

Lesson 7 – Resource Sheet 1

Natural hazards caused by the weather



Floods

Floods occur when a creek or river overflows its banks and its water covers normally dry land. Floods can result from heavy rainfall over a long period of time, rapid winter snowmelt or sudden, heavy downpours (resulting in flash flooding).



Heatwaves

Heatwaves are a long period of very hot weather. Severe heatwaves can cause widespread crop failures and thousands of deaths.



Droughts

Drought occurs when there is a long period of below-average rainfall in an area. Drought can destroy crops on farms and farm animals may die.



Dust storms

Dust storms happen when strong wind blow loose sand and dirt from a dry surface. Often occur in time of drought.



Severe storms

Storms are the most common weather hazard. They are a local disturbance in the atmosphere and are often accompanied by thunder, lightning, rain, hail and, in some cases, snow. They can occur anywhere and are responsible for more damage than any other natural hazard.



Cyclones

Tropical cyclones are very large storms that develop over warm tropical waters. They are usually accompanied by very strong winds and heavy rainfall.



Tornadoes

A tornado (or 'twister') is a rotating column of air extending from the base of a thunderstorm to the ground. Tornadoes can cause a lot of damage.



Avalanches

An avalanche is a rapid down hill movement of snow. They often happen on very steep slopes after very heavy snow falls.



Bushfires

A bushfire is a fire that burns in grass, bush or woodland and can threaten life, property and the environment. They are most likely to ignite in hot, dry, windy weather.

Source: Shutterstock