

# StormSafe



## STUDENT PRESENTATION



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## PURPOSE OF THE PRESENTATION

The purpose of this presentation is for students to develop an understanding of the dangers of storms and floods and how to avoid them. It is also designed to explore the role of the emergency services.

## Key Questions

- What are floods and storms?
- Where and when do floods and storms occur?
- What are the dangers associated with floods and storms?
- How can we stay safe around floodwater?
- What is the role of the emergency services when it comes to floods?

**Grades: Appropriate for Grades 3 – 7**

**Time Required: 45 minutes**

Preparation

Equipment needed:

- Emergency services vehicle.
- Print-out of floodwater danger pictures.
- Print-out of cars driving through floodwater.
- Student activities.

## Vocabulary

Flash flood – is the rapid flooding of low-lying areas. The ground becomes saturated and water can not be absorbed, creating large amounts of runoff into the watercourses and stormwater systems.

Mountain or coastal rivers quick onset flooding – occurs in the upper reaches of large rivers, as well as rivers that drain to the coast. These floods last for one or two days.

Inland rivers slow-onset flooding – is the flooding of rivers in the vast flat areas of central and western Queensland. These floods can last for a number of weeks.



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### Introductory activity – 10 minutes

Following the initial introduction including the name and an explanation of where the presenter is from (e.g. QFES SES), explain to students that the purpose of the visit is to help them learn more about floods and how to be safe around them. *(Ask students to respond with a show of hands)* How many of you have seen somewhere that was flooded? How many of you have been a passenger in a car where there was flooding?

*Note: It's useful to know the area in which you are presenting and the major flood events that have occurred there. If there has been a recent flood event, it is useful to talk to students about how they were affected, or if there were people they know who were affected by the event.*



### Developing understanding – 25 minutes

Discuss with students the various causes of flooding, including flash flooding, quick-onset flooding and slow-onset flooding. Explore with students how storms can cause flooding though there are other causes including cyclones, high tides and rain. Ask students to describe what they might see during a flood episode and record these on chart paper or a whiteboard. Explore with students the potential for floodwater to be over roads and in low-lying areas; stormwater drains filling with rushing water; homes and businesses being inundated, and creeks and rivers rising beyond their banks.

Next, ask students to identify why floods might be dangerous. As students identify different dangers, place the corresponding picture up on the whiteboard or wall for them to see. Ask students to think about which dangers they might find in their local area if there was a flood.

Focus specifically on areas of concern relevant to the students' local environment. Show students images of cars driving through floodwater and the dangers



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concerned. Discuss with students the need to talk with their parents about floods and flood safety. Following this, discussion may focus on any aspect of flood safety relevant to students. For example, students in coastal regions should become familiar with high-tide and storm-surge flooding and the dangers of swimming and surfing during these times. Students in rural and remote areas should develop an understanding of slow-onset flooding and the danger that it presents for families and communities being cut off for extended periods of time from other regions. Additionally, students in rural and remote areas could engage in discussion around the dangers of swimming in flooded creeks and streams; whereas, for students in more urban locations, discussion should centre around stormwater drains and the dangers present in those environments.

Following the discussion of the dangers of floods relevant to their environment, it is important for students to identify ways of staying safe. For each of the dangers identified by students, discuss ways of staying safe (e.g. not swimming at the beach during a storm). Students can then record this information on the back of their colouring sheet on the notes page provided. Students can develop a list depending on their age and ability between 5 and 15.

## Concluding – 10 minutes

Ask students to commit to staying safe during floods and storms. Ask them also to talk to their parents when they get home about the dangers and what they can do to avoid them.

Then, discuss with students the role of the emergency services when a natural disaster occurs, such as a flood, and provide time to explore and discuss the emergency services vehicle.

Students can complete their colouring sheets as a follow-up activity.

## Optional activities

1. Have students create a board game to show the dangers and safety steps for floods and storms. Students can be encouraged to create a game board, game cards, and a series of instructions and rules so other students can play the game.
2. Students can create a poster advertising the dangers of floods for other students to colour in and decorate.



# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR EDUCATORS

The topic of flood and storm safety offers many opportunities for additional learning. Consider one of the following, or pursue ideas of your own.

Weather-related topics are of great concern to all students. Look at your whole school program around healthy behavior and weather. Do they include a major section on the risks of major weather events such as floods? Do they have take-home materials to help parents understand the issues of safe behavior? Look at pulling together material to help update the health program if needed.

Look at your own experience of floods and storms. Do you know what the major risks are for your family and community? Have you got safe strategies in place in the case of floods and storms?

Research the current information around the emergency services and the role they play in major flood events. Explore what recommendations are in place for your local community.



## PARENT MATERIAL

1. If you are aware of the dangers of floods and the safety behaviours to avoid these dangers, you're sending a very powerful message that being safe during storms and floods is important.
2. Discuss with children the dangers of floods, particularly around your home and local area, and have a plan as a family to avoid those dangers.
3. Discuss with the school the information your child is receiving around safe behaviours particularly those related to major weather events, including floods.
4. Teach the children the number to ring in case of an emergency is zero, zero, zero (000).
5. Plan for major flood events; for example, rising flood water can cut off some communities – what plans need to be in place if this occurs?

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Also available at  
[www.qfes.qld.gov.au/communitysafety/schools/default.asp](http://www.qfes.qld.gov.au/communitysafety/schools/default.asp)

