

Health

The following information is provided by the DFES Incident Management Team on behalf of the Department of Health WA.

Information current as at 10AM on 17 April 2021.

After a cyclone it is important to be aware of a range of hazards that may be present in and around your home and the local community. The immediate risks include damaged or downed power lines and unstable structures.

Other risks also include asbestos damage, displaced chemicals, unsafe food due to power outages, damaged wastewater systems and increased mosquito activity. See below for more information on these risks.

Asbestos:

- Broken asbestos sheets and material containing asbestos presents a hazard but exposure to asbestos fibres will be extremely low.
- Owners must take precautions to protect themselves and not to break-up and spread asbestos material when returning to their property.
- Professional asbestos removalists will be engaged to assess and remediate asbestos-containing material.
- If owners choose to remove asbestos on their own:
 - Wear correct PPE (including P2/N95 masks, gloves and overalls or old clothes that can be discarded).
 - Take care not to break, crush, scrape or use power tools on asbestos when moving it.
 - Asbestos must be wrapped in thick (200um) plastic and marked as 'DANGER ASBESTOS WASTE'. Check with the local council about correct disposal.
- More information about asbestos removal can be found on the Hazards after cyclones and floods page on the Healthy WA website. https://healthywa.wa.gov.au/Articles/F_I/Hazards-after-cyclones-and-floods.
- Where owners have acted on their own, the professional asbestos removalists will assess if asbestos has been removed.

Displaced chemicals:

After a cyclone dangerous goods may be moved or damaged including:

- gas cylinders
 - containers of corrosives
 - oils
 - pesticides
 - pool chemicals
 - industrial chemicals.
- Extreme care must be taken when handling any spills or containers of suspected poisons, chemicals or pesticides, especially if containers are damaged.



- When handling dangerous goods wear personal protective equipment such as chemical resistant gloves, protective eye-wear, enclosed footwear, long-sleeved shirts and trousers and a respirator.
- Ensure that if you are handling drums you work up-wind and in open areas.
- Generators and other fuel-powered equipment should stay outdoors or be placed in a well-ventilated area to prevent the build-up of contaminant exhaust gases such as carbon monoxide.
- Try to identify chemicals and their hazards using labels and markings. If the label has been removed, seek expert advice and chemical identification from a waste management consultant.
- Separate chemicals from general waste, while identifying whether the container is damaged or not and if there is the risk of any chemical reactions. For example, oils and dry pool chlorine may cause a fire if brought together.
- Take precautions to protect the area from further damage during the clean-up.

Unsafe food due to power outages:

If in doubt, throw it out.

- When disasters cause the power to go out, it generally means the food in your fridge will start to go off.
- Unless cold storage (below 4 °C) is available within 2 hours of a power cut, all potentially hazardous foods like cheese that are typically stored in the fridge need to be placed in alternative cold storage, eaten immediately or disposed of.
- Where larger quantities have to be disposed of such as for restaurants or cafes, contact the Environmental Health Services at your local government. Without correct disposal, fly breeding may result and increase the risk of the spread of infectious diseases.

Damaged septic tanks:

- Only trained specialists are suitably equipped to clean or repair onsite waste disposal systems.
- This is because tanks may contain dangerous gases and other harmful materials.
- Contact your local authority environmental health officer for a list of wastewater disposal system contractors who work in your area.
- Assume anything touched by wastewater is contaminated.
- Wash your hands and affected areas of the body thoroughly with clean warm water and soap, especially before eating.
- Immediately wash and disinfect any wounds that come into contact with wastewater.
- Change out of dirty clothes and wash clothes separately.
- Clean and dry dirty footwear.
- Contact your doctor immediately if you experience any illness.

Increased mosquito activity:

- Stagnant water provides an excellent breeding ground for mosquitoes increasing the risk of mosquito-borne diseases such as Ross River virus (RRV) and Barmah Forest virus (BFV).



- Prevent mosquito bites by covering up with long, loose fitting clothing and use insect repellent containing DEET (diethyltoluamide) or picaridin.

More information:

When internet access becomes available, please find the latest information at https://www.healthywa.wa.gov.au/Articles/F_1/Hazards-after-cyclones-and-floods



Water

The following information is provided by the DFES Incident Management Team on behalf of Water Corporation WA.

Information current as at 10AM on 17 April 2021.

Overview

- Water Corporation is not currently experiencing any widespread drinking water supply issues in the affected area.
- Power remains an issue in some areas, and crews are working across the affected areas to repair infrastructure damage and manage the impact to our water and wastewater network.
- Storm damage and ongoing power disruption mean that localised (streets/suburbs) temporary water outages or low pressure remain a possibility.
- Ongoing restoration of mains power has substantially returned wastewater networks to normal operation. However, in the event of any residual wastewater, the public is advised to avoid contact with it, as it may contain harmful bacteria.

Cyclone damage

- To prevent damage to property, we recommend turning the water off at the meter if your house is uninhabitable, and it is safe to do so.
- Stack loose material clear of water meters, valves and powerlines.

Non-potable farmlands schemes

- Power outages and wind damage is impacting non-drinking water supply to farms in some areas.
- We are working to source generators but it may take some time to fully restore some farmlands schemes.
- For those in the surrounding area, emergency water for stock use is available at the shire standpipe at Three Springs. Swipe cards to access the standpipe can be collected from the Shire of Three Springs office.
- Damaged farmlands scheme infrastructure should be reported to us on 13 13 75.

Customer support

Our thoughts are with those affected by the cyclone and we are here to support our customers and the community:

- For support or to report faults, please call our **24-hour Operations Centre** on **13 13 75**.
- Information on any water outages is available on our [outages page](#).

More information:

When internet access becomes available, please find the latest information at <https://www.watercorporation.com.au/Outages-and-works>



Education

The following information is provided by the DFES Incident Management Team on behalf of the Department of Education.

Information current as at 10AM on 17 April 2021.

Information for parents and school communities

Many of our staff, students and their families have been impacted by Cyclone Seroja.

The safety and wellbeing of staff and students is always our priority and we are working closely with Department of Fire and Emergency Services to ensure their safety.

We acknowledge that we may have families who have lost or had significant damage to their homes, and we are here to help support them through this.

Parents seeking information regarding their children's education can phone 1800 882 345 (open daily including weekends 8.00am to 8.00pm).

Term 2 schooling arrangements

Principals will contact parents/carers regarding arrangements for starting Term 2.

Schools ready to open

41 schools in the Mid West have been cleared of cyclone damage following Cyclone Seroja with most schools expected to open for the start of Term 2. The Department of Finance has today cleared an additional three schools; however, these three schools remain without power. Western Power has advised that power will be supplied to four schools to enable them to open for students and staff. We are seeking temporary solutions for three schools that remain without power.

The following list will be updated as new information becomes available.

Cleared of damage, but currently without power

- Binnu Primary School
- Kalbarri District High School
- Western Australian College of Agriculture - Morawa

Ready to open for Term 2

- Allendale Primary School
- Badgingarra Primary School
- Beachlands Primary School
- Bluff Point Primary School
- Carnamah District High School
- Central Midlands Senior High School
- Cervantes Primary School
- Champion Bay Senior High School



- Chapman Valley Primary School
- Coorow Primary School
- Dalwallinu District High School
- Dandaragan Primary School
- Dongara District High School
- Eneabba Primary School
- Geraldton Primary School
- Geraldton Residential College
- Geraldton Senior High School
- Holland Street School
- Jurien Bay District High School
- Kalannie Primary School
- Lancelin Primary School
- Leeman Primary School
- Meekatharra School Of The Air
- Miling Primary School
- Mingenew Primary School
- Moora Primary School
- Moora Residential College
- Morawa District High School
- Mount Tarcoola Primary School
- Mullewa District High School
- Northampton District High School
- Rangeway Primary School
- Shark Bay School
- Useless Loop Primary School
- Waggrakine Primary School
- Walkaway Primary School
- Wandina Primary School
- Watheroo Primary School
- Wongan Hills District High School
- Yerecoin Primary School
- Yuna Primary School

More information:

When internet access becomes available, please find the latest information at <https://www.education.wa.edu.au/cyclone-seroja>

