

A guide to WHAT TO DO IN A FLOOD IN THE WANAKA CBD



- **What can I expect from Council?**
- **Who do I call in a flood?**
- **What do I do before, during and after a flood?**
- **How do I monitor lake / river levels?**

Queenstown and Wanaka have a long history of flooding, most recently in 1999 when Lakes Wakatipu and Wanaka rose to record levels of 312.78m and 281.32m respectively. The damage was extensive, causing a closure of numerous businesses for up to 3 weeks at an estimated total cost of \$70 million in Queenstown alone.

This document is the result of a Queenstown Lakes District Council (QLDC) and Otago Regional Council (ORC) joint initiative to address the flood risk faced by the central business districts (CBD)s of Queenstown and Wanaka. It recognises that while flooding can't be stopped, such damage can be lessened through proper preparation and appropriate response.

Accordingly, it outlines simple steps to assist you in preparing and responding to a flood event.

WHAT CAN I EXPECT FROM COUNCIL?

QLDC's prime objective is the preservation of essential infrastructure such as drinking water. Protection of your stock and premises during a flood is your or your landlord's responsibility.

Sandbagging stations will be set up by Council in the CBD areas.

Although Council contractors and volunteers will assist with sandbagging on a priority basis, retailers are encouraged to take the initiative to sandbag their own premises.

WHO DO I CALL?

During a flood event, QLDC will be coordinating all flood responses from the Council offices at the Service Centre in Ardmore Street, Wanaka.

You can contact Council through the QLDC customer service department:

03 443 0024 (24 hours / 7 days).

Contact the relevant utility providers directly for information on your electricity, telephone and gas services.

Do NOT call Council contractors directly.

For emergency services call 111.



BE PREPARED

- Have a business continuity plan (ie, hard drive backup)
- Monitor the lake levels on the ORC website or flow phone www.orc.govt.nz. Modelling will allow ample notice of a possible flood.
- Ensure you have a plan that includes identifying a dry storage area for stock.
- Clean grease traps.
- Review insurance cover.
- Review the QLDC Guide to Flood Proofing Your Building and Contents at www.qldc.govt.nz

WHEN A FLOOD THREATENS

Keep a battery-powered radio tuned to a local station and await instructions from QLDC. Another option is to listen to your car radio.

Securing your building

- Store any remaining important documents where they won't get damaged including hard drives (business continuity).
- Clean out any grease traps (these should be regularly cleaned).
- Anchor fuel tanks to prevent them from floating and overturning.
- For short duration and limited level flooding a plywood template cut neatly to fit your door and put in place with sealer may be useful.

Sandbagging

- In the early stages of flooding sandbagging is useful to protect buildings against inundation, however once the water has risen over 10-20cm, sandbagging does not hold water but becomes a very useful protection against wave action and debris build-up. Do not place sand bags above a height of 75cm as collapse of sandbags and release of stored water can cause more damage than slow rising floodwaters.
- QLDC may deliver sand and bags to a central location and call for volunteers.

Getting around

- Do not walk or drive through flooded areas as flood waters can hide exposed grates, debris and carry possible contamination.
- Stay away from downed power lines and electrical wires as electrical currents pass easily through water.

Evacuating

If directed by an authority, evacuate your building as per the details of your Flood Emergency Operation Plan. A Flood Emergency Operation Plan is a vital tool in equipping your staff to cope in a flood and ensuring the flood proofing design elements of your building operate as designed under all conditions. See the QLDC Flood Design Guidelines www.qldc.govt.nz brochure for advice on writing your Flood Emergency Plan.

If you have to evacuate:

- Turn off all utilities at the main power switch and close the main gas valve.
- Block off toilets, sinks and showers by putting plugs in, covering the shower outlet with a mat and placing a towel in the toilet bowl.
- Inform QLDC you have evacuated.
- Coordinate with either QLDC over access to your building. If possible leave a set of keys to enable emergency access or a reliable contact phone number.

AFTER THE FLOOD

- If your business has suffered damage, call the insurance company or agent who handles your flood insurance policy right away to file a claim.
- Before re-entering your building, check with authorities for clearance.
- Keep electricity off until an electrician has inspected your system for safety.
- Until local authorities proclaim your water supply to be safe, boil drinking water for five minutes before using.
- Be careful walking around. After a flood, steps and floors are often slippery with mud and covered with debris, including nails and broken glass.
- Remember mud and pooled water may be contaminated.

Please contact:



**QUEENSTOWN
LAKES DISTRICT
COUNCIL**

Phone: 03 443 0024 (24 hours)
Office Hours: 8.00am to 5.00pm
www.qldc.govt.nz



**Otago
Regional
Council**

0800474082
www.orc.govt.nz

LAKE AND RIVER LEVELS

Call the ORC FLOW PHONE 0800426463

<http://water.orc.govt.nz/WaterInfo/Default.aspx>