

General disaster control

Other issues and common grower concerns



TOOLBOX

GREENHOUSE CONSTRUCTION AND SAFE OPERATION

Extreme weather events and disasters can strike greenhouse growers unexpectedly, often with serious and costly consequences. However, there are several things you can do to reduce, mitigate and control these consequences.

The main potential disasters facing greenhouse growers in Australia include catastrophic fire, high winds, storms and hail. The most effective way to manage risk relating to these potential disasters is the emergency management spectrum, which includes prevent, prepare, respond and recover (PPRR).

There are a range of management actions that may help to reduce risk and lessen the impact of fire, wind, storms and hail on your greenhouse operation. The below table is a practical guide using the emergency management spectrum to assist your decision-making.

Table 1: Emergency management spectrum for greenhouse fire, wind and storms

LEVEL	FIRE	WIND, STORMS AND HAIL
Prevent Aim: reduce risk occurring	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Ensure greenhouse is constructed to National Construction Code (NCC) standards- Ensure wiring is compliant with electrical standards- Install sprinklers, fire hydrants and hoses as per regulation- Build a separate ventilated area, preferably outside of your facility, to store flammable liquids- Use non-combustible building materials for walkways and other appropriate areas- Place heating systems, electrical equipment, and other combustion-type equipment a safe distance away from flammable materials, such as covers, shade cloths and chemicals- Reduce high temperatures from poor electrical wiring, overloaded circuits, soldering or welding work, heating systems- Reduce the amount of oxygen in your greenhouse, for example turning off fans	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Research the typical wind patterns on your property- Ensure greenhouse is constructed to NCC standards- Ensure you've considered withdrawal resistance, building orientation, and exposure to prevailing wind directions and weather patterns- Use windbreaks to reduce the wind speed or deflect wind over the greenhouse- If you have a metal chimney, stove pipe, or any exterior ventilation susceptible to high winds, secure them in an appropriate manner

KEY MESSAGES

- Extreme weather events and disasters can strike greenhouse growers unexpectedly
- There are a range of management actions to reduce risk and lessen the impact of fire, wind and storms on your greenhouse operation
- Developing and enacting an emergency management and response plan is critical



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