

Before the cyclone



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Once as cyclone has been predicted for your area, more immediate actions should be taken to protect the business. Some can be enacted immediately but others, especially those relating to the protection of plants, should be delayed as long as possible. The first step is to find and implement the elements of the business' emergency plan.

- Prior to the arrival of a storm or cyclone and while it is still safe to do so, walk through the entire property and identify anything that could come loose in high winds. Signage, hanging baskets, empty containers and equipment are the types of items that may need to be taken down and/or secured for safety and storage.
- Secure all loose items and materials that have the potential to become flying debris including old pots, drums and containers as well as rubbish, green waste piles, furniture, benches and equipment such as trolleys. Pallet wrapping has been effective in securing expensive items such as chemicals and fertilisers to secure them and weigh them down.
- Ensure that all dangerous substances such as agricultural chemicals are safe, secure and inventoried.
- Ensure all vehicles are fully fuelled and adequate fuel supplies have been acquired for generators and chainsaws that will be needed after the event.
- Charge all electrical devices such as torches, laptops and mobile phones and ensure a sufficient supply of batteries.
- Secure critical business documents into waterproof, plastic containers. This should include your emergency planning documents, crucial contact details, insurance papers and financial records.
- Ensure that electricity, water and gas are switched off according to your emergency preparation plans.

Protecting plants

- Protecting your plants may not be possible and depending on your nursery and the different product lines you grow the strategies available for their protection will vary.
- Lay larger plants down as flat as possible - in one direction. This places them down below the main area of wind activity (i.e. lower than 30cm from the ground), minimises damage from being pushed over from the wind and also minimises the tangling which causes significant damage to the plants when untangling after the event.
- Place small trays and pots on the ground (under benches if possible) to reduce the chance of being blown about. Note: Use your judgement based on what you know about your property and your specific crops. For example, in nurseries prone to flooding, exact placement of plants should be carefully considered.
- Some nurseries have 'sheltered' areas either as a result of the site topography (such as embankments, gullies or depressions) or have sturdy structures such as sheds or media storage bays. Many nurseries protect as much higher value plants as possible by moving plants to these areas just prior to the event.
- Check with staff that they have a plan make any agreements about returning to work and other arrangements as possible.
- Contact neighbours and nearby businesses to ensure they are informed of the coming event and to confirm any collaborative recovery plans that you may have organised during the long- and medium-term preparations.

Protecting yourself and your family

Refer to the materials provided with this pack from the Queensland State Emergency Service (SES) or refer to their website for information. Also check with your local authority and local media for more specific and up-to-date information as the situation progresses.



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