

USING PLUMBING AND WATER IN FLOOD AND CYCLONIC AFFECTED AREAS

EFFECTIVE DECEMBER 2016

Floods and cyclones can cause significant damage to water infrastructure and housing. Here are some answers to frequently asked questions from residents with plumbing and water use issues.

What should I check before turning on the water to my house?

Look for signs of damage to pipework and fittings. If your pipework is covered and you can't see any damage, turn off all the taps and check your water meter. If the dial is still turning, then you may have a broken pipe. Contact a licensed plumber to do the repairs.

Appliances such as hot water units, pumps and pipework should also be checked by a licensed plumber before you use them.

Can I drink water from taps on flood affected properties?

Check with your local government if the water in your area is fit to drink. If it is, run the tap first to flush out the water that has been in the pipes. Contact a licensed plumber to check all external pipework and appliances before you use them. Electrical appliances, such as a water pump, should be checked by a licensed electrician.

Who do I contact if the water is discoloured or smells?

If water has an unusual smell or colour, do not drink it. Notify your local government of the problem as soon as possible so it can be fixed quickly.

Can I use the rainwater tank for drinking?

If no flood water has entered the tank, the rainwater should be suitable for drinking. However, we recommend that rainwater is filtered/treated first.

Can I use the toilets?

Contact your local government to confirm the local sewerage system in your area is working. If it is, toilets and sanitary fixtures may be used. We recommend you use a licensed plumber to check all pipework, as well as flush and clean the cistern before use.

I have a septic system/on-site treatment plant. Can it be used?

Flood water may have entered, so ask a licensed plumber to check the tank before you use it. For treatment plants, contact a licensed electrician to check all the electrical components before the power supply is turned on.

What should I check before turning on the hot water unit?

Any system using electricity should be checked by a licensed electrician. Solar or heat pump hot water systems may require an inspection and/or servicing by a licensed plumber. Gas hot water systems may require an inspection and/or servicing by a licensed gasfitter.

What should I do before turning on the gas to my property?

Appliances, meters or regulators that have been covered or damaged by flood water must be inspected by a licensed gasfitter before the gas supply will be restored. A compliance certificate will be issued after the inspection has been completed.

Who to contact

To have your gas reconnected after inspection, contact:

- APA Group on 1300 001 001

If you have trouble locating gasfitters or suppliers, or are experiencing problems, contact the Petroleum and Gas Inspectorate on:

- Central region: (07) 4938 4683
- Southern region: (07) 3238 3725
- Northern region: (07) 4760 7402

Can I claim the repair works on my insurance?

Contact your insurance company as soon as possible after the damage so any necessary claims can be processed.

If the insurance company recommends a contractor, contact the Queensland Building and Construction Commission to check if the tradesperson holds a current licence to perform the work.

Need more information?

Visit qbcc.qld.gov.au or call QBCC on 139 333 and we can assist you.