

How to sandbag your home

Government
of South Australia

RESCUE



Sandbags placed correctly in and around your home can help minimise the impact of flooding.

Filled sandbags can weigh between 15–20 kilograms so you may need at least two people to lay them safely.

You can buy sandbags from many hardware, landscaping or garden supply stores. Plastic shopping bags, grain and animal fodder bags may also be used in an emergency in place of sandbags.

Before a major storm or flood, the SASES may make sandbags and/or sand available from locations in your local area.

Sandbag pickup locations and times will be promoted on the SASES website and social media channels (Facebook and Twitter).

Bricklayer's sand contains high amounts of clay and is the best type of sand to fill sandbags. Sand can be purchased from hardware and gardening suppliers. Otherwise use garden soil if sand is not readily available. Do not use materials that water can get through, such as rocks or perlite.

How to fill a sandbag:

- ✓ Only fill sandbags two-thirds full. This allows the sand to shift about, lie flat, and mould to fill any gaps.
- ✗ Do not overfill sandbags
- ✗ Do not tie the top of the bag



Working safely should be a priority.

Do not try and lift a sandbag that is too heavy. Wear gloves to protect your hands and goggles or safety glasses to avoid sand blowing into your eyes.

Visit ses.sa.gov.au/sandbagging for sandbag information and video.

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Where do I place the sandbags?

Place sandbags over all wastewater drains, including toilets, showers and sinks, to prevent greywater entering your home. Wrapping these sandbags in a plastic bag before using them is also a good idea.

Air vents at the bottom of your home's external wall may also need protection from flooding. You can cover smaller vents with waterproof tape or plastic.



Build a small sandbag wall across external doorways. This includes sliding doors and garage roller doors. The height of the sandbag wall will depend on the expected height of the floodwater, generally around two sandbag rows high.

How do I lay sandbags?

Lay sandbags as you would lay bricks, offsetting the rows so the gaps between the sandbags are staggered.

It is best to offset each row by half a sandbag.

Start at one end and work through to the other.

Tuck the flap under each sandbag and at the end of the row.

Flattening the top of the sandbag wall before adding the next row will help you to build a more stable sandbag wall.

If available, use plastic sheeting under the sandbags and continue it up the surface you are protecting to reduce water getting through.

Disposal of used sandbags

Wear sturdy gloves and goggles when handling used sandbags, particularly if they have been exposed to floodwater, which is often contaminated with human and animal waste, chemicals and other contaminants.

Open the sandbags and scatter the contents on to a garden bed, lawn or other external areas where it will not wash into stormwater drains or waterways such as rivers and creeks.

Most sandbags, including those supplied and used by the SASES, are biodegradable. Once emptied, they can safely be disposed in your household rubbish or buried in the ground where they will break down.



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