

Emergency Planning Information Document: Information to support individual/household resilience & emergency planning

Sandy Point & surrounds



Municipal Emergency
Management Planning
South Gippsland Shire



Emergency Planning Information Document

Sandy Point & surrounds

Local township and area information to help you get prepared for an emergency

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Introduction

About this document

This Emergency Planning Information Document has been developed in partnership with Sandy Point Men's Shed through a collaborative process involving the local community, emergency services and agencies represented on the South Gippsland Municipal Emergency Management Planning Committee (MEMPC). It has been designed to support the Sandy Point community and visitors in developing a personal or family emergency plan.

The document combines local knowledge, community experience and emergency management expertise to improve understanding of local risks, encourage personal emergency planning and strengthen community resilience. It supports individuals and families to be self-sufficient for the first 72 hours following an emergency, when access to essential services, utilities and assistance may be disrupted.

The document is reviewed and updated through ongoing collaboration between Sandy Point Men's Shed, South Gippsland Shire Council, community engagement and the MEMPC and is incorporated into the Municipal Emergency Management Plan (MEMP) review cycle. Feedback on the document can be provided to em@southgippsland.vic.gov.au.

Calling for help



Is someone seriously injured or in need of urgent medical help?

Is your life or property being threatened? If you answered **YES** call Triple Zero (000).

If you need emergency help in a flood or storm because:

- A tree has fallen (tree down) and caused structural damage to your home or vehicle
- There is damage to your roof, or it is leaking significantly
- A tree or large branch has fallen and is preventing you from entering or leaving your home
- Your property is flooded or about to flood

Call VICSES on 132 500. Your request for assistance will be logged by their 24/7 call centre. A local volunteer may then contact you for further details.

If **NO** depending on your situation you should:

- Contact your insurer to make a claim or arrange permanent repairs.
- Contact a professional tradesperson to repair damage or remove debris, if required.

How you can be more prepared for emergencies

Individuals, households and visitors can take action before, during and after an emergency.

Before an emergency – what you can do now

You can handle any emergency better if you are prepared

- Find out about and stay aware of potential bushfire/storm/flood risks in your environment
- Download the VicEmergency App to your smartphone and electronic devices
- Save important contact numbers on your phone such as family and friends and the VicEmergency Hotline 1800 226 226
- Develop and practice your emergency plan with the whole family, pets included
- Consider where you may relocate to during an emergency – ideally to family or friends in a location well away from the emergency area. Talk to your friends and family about your emergency plans.
- Ensure your house number is clearly visible, your driveway is accessible for emergency services, and that your address can be easily given to emergency services by people in your house
- Pack an emergency kit and keep it somewhere easily accessible. Have some non-perishable food and water stored at home and some cash if you can.
- Back-up important documents such as ID, insurance, financial and medical info
- Review your insurance – consider household, business and income protection insurance
- Get to know your neighbours and build connections in your local community. Talk to your neighbours about your emergency plans and see if there are ways you can assist each other. Look for local volunteering opportunities or other community groups you can get involved in.



During an emergency

In the event of an emergency, be as self-reliant as possible: in the first instance, agencies will prioritise those most vulnerable. Individuals and families should act on emergency information and warnings and implement plans as needed to protect themselves and their families. Where possible and if safe to do so, consider supporting neighbours and vulnerable members of your community.

In a large-scale emergency event, Council may open an Emergency Relief Centre (ERC) well away from the emergency area, so the community can access essential support including shelter, food, water, material aid, first aid and emergency information. The opening and location of an ERC will be communicated through Victoria's integrated emergency warning system and other official emergency information channels.

After an emergency

Only return home when it is safe and you have been given clearance. Check on neighbours, take care when cleaning up due to potential hazards, and contact your insurance company if you have one.

Meet your own recovery needs wherever possible. Engage with recovery services through Council or via Emergency Recovery Victoria www.vic.gov.au/emergency-recovery-victoria. Review and improve personal/family emergency plans after an event.

Stay informed

About Sandy Point

Sandy Point is located in the South Gippsland Shire Coastal Promontory Ward, located approximately 200 kilometres south-east of Melbourne, 2.5 hours' travel along the South Gippsland Highway via Fish Creek, turning off at Meenivan.

The long, sweeping beaches surrounding Sandy Point have to be some of the best in Victoria. Over summer, the beach is patrolled by surf lifesavers and entertainment is regularly provided at the Waratah Beach Surf Lifesaving Club.

The Shallow Inlet area to the east of the Sandy Point township is renowned for its kite- and windsurfing and other water-based activities. Drive out on to the beach to launch. The area is also popular with families with young children thanks to its shallow and gently lapping waters.

Sandy Point has a general store, and additional shopping options are available nearby in Fish Creek and Foster.

Understand emergency risks

What emergencies have impacted Sandy Point in the past, and what types of emergencies are most likely to impact us in the future?

Bushfire/Grassfire

Victoria is one of the most fire-prone areas in the world. Understanding your level of risk is the first step in knowing what to do before and during a fire. For more information on specific bushfire planning, go to [Am I at Risk? | CFA \(Country Fire Authority\) cfa.vic.gov.au/plan-prepare](http://Am I at Risk? | CFA (Country Fire Authority) cfa.vic.gov.au/plan-prepare).

Fire history in Sandy Point and South Gippsland

Sandy Point has an Extreme bushfire risk level. A bushfire/grass fire burning with a north/north westerly wind will impact populated areas of Sandy Point together with outlying properties. There is



no history in recent times of major bushfires for Sandy Point and surrounds but there have been several fire ignitions in the last five years.

Burning scrub, heath or other coastal vegetation can create hot, dangerous bushfires. If you live by, work by or travel to the coast you are at risk. Beaches, foreshores and shallow waters may not be safe or protect you from radiant heat. Often a fire will be burning between you and the beach.

Smoke can affect people's health. People with heart or lung conditions (including asthma), children, pregnant women and older people are more sensitive to the effects of breathing in smoke. For more information see epa.vic.gov.au.

What can you expect?

- Very hot and fast-moving fires
- Gusty ocean winds causing fire to behave erratically
- A lot of embers
- Fire reaching houses quickly
- Busy, congested coastal roads
- Radiant heat (the heat created by a fire)



Neighbourhood Safer Place – Bushfire Place of Last Resort

A 'Neighbourhood Safer Place' (also known as a 'Bushfire Place of Last Resort') is a place of last resort when all other bushfire plans have failed. These are locations that may provide some protection from direct flames and heat from fire, but they do not guarantee safety. They are not an alternative to planning to leave early or to stay and defend your property; they are a place of last resort if all other fire plans have failed.

- The **Sandy Point Community Centre**, Corner Ocean View Parade and Church Parade, Sandy Point is a designated Neighbourhood Safer Place.

The building has limited capacity and there is no provision for animals. If you need to access the building in a bushfire emergency, call the phone number next to the keypad (03 5662 9200) which is located at the building entrance. Council does not send staff to open the centre in a bushfire emergency.



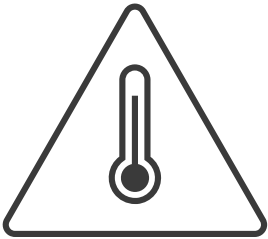
Severe Weather – storm, high winds, heavy rain, hail, flooding and power outages

Sandy Point is frequently hit by periods of storm activity. The single road in and out can be impacted by falling trees. It may not be safe to leave during periods of high winds.

Storm surges can lead to high tides that impact the beach and Shallow Inlet.

Recent emergency events in South Gippsland have included severe storms, damaging winds and flooding, particularly in 2021 and 2024. These events caused significant building damage, widespread power outages lasting several days, significant telecommunications disruptions, fallen trees and road closures, and flooding that impacted hundreds of roads and properties across the Shire.

Extreme heat



Days of extreme heat and heatwaves are periods of unusually hot weather that can worsen medical conditions or cause potentially fatal health problems, like heatstroke. Extreme heat can affect everyone. Those more at risk are people over the age of 65, babies and young children, pregnant women, people with acute or chronic health problems, and people who are socially isolated. They can also impact infrastructure like power and transport. More information to help your planning can be found at <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/extreme-heat>.

Other risks

Emergencies come in many forms. More information on general risks can be found at <https://www.emergencyprepare.com.au/>

Staying updated – Victoria’s warning system

Victoria’s integrated warning system provides emergency information via the VicEmergency App, website, hotline, broadcasters, and, in extreme cases, voice or text alerts. During an emergency, rely on credible sources – accurate information is vital for safety and effective response.



Prevent panic and misinformation

Reliable sources help prevent the spread of rumours and misinformation, which can lead to panic and chaos. Clear and consistent information from credible sources helps maintain calm and ensures that people receive accurate guidance on what actions to take during the emergency.

VicEmergency Hotline: 1800 226 226 <https://emergency.vic.gov.au/>

Official Emergency Radio Broadcasters

<https://www.emv.vic.gov.au/official-emergency-broadcasters-in-victoria>

ABC Local: 774 AM | 828 AM | 100.7 FM

Gippsland FM: 100.7 FM and 104.7 FM

Recommended Apps:

VicEmergency, ABC Listen, Emergency Plus, BOM weather



Make a plan

The First 72 Hours planning process focuses on helping individuals and communities be self-reliant in the critical first three days after an emergency, when services may be delayed. It involves identifying risks, making a simple emergency plan, preparing essential supplies, and knowing how to stay informed. The process also encourages people to check on others and connect with local support networks, strengthening overall community resilience.

We recommend using The First 72 Hours emergency workplan to create your own plan. A blank worksheet is provided at the end of this document. Use this worksheet to create your unique emergency plan. Consider whether it needs to differ for fire, flood or storm.

An editable [on-line version](#) is also available on Council's website:

https://www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/downloads/file/5389/the_first_72_hour_emergency_plan

Emergency planning resources

The following links contain many helpful tools to assist you in creating an emergency plan:

- **The First 72 Hours** southgippsland.vic.gov.au/72HRS
- **Australian Red Cross** redcross.org.au/prepare/
- **CFA (to prepare for fire)** cfa.vic.gov.au/plan-prepare
- **SES (to prepare for flood and storm)** ses.vic.gov.au/plan-and-stay-safe
- **Are you prepared for an emergency?** emergencyprepare.com.au/

If you need help to get started or know someone who may need extra help:

- If you live with disability or care for someone with disability, see collaborating4inclusion.org/pcep-old/

- Fire safety information in multiple formats and languages:
cfa.vic.gov.au/about-us/publications/fire-safety-translations

Additionally, an Emergency Contacts & Resources sheet has been prepared by Council to help with the development of your Emergency Plan in the 'before an emergency' section of Council's website – southgippsland.vic.gov.au/emergency_management.

Things to consider when planning for emergencies in Sandy Point

Access issues

- Access to and from Sandy Point may be restricted during emergencies such as bushfire, flood or severe storms
- Sandy Point has only one road in and out of the township, increasing the risk of isolation if this route is closed
- Additional traffic into Sandy Point during an emergency may place unnecessary strain on the township's already limited road network, emergency services and essential resources
- Many internal roads are narrow and bordered by dense vegetation, which can affect emergency vehicle access and evacuation. In foreshore areas, parked vehicles on both sides of the road can further reduce road width.
- Several streets within Sandy Point are dead ends, limiting evacuation options for some residents
- During severe storm events, fallen trees and debris may delay road clearance. Residents should be prepared to be self-sufficient until access is restored.
- If you choose to leave during an emergency, relocate early to stay with family or friends well away from the affected area, or travel to a nearby town or other built-up area before conditions become unsafe.
- Road closures and access updates are available through the VicEmergency app and the VicTraffic website
- School buses service Sandy Point and district daily to Foster and Fish Creek
- Public transport is extremely limited. The only local community transport option is a volunteer-operated 10-seat community e-bus, meaning most residents rely on private vehicles.

Communication issues

- Mobile phone communication in some areas of Sandy Point is not good and can be impacted by location and provider
- Internet and phone coverage can be impacted by strong winds
- There are some telecommunications black spots in the Sandy Point area – particularly the southeast section of town

- Commercial and ABC radio provide good emergency broadcast coverage across the area, although reception may be patchy in some locations

Loss of power

- During significant, widespread power outages, priority is given to restoring power to the greatest number of properties as quickly as possible. If you live at the end of a road or in a more remote area, your power may take longer to be restored.
- In extended power outages (24+ hours) the Sandy Point Community Centre may be open as a Resilient Energy Centre where mobile devices can be charged and Wi-Fi accessed.
- Stay informed by checking the [AusNet Outage Tracker https://www.outagetracker.com.au/](https://www.outagetracker.com.au/) for outage updates and estimated restoration times and ensure your electricity retailer has your current mobile phone number so you can receive SMS updates from AusNet.

Water issues

- Power outages can disrupt your water supply, particularly if you rely on electric pumps. Use water wisely and prioritise essential needs such as drinking, hand washing and toilet flushing.
- Before a forecast emergency, fill a couple of buckets with water to use for toilet flushing or other essential tasks if the power goes out.
- If you rely on tank water and a septic system, remember that unless your water supply is gravity-fed, a power outage may mean you have no running water or toilet flushing. Plan ahead.
- If you have livestock, plan for how you will provide water if pumps stop working during a power outage.

Pets

- Your pets are your responsibility. Failing to plan ahead for your pets' safety during an emergency puts everyone's lives at risk.
- Information relating to planning for your animals in emergencies can be found at <https://agriculture.vic.gov.au/>





Get connected

Connected communities are more resilient. By building strong local connections before an emergency, people are better able to support one another during an event and throughout the recovery process.

Community Groups and Networks

Take the time to get to know your neighbours and local community, identify your support networks, and consider who may need extra assistance during an emergency.

Sandy Point has a number of clubs and organisations in the township – there's an activity or interest group for everyone who wants to be involved. For social / educational / sporting / community networks that connect this community, visit the Sandy Point Community Group website www.sandypoint.vic.au/groups-and-organisations.

Community communication channels

Communication channels and media that are commonly used by the Sandy Point community to share news and updates include:

- Sandy Point News – community newsletter sent quarterly to 500+ e-mail addresses
- Sandy Point Community Group (www.sandypoint.vic.au, Facebook and Instagram)
- Sandy Point/Waratah Bay Community Noticeboard (Facebook)
- Sandy Point/Shallow Inlet Community Noticeboard (Facebook)
- Community Noticeboards – at the Foreshore and Community Garden in TP Taylor Reserve

Where possible, community emergency information is posted at the Sandy Point Community Centre building which may be open as a Resilient Energy Centre in times of extended power outages.



Back up information

Important things to save:

- Your emergency plan
- Identification (to prove who you are)

Home inventory:

- Photos of possessions
- Photos of house assets
- Receipts, warranties etc.

Documents:

- Insurance policies
- Property documents
- Medical information and prescriptions
- Financial records

Contact list:

- Family / close friends
- Utility providers
- Other



Prepare your emergency kit

Have your own food, water, medication and other essential supplies to be able to look after yourself, your family and pets for at least 72 hours. An emergency kit must be prepared to suit your family's needs.

 WATER	 MEDICATION	 RADIO & BATTERIES	 TORCH	 DOCUMENTS
 FOOD	 FIRST AID	 CLOTHES	 TOILETRIES	 MONEY
 PHONE & CHARGER	 PET'S NEEDS	 CHILDREN'S NEEDS	 GLASSES	 WHAT ELSE?

The First 72 Hours emergency workplan



1. Make an emergency plan

What are you going to do?



What is this plan for:

WHO ...

do I need to consider?
do I need to tell?

Who am I going to tell if I am evacuating:

WHAT ...

do I need to know?
do I need to do?

WHERE ...

will I go?
do I get information?
do I keep my plan?

HOW ...

will I get there?
will I get there - plan B?

WHY ...

do I need to make a plan?