

Types of flooding

Flooding can happen in different ways depending on where you live. So it helps to know the flood types that are most likely to occur in your area and understand how they might impact you.



Stormwater flooding

Heavy rain can overwhelm drainage systems, causing water to spill into streets, yards, and public spaces. Stormwater flooding is most common in low-lying and built-up areas, where water has fewer places to drain.

This can lead to road closures, disruptions, and traffic congestion.

Scenario

Alex lives in South Melbourne, where stormwater floods are common after heavy rain. During storms, they know to avoid driving near the Montague Street and York Street bridges, because cars often get stuck in the floodwater under the bridges. The floodwater can appear quickly and with little notice.



Waterway flooding

Waterway flooding happens when rivers and creeks overflow due to heavy or prolonged rain. This is most common in areas near rivers, creeks, and floodplains, where excess water has nowhere to go. Floodwaters can rise slowly over longer periods of time and can cover roads, cut off communities, and damage homes, farms, and infrastructure.

Scenario

Carolina lives in Warrandyte, a suburb along the Yarra River that is prone to flooding after days of heavy rain. She keeps track of river levels during storms and knows that some local roads, like Yarra Street, can become blocked. When flood warnings are issued, she moves valuables to higher shelves and checks emergency updates in case she needs to leave early before roads are cut off.



Coastal flooding

Coastal flooding occurs when high tides, storms, or rising sea levels push seawater inland, affecting beaches, coastal towns, and low-lying shorelines. This can damage homes, roads, and critical infrastructure.

It can also lead to erosion and disruption of natural ecosystems.

Scenario

Tom lives in Seaholme. When a storm occurs during a very high tide and southerly winds, sea water can come over the wall next to the beach. He follows weather updates, especially in winter when strong winds and storm surges are more common. When heavy rain and high tides are predicted, he moves his car to higher ground and checks that his drains on his property are clear. If severe weather is expected, he also secures loose items in his yard and stays alert for emergency warnings.

Do you want to learn more?

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Understanding key flood terminology



Impact of flooding



Drainage plans