Emergency water fountains ready to be deployed ahead of big cyclone season

Minister for Essential Services, Rob Knight today announced a network of emergency water fountains will be on standby in the Territory this wet season as part of the Henderson Government’s preparations for a big cyclone season forecast for northern Australia.

Mr Knight said 20 portable water fountains called ‘water horses’ will be deployed in the immediate aftermath of a major emergency to sites across the Darwin city for people to access safe drinking water.

“All signs show that this wet season is going to be a big one - the Bureau of Meteorology have indicated they expect at lease one severe tropical cyclone could hit as early as next month,” Mr Knight said.

“We need to be prepared for a ‘worst case scenario’ event - in the aftermath of an extreme storm this network emergency water access points will be located at water towers and ‘critical supply areas’ across the city for people to access to safe drinking water.

“In an extreme weather event major infrastructure networks can be destroyed - trees can take down powerlines, dislodge above ground water mains and uproot water pipes.

“During a natural disaster, damaged pipes can compromise water supplies - these water horses will tap directly into safe drinking water.

“These water horses have been specifically designed to be quickly deployed in the immediate aftermath of a major emergency and can provide water to eight people at any one time.

“We have identified ‘critical supply corridors’ for water mains that supply water to hospitals, essential services facilities, and public cyclone shelters, that will be restored as a first priority in the event of a major water supply interruption.

“The water horses have been designed by Power and Water technicians based on observations of natural disasters restoration efforts internationally.

“Data from the Bureau of Meteorology show that we’re facing cyclone conditions similar to that when severe tropical cyclone Thelma narrowly missed in 1998 - all Territorians need to be prepared for the worst case scenario in case it hits.”
Minister Knight called on all families to plan early for the wet season.

“We’re urging all families not to be complacent this wet season, and take all the precautionary measures to be prepared in case a cyclone hits,” Mr Knight said.

“Households should have at least 4 litres of drinking water per person per day in clean, robust, sealed containers and fill bathtubs, buckets, and any other large storage available.”

“I encourage all Territorians to visit the Emergency Services website and follow the guidelines for preparing for the wet season.”

Tips on how to get set for the wet:
- Prepare an emergency plan for your household;
- Tie down any loose objects around your home;
- Prepare an emergency kit for your family;
- Clear guttering to prevent flooding inside your house;
- Fill your vehicles' fuel tanks;
- Ensure all members of your family know where the strongest part of your household is;
- Tune to your local radio/TV for further information and warnings; and
- Store your photos and valuables in a safe, airtight waterproof container.

Emergency kit should include:
- Torch with spare batteries, candles and waterproof matches;
- Portable radio with spare batteries (be sure to check all batteries every 3 months);
- First Aid Kit with any essential medications that may not be found in a basic kit;
- A changes of clothes for each member of the household (wind and waterproof, hats, strong protective closed in shoes);
- Blankets or sleeping bags;
- Toilet paper and essential toiletries;
- Special needs for infants, the aged and people with disabilities;
- Portable stove with fuel;
- Pet supplies (food and toiletry requirements);
- Food and water for each person for at least 72 hours;
- Strong plastic bags; and
- Spare money including coins.

For more information about preparing an emergency plan for your household visit www.nt.gov.au/pfes/documents/File/emergencyservices/publications/emergency_plan.pdf

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