



MEDIA RELEASE

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Thinking about a sea or tree change? Think about the risk

New research by Suncorp finds many Australians fail to consider impacts of natural disasters when moving

- **Almost a third of Aussies making or considering a sea/ tree change**
- **Half of those don't consider the risks of natural disasters when purchasing a new property**
- **Prepare your home for cyclones, fires, and floods this summer**

Suncorp research has found 27 per cent of Australians have moved or considered relocating during COVID. And although experts are predicting more cyclones, fires and floods this summer, half failed to consider the impacts of natural disasters.

The inaugural *Suncorp Resilient Home Report* found lifestyle factors (closeness to family and friends, climate, escaping the rat race) were the main drivers of Australians seeking to relocate to another state or region.

Alarmingly almost half (46 per cent) said they didn't take into consideration the increasing risks of extreme weather when deciding on where to live, and even more (52 per cent) didn't consider the impacts when selecting the type of home to live in.

"As an insurer, we're on the frontline helping people and communities most impacted by weather disasters," said Bernadette Norrie, Suncorp Insurance Executive Manager. "It's not just property damage that Aussies face in the wake of a natural disaster, it's the mental toll of severe weather events that many people fail to realise and properly consider.

"Once a disaster strikes, the lives of those affected can be upended completely. Many families can be displaced from their homes while repairs happen, people lose irreplaceable possessions, and are left with the emotional scars of what they've endured.

"Identifying the natural hazards of where you plan to live as well as the type of structure that can best defend your family against a bushfire, flood or storm needs to be an essential part of property research," Ms Norrie said.

Suncorp research also found that one in five did not consider the frequency or severity of natural disasters before making their sea/ tree change.

The *Suncorp Resilient Home Report* revealed over half of Australians (52 per cent) believe they live in an area with some form of risk – the most common being severe storms (30 per cent) followed by bushfires (29 per cent).

More than two thirds (64 per cent) admit that extreme weather events in recent years have made them more aware of the risks, however only one in four have made modifications to their home to protect against natural disasters.

"Getting ready for extreme weather is more than just checking gutters for leaves and trees and tying down backyard furniture, it's about making your home more resilient, so you are better protected from the impacts of Mother Nature." Ms Norrie said.

Get weather-ready: Prepare for natural hazard risks

Check State government and council websites

Undertake a natural hazards review, including disaster readiness information. Government websites have a range of guidelines and information to help you consider natural hazard risk and planning.

Understand how resilience against weather can be incorporated within your house design

Visit Suncorp's [One House](#) prototype to understand factors such as building type, location and weather conditions, which can help you determine how you can build or renovate with resilience.

Do it yourself: Make simple changes to your new or existing home

- Installing fixed and operable high-performance mesh screens will help slow down flame spread during a bushfire.
- Installing a dual tank system of two galvanised water tanks: one for firefighting so if the home is ever disconnected from its main water source, occupants could extinguish flames on site; the second a back-up water supply, ensuring occupants always have drinkable water.
- PVC plastic gutter fixings. In the event of a fire, fixings melt, and gutters become 'sacrificial' and safely fall away from the house. This helps protect the home from embers and reduces the likelihood of embers entering the back-up water supply, affecting its quality.
- Installing electrical wiring in the roof to prevent loss of power during a flood event.
- Installing power points and switches at least one metre above floor level to reduce the risk of electrical issues during flooding.
- Considering a roof shape that will minimise unnecessary junctions which are prone to wear and can allow embers into the home.
- Installing glazed windows and doors – which prevents water from entering the home and evenly distributes heat load over the glass, helping to prevent cracking.

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Notes to Editor: The *Suncorp Resilient Home Report* findings are based on research undertaken by Kantar on behalf of Suncorp. The first survey was conducted in March 2021 with a representative sample of 1195 homeowners aged 18+ and a second survey was conducted between September and October 2021 with a representative sample of 1,499 Australians aged 18+.

State-based research stats provided on next page.

State-based stats from the research:

Question/ statement	National	QLD	NSW/ ACT	VIC
Have you made or seriously considered a significant move (to another region or state) in the past two years?	27%	27%	30%	30%
What was the reason for moving/ thinking about moving? (Responded Lifestyle factors)	32%	33%	32%	35%
Was the potential for natural hazards a factor in your decision making when choosing where you have or would move to? (Responded No)	46%	48%	41%	46%
Does/did the potential for natural hazards influence your preference for the type of home/structure you built/bought? (Responded No)	52%	61%	49%	50%
Before purchasing your property, did you do some research into the frequency/severity of natural hazards in the area? (Responded No)	34%	35%	31%	33%
Have you made modifications to your home to protect it against natural disasters? (Responded Yes)	25%	21%	27%	26%
Natural hazard events in recent years has made me more aware of the risks my home faces.	64%	57%	68%	62%
I believe I live in an area with some form of risk to natural hazards	52%	72%	56%	35%
Area of risk – bushfire	29%	26%	34%	18%
Area of risk – storms	30%	54%	32%	19%