

UNDER EMBARGO until 12.01am 15 November 2023

Suncorp Insurance urges homeowners to prepare now for summer storms

- **Suncorp Insurance data reveals half of Queensland’s Top 10 Storm battered suburbs are in Wide Bay**

With storm season upon us, and the Bureau of Meteorology warning Queenslanders they’re in for a wild ride this summer with severe weather, including not only bushfires but also thunderstorms, flooding and tropical cyclones predicted – Suncorp insurance and the Queensland State Emergency Service (SES) have revealed the state's worst storm damaged hotspots this past financial year.

Suncorp’s data also found that half of Queensland’s Top 10 storm battered suburbs were located in Wide Bay.

Suncorp Insurance analysed more than 8,559 weather-related home insurance claims across Queensland from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2023, to reveal the hardest hit suburbs.

Suncorp Insurance’s Top 10 storm hotspots in Queensland

Rank	Hotspot Suburb	Region
1.	Maryborough	Wide Bay
2.	Cooloola Cove	Wide Bay
3.	Mackay	Mackay
4.	Toowoomba	Toowoomba
5.	Gympie	Wide Bay
6.	Gladstone	Central Qld
7.	Bundaberg	Wide Bay
8.	Yeppoon	Central Qld
9.	Hervey Bay	Wide Bay
10.	Highfields	Toowoomba

Quotes below attributable to Suncorp Insurance Executive Manager Disaster Response Lilly Broodbank:

“Our home claims data showed that rain, followed by hail and flood were the most common causes of damage to homes across Queensland,” Ms Broodbank said.

“In December 2022, the Sunshine Coast experienced an intense and fast-moving hailstorm bringing down power lines with giant hail stones the size of five centimetres in diameter crashing down on Maryborough, Cooloola Cove and Gympie, which resulted in a large volume of claims.

“In February this year, the state also experienced significant rain and hail, damaging homes in locations across South-East Queensland from the Gold Coast to Brisbane.

“As a result of these weather events, our customers experienced everything from water ingress, damaged roofs and flooding, and in some cases were displaced from their homes.

“Storms are a normal part of everyday life in Queensland, which means damage from them can catch people off guard. Aussies tend to have a ‘laissez faire’ attitude when it comes to preparing for summer storms. However, what Queenslanders don’t realise is that storms can be a serious event and don’t need to last long or be a category 5 cyclone to cause severe damage to their homes.

“Although some areas of the state, particularly Wide Bay, central Queensland and Toowoomba copped a battering, storms by their nature are unpredictable and can happen anywhere and anytime, so it’s vital to not be complacent and prepare your home now.

“Despite the heightened risk of bushfires from El Nino, we need to also be ready and prepare for wild weather brought by thunderstorms, damaging wind, hail and tropical cyclones.”

According to Suncorp Partner Queensland State Emergency Service (SES), SES volunteers responded to a large number of requests for assistance.

Quotes below attributable to Acting SES Assistant Commissioner Brian Cox:

“Severe weather is a part of life in Queensland and storms can strike at any time,” Mr Cox said.

“Emergency services are trained and ready for whatever the upcoming storm season will bring, but I encourage all households to do what they can now to prepare.

“Simple steps like clearing gutters, checking your roof and ceiling for any damage and securing outdoor items can minimise risk before storms arrive. I would also encourage all Queenslanders to pack an emergency kit with essential items if they haven’t already.”

Quotes below attributable to Queensland Reconstruction Authority CEO Major General Jake Elwood (Retd):

“We are asking Queenslanders to plan ahead and pack an emergency kit, so they are ready when severe weather inevitably hits,” Mr Elwood said.

“I encourage everyone to think about how extreme weather could impact on their families, make a plan to stay safe, and have emergency supplies on hand so you don’t get caught out.

“Experience shows communities that are well prepared and supported before a disaster are more resilient and able to recover faster afterwards.”

Top Tips to Prepare

“When times are tough, it can be hard to prioritise things like home maintenance, particularly spending money on improving the resilience of your home. However, many of these tasks don’t cost or take long, and can be well worth the investment to strengthen the resilience of your biggest asset,” Ms Broodbank said.

These include:

- Securing and putting away loose items around your backyard or balcony.
- Trimming trees and branches that could fall onto your home or car.
- Cleaning your gutters, downpipes and drains of leaves and debris.
- Parking your vehicles under cover and away from trees or powerlines.
- Inspecting retaining walls
- Ensuring there’s no corrosion, loose fittings or rotting timber around your property.

- Inspecting your roof for damaged or loose tiles.

To find out more about how to best prepare your home and family for storm season, visit [How to Prepare Your Home for Storm and Cyclone Season | Suncorp](#) and [Storm | Queensland Fire and Emergency Services \(qfes.qld.gov.au\)](#).

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Notes to Editor

Claims data collected from Suncorp Group's network of brands including: AAMI, Suncorp Insurance, GIO, Apia and Bingle

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