

Severe Storms & Hail – Roof and Window Readiness

Household checklist for Australian homes – FireRescue.com.au

Before the season – quick home scan

- Take full photos of each side of the house, sheds and key rooms for insurance and Severe Storms and Hail: How to Harden Your Roof and Windows records.
- Walk around the home and list obvious roof and gutter issues – broken tiles, rust, overhanging branches, blocked downpipes.
- Choose three easy fixes to complete this week (e.g. clean one gutter run, trim one branch, clear clutter from exits).
- Test smoke alarms, safety switches and torches; label the switchboard and show everyone how to shut things down safely.
- Update a printed contacts sheet (council, SES, insurer, electricity distributor, GP, trusted friend in another town).

Roof, gutters and windows – hardening steps

- Arrange a roof and gutter inspection (DIY or tradie) to identify cracked tiles, loose sheeting, rust and poorly fixed solar panels.
- Clean gutters and downpipes so heavy rain and hail meltwater can clear quickly.
- Note which windows face the likely hail direction and consider shutters, temporary covers or impact film for those panes.
- Decide where you can quickly move outdoor furniture, pots, BBQs and toys so they are not smashed or turned into missiles.
- Identify safer parking spots for cars, trailers and caravans under cover or on less exposed sides of the home.

Inside the home – people, pets and essentials

- Choose a safer internal area away from large windows (hallway or internal room) for intense hail or high wind.
- Keep a small storm kit: torch, battery radio or charged power bank, spare phone cable, basic first aid, spare medication, child comfort items.
- List special needs for children, older relatives, disability and pets, and who will help each one if the roof or windows fail.
- Decide how you will stay informed: official app, BOM warnings, ABC radio, VicEmergency website or hotline.
- Agree on a simple check-in message to send to one contact outside the area (“We’re at home and OK” / “We’re staying at ___”).

Money, records and after-storm actions

- Check insurance policies for storm and hail cover – roofs, solar, vehicles and temporary accommodation – and note any excesses.
- Store back-up copies of key documents (ID, policies, photos of belongings) in the cloud or with a trusted person.
- After a storm, walk carefully around the property for hidden hazards (loose tiles, branches, wires, slippery surfaces) before clean-up.
- Take clear photos of damage before moving items; keep notes of who you spoke to (insurer, tradies, council) and when.

Severe Storms & Hail – Checklist (continued)

- Schedule a short debrief with your household after each event: what worked, what didn't, and one improvement for next time.