

Emergency Preparedness FAQ's

How does NBN Co prepare for emergency events?

Preparations for disaster season begins months in advance. We have a dedicated nbn emergency response team that works to identify and protect critical nbn network assets and works with emergency services to develop plans to respond to incidents and recover the network as quickly as possible.

We are consistently undertaking work such as vegetation clearance around sites in high risk bushfire and cyclone areas, checking seals on cabinets in flood prone areas, and stocking operational vehicles with the agreed levels of network spares and the required tools and equipment. This will help enable us to be ready to respond should an emergency arise.

How is the network impacted by fire/flood/cyclone?

The main risk is the access to power as equipment connected to services over the nbn™ access network - both at the exchange/tower and within home or business - will not work during a power outage. While parts the nbn™ access network has in-built power back up, power outages may last longer than the battery life. Therefore, communities should be prepared to be without landline phone and internet services for some time.

Are residents on Fixed Wireless /Satellite services more at risk of losing their connection?

Regardless of the access technology, the main risk is the access to power as equipment connected to services over the nbn™ access network - both at the exchange/tower and within home or business - will not work during a power outage. Services provided over the copper network are not as likely to be disrupted by a power outage.

What can residents do to help ensure they are connected in an emergency?

We recommend the community put together an emergency communications kit with equipment that can be used in a power outage, or if there is a disruption to the nbn™ access network. Here are some tips to staying connected in an emergency:

Stay mobile

- *Keep a charged mobile phone and portable mobile battery pack ready to use in a power outage, or if your nbn™ connection is disrupted in an emergency event. Consider turning off cellular data on unnecessary apps to save battery.*

Stay updated

- *Local radio is a good source of information during an emergency, so include a battery powered radio in your emergency communications kit. Also follow emergency services, including your state Fire and Rescue and Police Services, as well as utility companies and nbn (@NBN_Australia) on social media for updates.*

Back up

- *To make sure you can access important information and essential documents from anywhere, including insurance policies and financial documents, consider creating a digital back up on a USB or in the cloud.*

Alternate Power

- *If there is a [power outage](#), equipment connected to nbn services will not work. So, you might also want to consider investing in an alternative power source, for example a UPS or generator, to have on standby during emergencies.*
- *Unfortunately, restoring power with an alternative power option is not possible if the nbn™ network is also experiencing a power loss. Consider keeping a charged mobile phone nearby and portable mobile battery pack ready to use in a power outage.*

How long does it take to repair damage for fire/flood/cyclone?

Restoration times will vary. Where services over the nbn™ network are affected, nbn will prioritise reconnecting essential services, such as hospitals, fire, police and emergency services. Community infrastructure will also be included with traffic management, sewerage, power and water utilities a high priority. We will also work to

prioritise the reconnection of business services essential to community recovery, such as banks, petrol stations and supermarkets.

How do you support communities during and after an emergency?

Where possible, nbn will deploy temporary network infrastructure into areas where extended outage durations are anticipated. This infrastructure is designed to provide temporary backup to support emergency services and the community. Allocation of this equipment will be based on the network infrastructure available and be on a best efforts basis.

How does nbn work with federal and state emergency teams?

nbn works closely with the emergency management teams at a Federal and State level, with NBN Co now included in every state and territory's Emergency Response Plan.

Where can people find more information about emergency planning from nbn?

You can find more information about nbn's emergency management plans and tips for customers on our website and on the nbn blog. We will also be sharing information across our social media channels.

General

Why has nbn removed copper-based phones - which worked in power outages - and we now have a situation where older people may not be able to communicate during an emergency?

No telecommunications network is impervious to natural disaster and power outages.

The old Telstra landline service relied on power from the exchanges to power your home phone, so if mains power was lost at the exchange, your home phone would also stop working.

We do recommend that customers have as many options available to them as possible to maintain communications in the event of a natural disaster, and that includes fixed line and mobile options. More information is available on our power outages page.

We also do our utmost to help ensure the reliability and resilience of the nbn network during and after natural disasters.