

November 19, 2012

Victims of Queensland and New South Wales storms should contact insurers as a priority

The Insurance Council of Australia (ICA) says policyholders whose homes, businesses and vehicles have been damaged in severe thunderstorms across parts of Queensland and New South Wales should contact their insurer as soon as possible.

Storms damaged large areas of the states at the weekend (November 17 to 18), bringing damaging wind, heavy rainfall, hail and lightning strikes.

Storms hit Brisbane, Ipswich, the Sunshine Coast and Lockyer Valley, while the town of Woodburn on the NSW north coast also suffered significant damage, with state emergency services receiving hundreds of calls for assistance across both states.

ICA CEO Rob Whelan said storm-affected property owners should contact their insurer as soon as they can.

"This is the start of the storm season, so insurers expect to receive claims for storm damage at this time of the year," he said.

"Insurers stand ready and able to help policyholders recover from the damage caused by this severe weather, but so far they have received only a small number of claims.

"If you have experienced storm damage, the sooner you contact your insurer to lodge a claim the sooner it can begin to process the claim, and the sooner you will be back on your feet.

"Take photographs of anything damaged during the storms and make an inventory. These can be provided to your claims assessor as evidence of your claim.

"We advise that emergency repairs should only be carried out in the first instance to make the property safe, and you shouldn't approve repairs or rebuilding without first talking to your insurer.

"Don't be concerned if insurance documents are not at hand. Insurance companies keep records electronically and will require only your name and address to find a policy."

Mr Whelan said the arrival of the storm season should remind all property owners to inspect their properties and ensure they are as storm safe as possible. The ICA has prepared a storm preparation [checklist](#) to help property owners get ready for severe weather.

For emergency help in floods and storms, you can contact both the NSW State Emergency Service and Emergency Management Queensland on 132 500.