

# TYPES OF DISASTERS

The Pacific region is at risk of many types of hazards like:



## CYCLONES

Cyclones refer to any low pressure area with a system of rotating clouds, winds and thunderstorms spiraling inwards. This is especially common in the Pacific because of our warm sea waters generating moist air that act as fuel to cyclones. Cyclones are naturally occurring and can cause widespread destruction. They vary in strength based on the size and severity and at times have the strength to completely destroy crops, buildings and generate large waves.



### Cyclone season:

Pay attention to weather forecasts during cyclone season as keeping informed will help protect your family and your business.

## CATEGORIES OF CYCLONES



**Gale winds of 63 - 125 km/h**  
Damage to some crops and trees.



**Destructive winds of 125 - 164 km/h**  
Damage to signs and trees. Heavy damage to crops. Risk of power failure.



**Very destructive winds of 164 - 224 km/h**  
Roof and structural damage. Power failure likely.



**Very destructive winds of 225 - 279 km/h.**  
Significant roof and structural damage. Dangerous airborne debris. Widespread power failures.



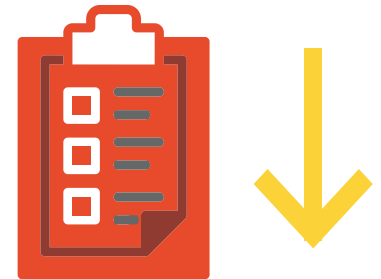
**Extremely destructive winds of more than 280 km/h.**  
Extremely dangerous with widespread destruction.



## DO YOU KNOW...

**1 in 4 businesses do not survive after a large disaster strikes.<sup>1</sup>**

*There is one way that will ensure you stay in business in the face of any disaster or adversity:*



**Create a Business Continuity Plan (BCP) and put it into action.**

If you do not have a BCP yet or not sure what it is, download our BCP template and create one yourself using our quick 12-step guide which you can complete in 12 minutes! Visit [pipso.org.fj/stayopen](http://pipso.org.fj/stayopen)

**REDUCE RISK, BE READY, RESPOND ACCORDINGLY AND RECOVER QUICKLY FROM ANY DISASTER.**

**FOR MORE INFO**

**BECOME A DISASTER-READY BUSINESS.**

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## LANDSLIDES

A landslide or landslip is when the ground on a slope breaks away and slips down mountains. They can cause rockfalls and large debris to fall and can cover communities. They can be caused by earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, unstable land, water leaks and erosion and can be hugely destructive.



## TSUNAMIS

Tsunami are a series of enormous sea waves created by a sudden event like an earthquake, volcanic eruption, landslide or meteorite, that can cause extreme damage and loss of life. The warning you will get for a tsunami due to its speed is the shaking of the ground caused by the earthquake and if you are close to the shore you may see the water suck back away from the shore. If this occurs, go to higher ground immediately away from the sea and follow evacuation orders by local authorities.



## FLOODS

Flooding occurs when land not normally covered by water becomes covered by water. Because we experience many tropical cyclones in the Pacific and high rainfall can cause rivers and urban areas to flood, it is a hazard that we must prepare for. Flooding can destroy your business records, your equipment and property.



## FIRE INCLUDING BUILDING & HOUSING FIRE

Fires are either caused by human activity or by natural events such as a lightning strike. It is important to note that fire spreads quickly and the poisonous gases it produces are deadly. In thirty seconds a small flame can turn into a major fire and in two minutes a fire can become life-threatening. There will be no time to gather valuables or even make a phone call, there is only time to escape. Crawl low under any smoke to your nearest exit to avoid the toxic smoke, you may only have seconds to escape safely.



## STORM SURGES

Storm surges are coastal floods or an abnormal rise of water generated by a storm's winds that pose a significant threat to life, properties, roads and bridges along our coastlines. It is not the same as a tsunami, or tidal wave but it comes like a rapidly rising tide that moves inland quickly, cutting off escape routes and damaging property.



## VOLCANIC ERUPTIONS

Volcanic eruptions happen when pressure from gases within the molten rock below the earth's surface becomes too great. Volcanic eruptions can be accompanied by other natural hazards such as earthquakes, flash floods, landslides, acid rain, fire, volcanic ash and even tsunami that can lead to loss of life, destroy properties, damage equipment, contaminate water systems, and disrupt air and land travel many miles away. Follow evacuation orders issued by authorities to avoid flying debris, hot gases, lateral blasts, mud flow and lava flow.



## EARTHQUAKES

Earthquakes occur when a release of energy is released within the earth's crust and rocks break under stress. Many other hazards can be triggered by earthquakes and they can cause extensive damage to your property and substantial loss of life. An important note to remember is if you experience an earthquake that takes longer than a minute and feel it is hard for you to stand up while it is happening, YOU MUST get to higher ground as soon as it stops. The earthquake could be the only warning of an oncoming tsunami.



## DROUGHT

Droughts are periods of abnormally dry weather that persist long enough to cause water supply shortage, poor water quality, crop damage, increase risk of fires, reduce breeding stock and have negative long-term effects on agricultural and related industries. To minimise impacts of drought, use water wisely and follow water restrictions issued by authorities.

### Endnotes:

<sup>1</sup> Civil Defence Wellington Region Emergency Management Office. (2017). Retrieved February 24, 2017, from Wellington Region Emergency Management website, <http://www.getprepared.org.nz/>

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