or making sure there is space for reading glasses on the bedside table. Check these safety tips:



- Install a telephone wall socket beside the bed for convenience and emergency calls (remember, cordless phones do not work if the power fails)
- Keep a torch handy if you cannot reach a light switch from your bed. If you have bedside lights, make sure you can reach them from the bed
- Have a battery-powered radio nearby in case of power failure
- Turn off the electric blanket before getting into bed
- Never smoke in bed
- Turn off and unplug electric blankets when not in use. When storing electric blankets roll them up – do not fold them
- Keep the bedroom floor free of electrical cords and general clutter
- Make sure your glasses are within easy reach for when you get out of bed
- When getting out of bed, sit up and place both feet firmly on the floor before standing up.



*Install smoke alarms in the hallway outside the bedrooms.*

*If a bedroom door is usually closed, place a smoke alarm inside the bedroom as well.*

## **Safehome**

Individual households may receive free in-home safety advice from local firefighters. Find out more about smoke alarms, escape plans and other key safety issues.

For Safehome bookings, phone 1300 369 003.



# Prevention of heat related illness

A heat wave occurs when there are more than a few days in a row of above-average temperature, often combined with high humidity. Babies, children under four years, older people, people with a chronic condition or illness, people who are overweight and people who undertake vigorous exercise are the most susceptible to the effects of a heat wave.

If a heatwave is predicted or is happening, you should do the following:

## 1. Drink water

- Drink small amounts of water every 15-20 minutes, even if you don't feel thirsty.
- Drink cool drinks – avoid the use of ice as it can cause cramps.
- Avoid drinks that contain alcohol, caffeine or a lot of sugar. They can cause dehydration.
- Monitor urine output. If you are passing less urine than usual you are not drinking enough. Urine should be clear to light straw colour – any darker could be a sign of dehydration.
- If you are on medication, check with your doctor about how much water you should drink.

**Tip:** Each morning, fill a large jug with water and ensure it is finished by the end of the day.

## 2. Modify your lifestyle

- Eat small meals and eat more often.
- Slow down and avoid strenuous activity.
- Wear lightweight, light coloured, cotton clothing.
- Take additional cool showers during the day.

**Tip:** Stay inside (with adequate ventilation) or visit an air conditioned building such as a shopping centre.

## 3. Staying inside

- Use blinds and curtains to shade your house from the sun.
- Stay inside between 10.00am and 3.00pm.

## 4. Call family or friends

- Check on the wellbeing of family members, friends and neighbours.

### Be alert to these signs of heat stress:

- loss of appetite
- rising body temperature
- dry mouth and eyes
- tiredness, dizziness, headache
- nausea, loss of concentration
- muscle weakness or cramps.

**Tip:** While you are at home, keep windows and doors open and use a fan to keep the air circulating.

If you have any doubts about your condition (or someone else's), phone triple zero (000), request the ambulance service and ask the Queensland Ambulance Service Communications Officer for advice.

## Laundry – keep the path clear

Always keep laundries tidy because they are often used as an emergency exit or entry. Check these safety tips:

- Reduce clutter – set up a storage area for the ironing board, brooms etc
- Clean the clothes dryer filter after each use to reduce fire risk
- Look after appliances and electrical leads such as the iron cord because these can fray and cause an electrical fire
- Always have electrical repairs carried out by an authorised agent or electrician
- Avoid the risk of chemical poisoning or misuse: do not transfer chemicals from their original container to another
- Store chemicals in a locked cupboard which is inaccessible to children.



## Bathroom – a high risk fall area

Slippery surfaces or difficulties getting in or out of the bath or shower can cause slips, trips or falls in the bathroom or toilet. Plan NOW for your future needs in these areas. Check these safety tips:

- If the bathroom floor becomes particularly slippery when wet, investigate ways to reduce its slippery nature
- Even if you are not currently frail, consider planning for the future by installing grab rails over the bath, in the shower recess and beside the toilet to reduce the risk of falls
- Use non-slip strips in the bottom of the shower or bath
- Where possible, avoid using the bath if you are unsteady on your feet
- Make sure items such as hair dryers, radios and electric razors are not used in any damp areas and are out of the reach of children
- Store medication and cleaning agents separately in locked cupboards
- Re-fit bathroom/toilet doors or fit lift hinges so doors open outwards (a person may become trapped if they collapse against an inward-opening door).

**Scalds:** To protect children and seniors, check the water temperature when running a bath or shower. Turn on the cold first, then add hot water and finish with cold. (The hot water temperature in most Australian homes is about 60°C, 10°C more than the ideal maximum safe temperature of 50°C.)

# Steps to safety in a house fire

If fire strikes your home, the air is much cleaner, cooler and clearer near the floor. When making your escape, keep as low as possible. Check these safety tips:

- Survival means crawling on your hands and knees, so 'Get down low and go, go, go'
- After leaving the home, gather everyone at a suitable, safe location such as the letterbox
- Once everyone is out, DO NOT GO BACK INSIDE THE HOUSE, not even for family pets or treasured belongings
- Go to a neighbour's house and phone triple zero (000). For mobile phones see details in the Emergency Information List
- Wait outside for firefighters. Tell them where the fire started and whether anyone is still inside the house
- Always make sure your house number is clearly visible to emergency vehicles.

# First Aid treatment for smoke inhalation

If a person has been exposed to smoke from a fire they may be suffering from smoke inhalation. The treatment for smoke inhalation is:

1. Assess the situation for danger.
2. Phone triple zero (000) and ask for the ambulance service.
3. Check the person for a response.
4. If the person is unconscious and not breathing normally, begin cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).
5. If the person is conscious, reassure them and make them comfortable, sitting them upright often helps.
6. Monitor breathing until paramedics arrive.

# Working smoke alarms save lives



Fires start quietly and spread very quickly. Smoke is a silent killer and when people are asleep, their sense of smell is largely diminished and they are unlikely to smell smoke.

However, smoke alarms help save lives and property by producing a loud warning sound that can give you time to get out of the house. (The risk of a fire death in homes without a smoke alarm is up to three times higher than for homes with alarms.)

For your safety and peace of mind, correctly install smoke alarms on each level of your home, fitting them in living areas and outside bedrooms. Check these safety tips:

- Test your smoke alarms regularly and follow manufacturer's instructions
- Change the batteries of battery-operated alarms at least once a year – decide on a memorable day (e.g. April 1) or an anniversary, birthday or public holiday
- Test and clean smoke alarms monthly using the nozzle of a vacuum cleaner or soft brush
- Check the manufacturer's instructions for mains-powered smoke alarms as the back-up battery may require changing every 12 months.

## New Smoke Alarm Laws

Since 1 July 2007 all homes and units throughout Queensland must have working smoke alarms. The Queensland Fire and Rescue Service recommends the installation of photoelectric smoke alarms.

For more information phone Smart Service Queensland on 1300 369 003 or visit [www.fire.qld.gov.au](http://www.fire.qld.gov.au)

QFRS subsidises the purchase of special smoke alarms for deaf and the hearing impaired, subject to eligibility criterion.

Note: All homes built or substantially renovated after 1997 must have mains-powered smoke alarms installed.



Test and clean smoke alarms monthly using the nozzle of a vacuum cleaner or soft brush

# Balancing security against safety

Home security measures, such as deadlocks on doors and windows, may be necessary, however it is important not to let these precautions trap you inside your home in an emergency. Check these safety tips:

- Have one common key for all door locks
- Keep a spare key where it cannot be seen or reached by intruders. For example, hang it in the middle of the back of a door
- Choose window security screens that can be opened from the inside
- Show all occupants, including overnight visitors, how to escape through security doors or windows if an emergency occurs.



Don't let security fittings  
trap you in your home

## The backyard – simple steps for safety

While the backyard is a natural retreat, as with many other areas of the home, there are a number of risky situations which may cause an injury. Check these safety tips:



- Clear out gutters regularly to prevent fire or storm damage (safety authorities recommend professional home maintenance people be engaged for this task)
- During the storm season, clean up and secure all loose items around the house
- When moving a vehicle, know exactly where children are so they are not at risk. A safe method is to place them in the vehicle with you or ask an adult to supervise them
- If operating electric garage doors, be extra careful when young children are around
- Secure tools in a shed, particularly if there are children around
- Store chemicals securely (see page 15)
- Keep pathways clear of slippery items. Tidy up dog food and water bowls
- Make sure dry dog food is not scattered on a path – the pellets can have the effect of ball bearings and lead to a serious fall
- Remove poisonous or irritating plants or weeds (for further information visit [www.health.qld.gov.au/PoisonsInformationCentre/plants\\_fungi/default.asp](http://www.health.qld.gov.au/PoisonsInformationCentre/plants_fungi/default.asp))
- Mow your lawn wearing closed-in footwear, long pants, a hat and ear protectors.



# Care with flammable items and household chemicals

Chemicals used every day around the home have the potential to harm people, the environment and either cause or fuel a fire. Check these safety tips:

- Do not transfer chemicals from one container to another
- Remove flammable materials such as oily rags, old newspapers and timber from under the house, in the shed or carport
- Never store flammable materials near heat sources such as portable heaters and BBQs
- When using chemicals, follow the directions on the label for storage and disposal and check the manufacturer's advice for recommended protective equipment and clothing
- Avoid mixing common household chemicals; stored chemicals should be clearly marked.

**For enquiries about chemicals: phone Smart Services Queensland on 1300 369 003.**

## Learn first aid

A first aid course with Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS) provides practical hands-on training so the public can gain the necessary skills and confidence to respond to an emergency. To enrol in a course or to find out more about any QAS product, phone 1300 369 003 or visit [www.ambulance.qld.gov.au](http://www.ambulance.qld.gov.au)

# Fire safe your caravan or mobile home

Caravans and mobile homes can be used for recreational purposes or occupied as permanent dwellings in caravan parks.

Whatever the purpose, check these safety tips:

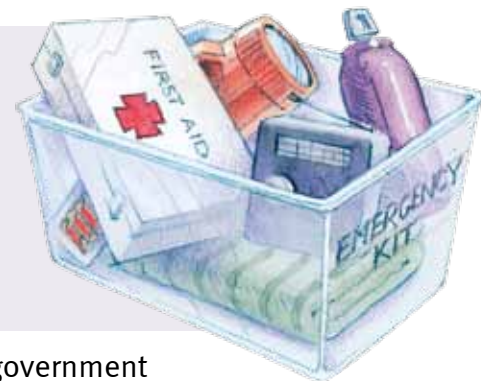


- Fit gas cylinders on the outside of the van or mobile home, or install them in a storage cabinet approved to Australian Standards
- Make sure the relief valve of the gas cylinder is pointed away from the van in case the cylinder overheats
- Turn off gas cylinders before towing your van or starting the engine of a mobile home
- If your van or mobile home has been driven on rough roads, arrange for a qualified person to check gas cylinders, pipes and fittings
- Make sure the power lead for your van or mobile home is a suitable size for the power load and is in good condition. Damaged cords must be replaced
- Store clothes and linen away from the kitchen
- Never leave cooking unattended
- Know where the escape windows and hatches are located and how they work
- Keep doors, windows and hatches clear of obstructions
- Fit and maintain a smoke alarm
- Make sure fire extinguishers are inspected and regularly serviced
- For added safety, install a fire blanket near the caravan door
- Store all flammable liquids outside the van but not under it
- Have a first aid kit in your van or mobile home (see page 22).

## Natural disasters

Nature reminds everyone from time to time not to take it for granted. Although storms, lightning, cyclones, floods, heatwaves and bushfires are some of the most common threats, tidal surges, landslides and earthquakes may also occur. You can help prepare your family and your home by developing an Emergency Plan, preparing your home and preparing an Emergency Kit with these items:

- An emergency kit and first aid kit (see page 22)
- Portable radio with spare batteries
- Torch with spare batteries
- Fully-charged mobile phone
- Emergency Information List.
- Essential medications



If you decide to evacuate or are requested to evacuate by a government agency, do so as soon as possible. Do not delay your departure until the last moment, especially if you are older or caring for young children. If you are instructed to evacuate, check these safety tips:

- Follow all instructions from emergency services personnel
- Listen for emergency warnings and safety advice on radio or television
- Before an emergency situation develops, if time permits, telephone an out-of-town relative or friend to let them know where you are likely to be
- Use travel routes specified by emergency services. Do not travel via a shortcut because certain areas may be impassable or dangerous
- Allow for the special needs of infants, the aged and people with disabilities
- Turn off the electricity, gas and water, unplug appliances, and lock doors and windows
- Make sure all people in the household are wearing long-sleeved shirts, long pants, a hat and sturdy shoes for their protection
- Take your emergency kit, first aid kit, portable radio, torch and mobile phone
- Take important documents, as many as you can safely manage
- Stay away from fallen power lines
- If you go to an evacuation centre, notify the registration desk so others can find you
- If you go to the home of a relative or friend, advise the evacuation centre
- When told it is safe, return to your home and open windows to provide ventilation.

If you decide to stay in your home during a natural disaster, make sure your home has been well prepared in advance. In this case, check these safety tips:

- Have your emergency kit, first aid kit, portable radio, torch and mobile phone ready
- Prepare a supply of medications for children and seniors with special needs
- Have sufficient quantities of food (plus can opener) and water for at least three days
- Pack sturdy footwear/clothing, strong plastic bags for documents, clothing and rubbish.

## Natural disaster action guide

### Storm

Severe storms cause more damage than any other event. Check these safety tips on preparations you should take to minimise the risk to you and your property:

#### Before the storm

- Listen to your radio for storm updates
- Stay inside and secure all windows and doors
- Keep guttering and downpipes clear; secure loose items in your yard
- Store poisons above ground level in case of flash floods.

#### During a storm

- Stay inside, take shelter, remain clear of windows and make sure your pets are safe
- If outdoors, find safe shelter but not under trees or metal structures.

#### After the storm has passed

- Beware of fallen power lines
- Check your house for damage and trees for damage and stability
- Check your neighbours, if safe to do so.



## Flood

Floods can happen in a flash – check these safety tips:

- Know your local area, particularly if there is a history of flooding
- Identify evacuation routes and centres and be ready to evacuate if necessary
- Follow instructions from local authorities
- Never drive, swim or wade in flood waters
- Do not allow children to play in or near flood waters
- Stay tuned to radio/television for weather advice, warnings and updated information.



## Storm and lightning

Preventative action, both outdoors and indoors, can reduce the risk from lightning strike. For example, check with your local electrical contractor for advice on surge protectors and lightning conductors. Check these safety tips:

### If indoors

- Disconnect computers, televisions and other electrical/electronic appliances
- Avoid using fixed line telephones unless essential
- Keep clear of windows; avoid contact with metal fixtures such as roofs, guttering, downpipes and taps.

### If caught outdoors

- Seek shelter in a hard top vehicle or solid building
- Secure pets in a safe place
- Never shelter under a tree or group of trees. If far from shelter, crouch down, don't lie flat
- Avoid metal objects such as ladders, umbrellas, fences and clothes lines
- If boating or swimming, leave the water immediately.

### After the lightning

- Check the radio for updated weather reports and power outages
- Confirm the location and safety of family members and neighbours
- Check your fuse box. Operate only essential household items.

## Cyclone

Be informed beforehand.

Collect information by asking neighbours, your State Emergency Service (SES) and the local council about whether cyclones have occurred in your area, what to expect and appropriate action to take. Be prepared with these safety tips:

- Fit window shutters or metal screens
- Trim tree branches well clear of your home
- Clear your property of loose material which could blow about causing injury or damage.

Be alert during cyclone season.

- Keep up to date via your radio on the progress of a cyclone
- Decide as early as possible whether you are going to evacuate and check the radio for details of safe routes and when to move (evacuation may be necessary based on reports of predicted wind speeds and storm surge heights)
- Follow the advice of local authorities for appropriate action during each cyclone stage.

For more information to assist in developing your Emergency Plan, Emergency Kit and preparing your home, visit [www.disaster.qld.gov.au](http://www.disaster.qld.gov.au)

### Signal sounds a warning

During major emergencies, Queensland residents are alerted by the sound of the Standard Emergency Warning Signal (SEWS) on radio or television, along with a message.

To hear the signal, check the website: [www.disaster.qld.gov.au/disasters/warning.asp](http://www.disaster.qld.gov.au/disasters/warning.asp)



The only number to phone for SES assistance following a storm, flood or cyclone is 132 500.

## Bushfire

Bushfire is one of nature's most devastating forces and the risks increase with the number of people in or near bushland, in semi-rural areas and residential estates on the outskirts of cities and towns.

Check these basic bushfire safety tips:

- Clean out gutters and clear overhanging trees
- Tidy the yard, mow the grass and remove rubbish
- Store flammable items away from the house
- Check your firefighting equipment
- Have an emergency kit and first aid kit ready
- Ensure your property is easily identifiable.



People who are well prepared, both physically and mentally, can shelter in their homes and survive.

If you are caught on the road during a bushfire, you stand a better chance of survival in your vehicle rather than fleeing on foot.

Phone 1300 369 003 to receive a copy of the brochures, *Bushfire Prepared Communities* and *Bushfire Safety and Survival* or check the website: [www.ruralfire.qld.gov.au/commsafety/resources.htm](http://www.ruralfire.qld.gov.au/commsafety/resources.htm)

### Bushfire prepared communities

Phone 1300 369 003 to organise a bushfire safety presentation from local firefighters for your community group or street.

These presentations are particularly valuable to householders who live near bushland.

## Pets in emergencies

- Some evacuation centres may not accept animals so have an alternative plan
- If moving animals to a safer place, do so early to avoid unnecessary risk
- If staying at home, secure animals early so they do not take flight
- If you have to leave pets behind, try to leave them indoors in separate rooms with small or preferably no windows (e.g. laundry, bathroom)
- Provide adequate food and water in large heavy bowls
- If pets are left outside, do not tie them up.

Remember: Your family's safety is paramount. Do not risk human life trying to find and protect pets.

# Emergency Kit at the ready

Emergency services staff recommend a number of items which can form an Emergency Kit in case of natural disasters.

The items, which can include the following, should be stored in a sturdy carry bag or water-resistant container.

- First aid kit and manual, which complies with Standards Australia
- Battery operated radio and torch (with spare batteries)
- Candles and waterproof matches
- Strong plastic bags for clothing and other items
- A waterproof bag for valuables and mementos
- Copies of important family documents.

Additional items can include: medications, toiletry and sanitary supplies; special needs for infants, the aged and people with disabilities; sleeping equipment and spare clothes including strong shoes, broad brimmed hat, leather gloves and sunscreen for each household member; a mobile phone, spare battery and charger; food and water; and basic provisions for your pets.

**For further suggested items visit the website [www.disaster.qld.gov.au](http://www.disaster.qld.gov.au)**

**You can also download a free copy of the QAS First Aid Hints booklet at [www.ambulance.qld.gov.au](http://www.ambulance.qld.gov.au)**



## First aid kit

A general-purpose first aid kit should contain the following items which your pharmacist will be able to identify and supply.

1 packet of plastic strips	1 pair stainless steel scissors (sharp/blunt)
1 roll of non-allergenic tape	2 square gauze swabs
2 sterile eye pads	1 pair forceps
4 triangular bandages	1 pack (10) latex gloves
1 conforming gauze bandage (10cm)	1 resuscitation mask
1 conforming gauze bandage (7.5cm)	2 bottles eye irrigation (15ml)
1 conforming gauze bandage (5cm)	1 bottle antiseptic cream (50g)
1 hospital crepe bandage (10cm)	1 wound closure steri-strip
1 sterile combine dressing (9x10cm)	1 stainless steel splinter remover
1 sterile combine dressing (20x20cm)	1 bottle antiseptic solution (30ml)
1 sterile combine dressing (#14)	5 alcohol swabs
2 non-adhesive dressings (5x7.5cm)	1 first aid hints booklet
1 non-adhesive dressing (10x7.5cm)	

The Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS) encourages you to be prepared in an emergency. Enrol in a QAS first aid course to learn vital life saving first aid skills. Visit [www.ambulance.qld.gov.au](http://www.ambulance.qld.gov.au) and book online today or phone 1300 369 003.

# Emergency Information List

Complete the Emergency Information List on the reverse including your current health details, medications and allergies as well as your doctor/specialist details. Detach the page from this booklet and place it by your telephone.



## Triple zero (000) calls

### When should you make a triple zero (000) call?

Calls should only be made to triple zero (000) when police, fire or ambulance attendance is necessary in an emergency situation. When a situation does not fulfil this criterion, but still requires police, fire or ambulance attendance, you should obtain the appropriate numbers from the telephone directory or directory assistance.

### What happens when you phone triple zero (000)?

Callers can be connected to police, fire or ambulance by phoning triple zero (000) from any fixed or mobile phone in Australia. Telstra operates the triple zero (000) emergency call service. Their role is to connect callers to the designated emergency services answer points as quickly as possible. You do not need to explain your emergency to this operator, simply advise them which service you require. The triple zero (000) service only deals with emergencies requiring police, fire or ambulance.

When requesting an emergency service, it is important to:

- STAY FOCUSED – answer the prompted questions
- STAY RELEVANT – use for emergency assistance only
- STAY ON THE LINE – until you speak to the requested emergency service.

# Emergency Information List

<b>Ambulance • Fire • Police</b> <b>Triple zero (000)</b>	<b>Other Emergency Numbers</b> Local Council ..... State Emergency Service (SES) ..... <b>132 500</b> Electricity supplier ..... Gas supplier ..... Poisons Information Centre ..... <b>13 11 26</b> QLD Government Electrical Safety Office..... <b>1300 650 662</b> For TTY phone ..... <b>106</b> <i>Record other personal information in the sections below</i>
<b>Phone 000 from mobiles or 112 if unsuccessful*</b>	

In an emergency, contact...		
Name	Relationship (e.g. next of kin / friend) and address	Telephone

Personal details of household residents			
(You can bend this section underneath for privacy before placing this list by your phone)			
Resident's name. Date of birth	Medical conditions and allergies	Current medications and dose	Doctor/Specialist name and telephone

\*For emergencies throughout Australia, phone triple zero (000). Although this number works on landline phones, if you phone triple zero (000) on some mobile phones it may not connect. In such cases, phone 112 on your mobile phone. If there is no mobile coverage available, you must phone triple zero (000) from a landline phone.

**Complete this Emergency Information List and keep by the phone**



## Home Escape Plan

When fire breaks out in the home it's far too late to start planning how to get out. That is why it is essential to prepare an escape plan in advance (see reverse side).

First, draw a floor plan of the house showing two ways out of every room – particularly bedrooms – and make sure everyone knows the plan, even your guests.

Secondly, practise your escape, especially at night, first with the lights on and then with the lights off. This is a sensible method because distances are difficult to judge in the dark. In addition, during a fire, heavy smoke could add to the pressure of locating an exit point.

See 'Steps to safety in a house fire' on page 11.





## Develop an Emergency Plan

Find out about natural disasters that can occur in your area and decide how you can best prepare for such events. Here are some ideas to discuss and record on your Emergency Plan:

- Decide how you would keep in touch with carers and family and where you would evacuate to if required. Include a list of contact numbers on your Emergency Plan.
- Nominate two meeting places, one near your home and another outside your neighbourhood that you can easily evacuate to. Family or friends who live in secure accommodation further inland and on higher ground are the best option. Record these two locations on your Emergency Plan.
- Nominate an out of town or interstate family member or friend to be a point of contact in case you and your immediate family become separated and record their contact details on your Emergency Plan.
- Make a list of personal and household items to take with you in the case of evacuation.

## Learn CPR

Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS) provides an accredited Perform Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) course. The CPR training course assists members of the public to respond to and manage an unconscious casualty, perform CPR and communicate details of the incident.

To enrol in a course or to find out more about any QAS product, phone Smart Service Queensland on 1300 369 003 or visit [www.ambulance.qld.gov.au](http://www.ambulance.qld.gov.au)

## Book a Seniors Fire Ed presentation



Retired firefighters, working for Queensland Fire and Rescue Service on a voluntary basis, bring their real-life experiences to older members of the community as they demonstrate and discuss fire safety methods and equipment.

For bookings phone 1300 369 003.

Items in this booklet are for information only and provided in good faith. The Department of Community Safety, comprising the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service, Queensland Ambulance Service and Emergency Management Queensland, are under no liability to any person in respect of any loss or damage (including consequential loss or damage) which may be suffered or incurred or which may arise directly or indirectly, in respect of reliance by any person on the information contained in this booklet.

# Your final home safety check list

At the very least, make sure you have these items covered in a final safety check:

- Emergency Information List completed
- Street number clearly visible day and night
- Smoke alarm cleaned and a fresh battery installed
- Home Escape Plan prepared
- Fire extinguisher and fire blanket available
- Emergency Plan developed
- Emergency kit prepared
- First aid kit available
- Evacuation Plan prepared.



In an emergency,  
phone triple zero (000).



The only number to phone for SES  
assistance following a storm, flood  
or cyclone is 132 500.

## Department of Community Safety – making Queensland a safer place

This booklet is an initiative of the Department of Community Safety, produced with the assistance of the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service, Queensland Ambulance Service and Emergency Management Queensland.

**For details of all community programs and initiatives  
phone 1300 369 003 or go to [www.emergency.qld.gov.au](http://www.emergency.qld.gov.au)**



**Queensland  
Government**