



HAILSTORMS

*Please note that the foundation messages are included in the previous section: **Key messages for all-hazards household and family disaster planning.** Separate messages are also available for other specific hazards.*

Hail is a form of solid rain consisting of balls or irregular lumps of ice, measuring between 5 millimetres or 15 centimetres in diameter. Hail formation requires strong, upward motion of air freezing temperatures at lower heights. Storms that produce hail that reaches the ground are known as hailstorms. Hailstorms normally last from a few minutes up to 15 minutes. Hail in the tropics occur mainly at higher elevations. It may be accompanied by other severe weather events, such as cyclones and tornadoes.

Hailstorms are a common, costly and potentially hazardous weather event that can cause injuries to people, and damage to buildings, vehicles and crops. Accumulating hail can cause loss of power and bring down trees. Hail damage to roofs may go unnoticed until leaks or cracks become obvious. Flash floods and mudslides within areas of steep terrain can be a concern with accumulating hail. Rarely, massive hailstones have been known to cause concussions or fatal head injuries.



Assess and plan

Key messages	Context-specific details
Monitor weather and watch for indicators of dangerous weather	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to the radio or watch television for severe weather warnings. • Monitor weather conditions. Hail clouds often exhibit a characteristic green colouration. • Alert neighbours to indicators for dangerous weather conditions. • Stay alert for landslide or flood warnings.
Identify safest places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the safest places in your building, located away from exterior windows. • Outside a building, the safest places are covered areas away from steep sloping terrain or waterways. • Identify dangerous places with natural lightning rods such as tall isolated trees, hilltops, open fields, beaches, sheds or other small structures and anything metal.



Mitigate risks: physical or environmental

Key messages	Context-specific details
Protect buildings and vehicles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep rain gutters and down pipes clear and repair any damage. • Install permanent external storm shutters on windows and doors. • Park vehicles under shelter or cover windscreens and windows. • Trim dead wood from trees to reduce wind stress and damage from falling branches. • Move valuables away from windows.
Protect livestock and pets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide covered shelter for animals and move livestock there, if necessary. • Bring pets indoors.



Prepare to respond: develop skills and store provisions

Key messages	Context-specific details
Be prepared to act in response to severe weather warning or conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow evacuation instructions. • Stay near safe areas. • Keep children nearby. • Firmly close external shutters.

Store provisions for protecting your home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep items needed to protect your home from water damage (plastic sheeting, duct tape, sandbags, sand etc.).
If you are outdoors, take shelter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek shelter but avoid natural lightning rods such as a tall, isolated tree in an open area, hilltops, open fields, beaches, sheds or other small structures, and anything metal. Face away from wind while you head to the nearest shelter. Use your arms, bag, books or any other object to cover your head. Be alert for signs of high winds or tornado (especially if hail is large). Move to a vehicle with a metal top.
If you are indoors, stay away from windows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stay away from windows and glass doors. Be alert for signs of high winds or tornado, especially if hail is large, and follow tornado precautions if necessary. Stay indoors until the storm stops and you are sure it is safe to exit.
If you are in a vehicle, remain inside	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stop the vehicle in a safe place. Stay in the vehicle until the storm stops. Keep head and face away from windows and put your head down with arms over your head. Be alert for signs of high winds or tornadoes, especially if hail is large, and follow tornado precautions if necessary.
Remain calm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stay calm by counting or taking slow, deep breaths. Look around to assess the situation before moving.
In mountainous areas, stay alert	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you are in a mountainous area or near unstable slopes or cliffs, be alert for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> falling rocks and other debris unusual sounds, such as cracking trees sudden increase or decrease of water in streams local dams, dykes, or levees that may be prone to damage or destruction. Be alert for hail-induced landslides. If there is a landslide warning and a sudden burst of rain, evacuate immediately to an identified <i>safe haven</i>. Watch for flooding and be alert when driving near embankments or along swollen waterways.
Check for damage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Watch out for broken glass. Inspect your roof and make repairs to avoid leaks and water damage during the next rainfall.