



# Local Flood Guide Tarwin Valley



# FloodSafe

Flood information for the Tarwin River at Tarwin Lower and Venus Bay



TARWIN VALLEY



South Gippsland  
Shire Council

*come for the beauty, stay for the lifestyle!*



West Gippsland  
Catchment Management Authority



FLOOD STORM  
EMERGENCY **132 500**

For more information visit  
[www.ses.vic.gov.au](http://www.ses.vic.gov.au)

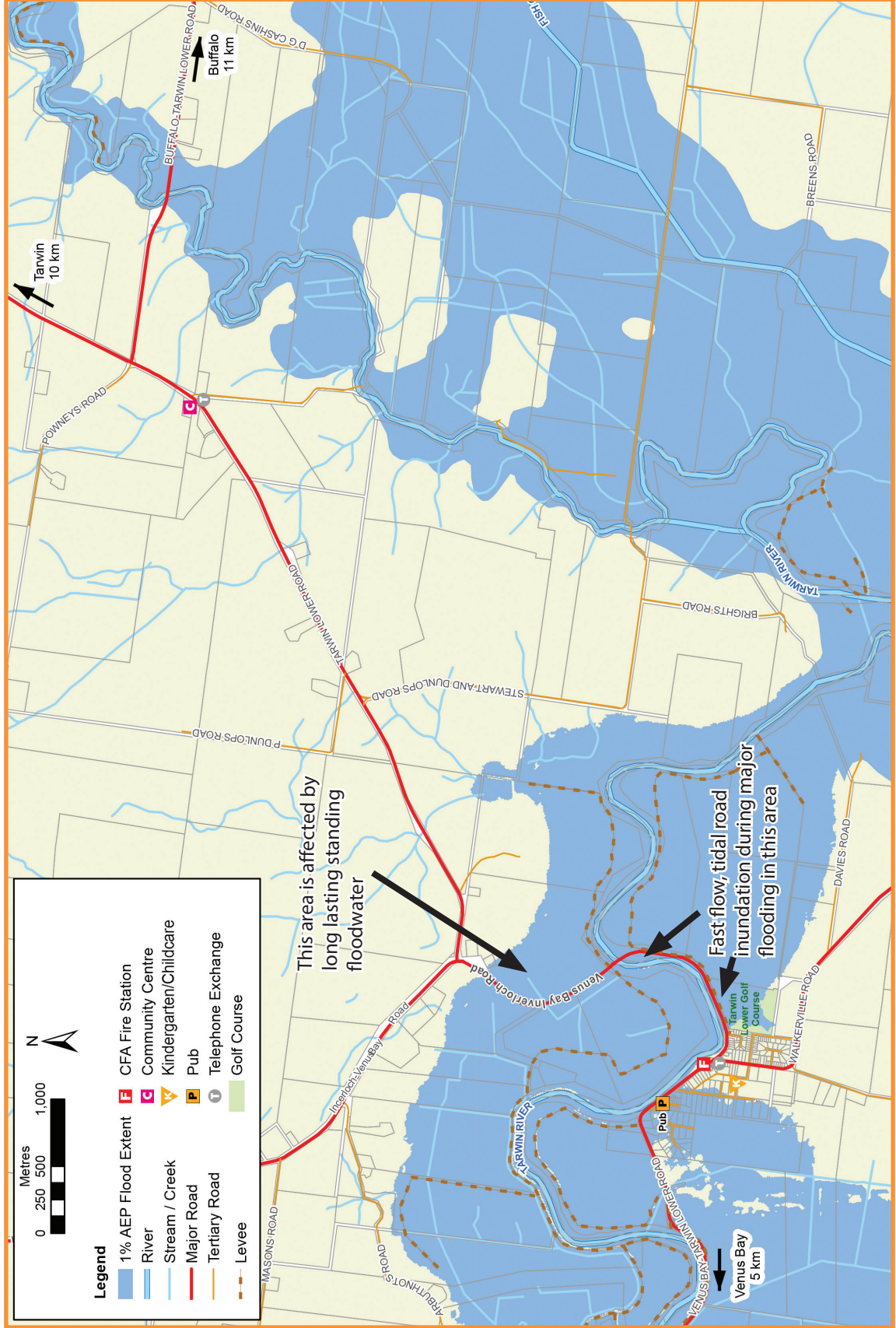
# The Tarwin Lower and Venus Bay local area

Tarwin Lower is located on the banks of the Tarwin River, which flows through the town towards Venus Bay where the river joins the ocean through Andersons Inlet.

The Tarwin Valley has a history of flooding, including the Tarwin Lower and Venus Bay area. In 2001, flooding in Gippsland caused the Tarwin River to burst its banks, isolating hundreds of people in the Tarwin Lower and Venus Bay area.

Map one: Tarwin Valley riverine flooding shows the expected impacts on Tarwin Lower and Middle Tarwin in the event of a 1% flood in the area. Map two: Venus Bay riverine flooding shows the expected impact of a 1% flood in Venus Bay. A 1% flood means there is a 1% chance of a flood this size occurring in any year. You can use these as a guide to understanding the impacts of the Tarwin River flooding.

## Map one: Tarwin Valley riverine flooding



**Disclaimer**  
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## Are you at risk of flooding?

The Tarwin Valley is subject to riverine flooding, flash flooding, and coastal storm surge flooding, which has a similar effect to King Tides. The Tarwin River can flood due to prolonged rain over a number of days, causing the river to rise and burst its banks.

The southern floodplain and areas downstream from the town towards Venus Bay are more likely to experience flooding from storm surges. Storm surge flooding is common during winter months and is caused primarily by prolonged south-westerly or westerly winds that accompany cold fronts, causing flooding in low-lying areas. If this happens during a high tide, the effect of flooding is greater.

Driving through floodwater is dangerous. In minor flooding events, plan your travel to and from Tarwin Lower and Venus Bay during low tides. The Bureau of Meteorology publishes daily tide charts at [bom.gov.au](http://bom.gov.au)

During flooding, the Tarwin River can change flow direction as it is influenced by the tides. When the tide is rising, and the river is flowing quickly due to high rainfalls upstream, the river can change direction slightly crossing the Inverloch-Venus Bay Road south of the Tarwin River Bridge near the fishing platforms. This area is incredibly dangerous for drivers and often closes during flooding.

Once you enter the floodwater, you cannot turn around due to the strong water currents.

Never drive through floodwater - you don't know what you're getting into.

## Useful contacts

Your local emergency broadcasters are:

- Gippsland ABC 100.7 FM or 828 AM
- 3GG 531 AM
- Star 94.3 FM
- SKY NEWS Television

South Gippsland Shire Council contact details:

- Phone: (03) 5662 9200
- Web: [southgippsland.vic.gov.au](http://southgippsland.vic.gov.au)
- Email: [council@southgippsland.vic.gov.au](mailto:council@southgippsland.vic.gov.au)

Bureau of Meteorology tide charts

- Web: [bom.gov.au/australia/tides/](http://bom.gov.au/australia/tides/)

Map two: Venus Bay Riverine Flooding



# About Flood Warnings

## Flood Warnings

**Warnings** are issued by the Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) to tell people about possible flooding.

A **Flood Watch** means there is a developing weather pattern that might cause floods in one or two days. A Flood Watch will be cancelled if it is no longer a threat.

The Victorian State Emergency Service (SES) will give information about how the floodwater might affect people and properties. This includes safety messages to remind you what to do.

### Severe Thunderstorm Warnings

Thunderstorms are classified as severe, due to their potential to cause significant localised damage through: wind gusts, large hail, tornadoes or flash flooding. Severe Thunderstorm Warnings are issued to the community by BoM.

### Severe Weather Warnings

These warnings are issued to the community by BoM when severe weather is expected that is not directly related to severe thunderstorms and bushfires. Examples of severe weather include damaging winds and flash flooding.

**Flash flooding** occurs when rain falls faster than the ground has the ability to absorb it. This causes water to run into low-lying areas and into local drainage systems that are unable to cope with the high volume of water. This results in water rising rapidly and flowing quickly.

Flash flooding:

- Occurs so fast that it is difficult to provide a detailed warning. Often it arrives without warning.
- Usually results from heavy rainfall falling during severe thunderstorms over a short time.

Listen to Severe Thunderstorm Warnings and Severe Weather Warnings for your area. If you hear a warning, check the BoM and SES websites for information and advice.

## Know your local environment

If you live in the area, keep an eye on the weather, especially heavy rainfall or sustained rainfall over a number of days. Knowing your local area and making your own observations are a great tool to help you prepare for a potential flood. Keep an eye on local river and creek heights.

**Remember, you may not receive any official warning.**

**Emergency assistance may not be immediately available. Be aware of what is happening around you to stay safe.**

**Never wait for a warning to act.**

## Emergency Alert

SES may provide alerts to the Tarwin Valley community through the Emergency Alert telephone warning system. All emergency service providers can use Emergency Alert to warn communities about dangerous situations by voice message to landline telephones or text message to mobile phones.

If you receive a warning, make sure that all family members, people at work and your neighbours are aware of the situation.

**If you receive an Emergency Alert you should pay attention and act. It could mean life or death.**

If you need help to understand a warning, ask a friend, neighbour or family member.

## Warnings for the Tarwin Valley

BoM does not issue river height predictions for the Tarwin River.

Warnings issued by BoM may provide information about when flooding is possible in the town, but not specifics such as river height predictions.

If flooding is likely, tune into emergency broadcasters to watch and listen for information relating to the Tarwin River the West Gippsland Catchment or the West and South Gippsland weather district.

Information about potential floods will also be available from SES. You can monitor rainfall and river levels on the BoM website at [bom.gov.au](http://bom.gov.au)

### NOW – before a flood

- Check if your home or business is subject to flooding. For more information, contact South Gippsland Shire Council.
- Develop an emergency plan.
- Check if you could be cut off by floodwater.
- Know the safest way to go if you decide to leave your property and plan an alternative route.
- Check your insurance policies to ensure your equipment, property and business are covered for flood damage.
- Keep a list of emergency numbers near the telephone.
- Put together an emergency kit.
- Stay alert for weather warnings and heavy rainfall.

### When a flood is likely

- Take action. Follow your emergency plan.
- Listen to your radio for information and advice.
- Check your neighbours are safe and know about the flood.
- Stack possessions on benches and tables with electrical goods in the highest places.
- Anchor objects that are likely to float and cause damage.
- Move rubbish bins, chemicals and poisons to the highest place.
- Put important papers, valuables, photos and other special personal items into your emergency kit.
- Business owners should raise stock, business records and equipment onto benches and tables.
- Rural property owners should move livestock, pumps and machinery to higher ground.
- If you are likely to be isolated, have enough food, drinking water, medicine, fuel and other needs to last at least three days.
- Do not forget pet food and stock feed.

### Your emergency plan

Emergencies can happen at any time, with little warning. People who have planned and prepared for emergencies will reduce the impact and recovered faster.

Taking the time to think about emergencies and make your own plan helps you think clearly, have more control and make better decisions when an emergency occurs.

Your emergency plan should identify:

- The types of emergencies that might affect you.
- How those emergencies might affect you.
- What you will do before, during and after an emergency.
- Where to get more information.
- Where you will go if you evacuate and the best way to go in different circumstances.
- A list of phone numbers you will need, including emergency service providers, your insurance company, friends and family.



Visit [ses.vic.gov.au](http://ses.vic.gov.au) to obtain a copy of your Home Emergency Plan workbook

### Evacuation

During a flood, Police, SES and other emergency service providers may advise you to evacuate to keep you safe. It is important that you follow this advice.

There are two types of evacuation notices that may be issued via your emergency broadcaster during a flood:

- **Prepare to evacuate** – means you should act quickly and take immediate action to protect your life and property. Be ready to leave your property.
- **Evacuate immediately** – you must leave immediately as there is a risk to lives. You may only have minutes to evacuate in a flash flooding situation.

Do not return to your home until you are sure it is safe to do so. You do not need to wait to be told to evacuate.

# Emergency Kit

Every home and business should have a basic emergency kit:



Check your kit often. Make sure things work. Replace out of date items.

When a warning is issued, have ready for use or pack into your kit:



## I need to add:

Write your list here. Tick items as you pack them into your kit.

- Special needs \_\_\_\_\_
- Photos \_\_\_\_\_
- Family keepsakes \_\_\_\_\_
- Valuables \_\_\_\_\_
- Documents \_\_\_\_\_
- Other \_\_\_\_\_



# During and After a Flood

**Never**  
Drive, Ride or Walk  
Through Floodwater

## During a flood

When flooding has begun:

- **Never drive, ride, swim or walk through floodwater.**
- Remember that floodwater can be deeper than you think and can hide damaged roads and bridges.
- Never let your children play or swim in floodwater. It is dirty, dangerous and deadly.
- Tune in to your emergency broadcasters: ABC Local Radio, Commercial Radio, designated Community Radio Stations and SKY NEWS Television.
- In life-threatening emergencies, call Triple Zero (000).
- For SES emergency assistance during floods and storms call 132 500.
- Stay away from all waterways including drains and culverts.
- Stay away from fallen powerlines as electricity travels easily through water.
- Be aware that animals such as snakes, rats, spiders and other pests may be on the move during a flood. These animals can come into houses and other buildings or hide around sandbags.
- Keep in contact with neighbours.
- Be prepared to act quickly.

## After a flood

Flood dangers do not end when the water begins to fall. To make sure you stay safe:

- Keep listening to local emergency broadcasters.
- Do not return home until you are sure that it is safe.

Once you return to your home:

- Investigate the structural safety of your building.
- Drink bottled water or boil all drinking water until advised that the water supply is safe.
- Throw away any food or medicines that may have been in contact with floodwater or affected by power outages.
- When entering a building, use a torch to light your way. Never use matches or cigarette lighters as there may be gas inside.
- Keep the electricity and gas off until checked and tested by a professional.
- Take photographs of all damage for insurance.
- Clean your home straight away to prevent disease.

## How SES helps the community

The Victoria State Emergency Service (SES) is a volunteer based emergency service. Although SES volunteers attempt to reach everyone prior to or during an emergency, at times this is not possible, especially during flash flooding which occurs so quickly. Therefore it is advisable for you to be prepared for emergencies so that you can share responsibility for your own wellbeing during those times. In a flood, SES assistance may include:

- Giving flood advice
- Protecting essential services
- Helping to protect infrastructure
- Rescuing people from floodwater
- Advising of an evacuation

To assist your preparation, it is recommended that you obtain a copy of the SES Home Emergency Plan by visiting [ses.vic.gov.au](http://ses.vic.gov.au).



# Emergency Checklist

## NOW: Flood preparation

- Check if your insurance policies cover flooding.
- Keep this list of emergency numbers near the telephone.
- Put together an emergency kit and prepare a home or business emergency plan, see [ses.vic.gov.au](http://ses.vic.gov.au).

## When you hear a Flood Watch or weather warning

- Listen to Severe Weather Warnings for flash flood.
- Listen to radio and check the SES website for more information and advice.
- Go over your emergency plan. Pack clothing and other extra items into your emergency kit and take this with you if you evacuate.
- Leave early if you intend to evacuate.

## When flooding may happen soon (heavy rainfall)

- Make sure your family members and neighbours are aware of what is happening.
- Conditions change rapidly, roads and escape routes can be covered or blocked. Don't forget to take pets and your medicine with you.
- Put household valuables and electrical items as high as possible.
- Turn off water, gas and electricity at the mains.
- Secure objects likely to float and cause damage.
- If you are staying in a caravan or temporary dwelling, move to higher ground BEFORE flooding begins.

## During the flood

- For SES emergency assistance, call 132 500.
- DO NOT drive, ride, swim or walk through floodwater. This is the main cause of death during floods.
- NEVER allow children to play in floodwater. This is the main cause of death during floods for children and young people.
- Stay away from drains, culverts and waterways as water can flow quickly and have strong currents.
- Stay well clear of fallen trees, powerlines and damaged buildings.
- If you are trapped inside a building, stay inside and shelter in the highest place. Call Triple Zero (000) in a life-threatening emergency.

## After the flood: recovery

- If your property has been flooded, check with South Gippsland Shire Council for information and advice.
- Have all electrical and gas equipment professionally tested before use.

For more information visit:

-  [ses.vic.gov.au](http://ses.vic.gov.au)
-  [facebook.com/vicses](https://www.facebook.com/vicses)
-  [twitter.com/vicseswarnings](https://twitter.com/vicseswarnings)

# Emergency Contacts

**Life-threatening emergency**  
Police Fire Ambulance

**000** Triple Zero  
TTY106

**Victoria State Emergency Service (SES)**  
For SES emergency assistance

**132 500**  
[ses.vic.gov.au](http://ses.vic.gov.au)

**SES information line**

Operates during major floods or storms

**1300 842 737**  
**1300 VIC SES**

**VicEmergency**

Victorian emergency warnings

[emergency.vic.gov.au](http://emergency.vic.gov.au)

**Bureau of Meteorology (BoM)**

Weather information, forecasts, warnings

**1300 659 217**  
[bom.gov.au](http://bom.gov.au)

**National Relay Service (NRS)**

[relayservice.gov.au](http://relayservice.gov.au)

The deaf, hearing or speech impaired can call SES or Triple Zero (000) using NRS:

	DIAL	THEN ASK FOR
■ <b>Speak and Listen (SSR)</b> users phone	<b>1300 555 727</b>	<b>132 500</b>
■ <b>TTY / Voice</b> users phone	<b>13 36 77</b>	<b>132 500</b>

**Internet Relay** users log into

[www.iprelay.com.au/call/](http://www.iprelay.com.au/call/)  
then enter: **132 500 or 000**

**VicRoads**

Road closures and hazard reporting service

**13 11 70**  
[vicroads.vic.gov.au](http://vicroads.vic.gov.au)

## South Gippsland Shire Contact Details

**Phone:** (03) 5662 9200  
**Web:** [southgippsland.vic.gov.au](http://southgippsland.vic.gov.au)  
**Email:** [council@southgippsland.vic.gov.au](mailto:council@southgippsland.vic.gov.au)

**Weather District:** West and South Gippsland

**Catchment Management Authority:** West Gippsland  
[www.wgcma.vic.gov.au](http://www.wgcma.vic.gov.au)

## Emergency Broadcasters

Emergency broadcasters include ABC Local Radio, designated commercial radio stations across Victoria and SKY NEWS Television.

-  Gippsland ABC 100.7 FM or 828 AM
-  3GG 531 AM
-  Star 94.3 FM
-  SKY NEWS Television

## Complete the following and keep this information handy close to the phone:

Your electricity supplier: \_\_\_\_\_

Your gas supplier: \_\_\_\_\_

Doctor: \_\_\_\_\_

Vet: \_\_\_\_\_

## Insurance

Policy Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_