

Fuel for Thought

Weathering the Storm at Home

One of the things that's been occupying our time at QER has been preparations for the up-coming wet season – which of course, is also the storm season, and as Marcia reminded us in February – the Cyclone Season.

Our work out here involves making sure our emergency plan is in place and up to date, preparing our emergency response equipment, and preparing the site itself.

This is also what the authorities tell us we each need to be doing at home so I thought I'd use this column as a little thought jogger.

An emergency plan for home might sound over the top, but it's important that everyone in the family knows what to do if a crisis hits. What should we each do when there's a storm coming? Who's going to make sure the car is ready (fuelled up and so on) if we have to evacuate? Under what circumstances should we evacuate, and where would we go? If we're not all together, how will we keep in contact each other? And where would we meet? What should we do to help our neighbours – especially the elderly? Do we have all the emergency contact numbers we need in a handy place?

Similarly we need to keep a kit handy for emergencies. Do some 'what ifs'...What if the power goes out? (Torches, battery radio to monitor the situation, spare batteries)? What if the water is off? (Keep water containers handy and fill them up when there's the possibility of storms). What if we are isolated for some time? (Canned food and maybe a gas cooker). What if someone is injured? (First aid kit and training). I'm sure you can think of many more.

Finally we need to prepare our homes: for example, getting rid of anything that might become flying debris; having tape or boards ready to cover windows.

This is not nearly a comprehensive list of preparations – just a few thought joggers. Fortunately there are many helpful resources on-line to help you with a thorough plan. A good place to start is the fact sheets at: getready.qld.gov.au.

Good luck with your preparations. Let's hope we don't need them this season!



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