

GET READY TOWNSVILLE

PLAN. PREPARE. ACT.

TREE RESILIENCE DURING FLOODS AND CYCLONES

Townsville's climate brings severe weather and storms, and ongoing climate change intensifies their impacts. Evidence shows that man-made changes to our landscapes worsen flooding and cyclone damage. Relying on structural defences is not cost-effective and can often just shift the problem. Instead, we must understand our landscapes and find effective ways to minimise and prevent the impact of extreme weather events. Awareness of the vital role vegetation plays in mitigating cyclonic wind damage is crucial.

Natural Protective Barriers

Ecosystems like wetlands, forests, and coastal systems act as natural protective barriers. These natural barriers offer cost-effective protection from various natural disasters and serve as an important preventative measure. It is far more effective to prevent losses than to rebuild livelihoods, so prevention measures are crucial in disaster risk reduction efforts.

Well managed vegetation can guard against cyclonic winds.

- ✓ Well-established, strong trees trap debris, reducing damage.
- ✗ Poor practices such as lopping can weaken trees and increase risk of damage.
- ✓ Restoring vegetation in catchment areas decreases rainfall runoff, significantly reducing the potential for flooding.

Storm-proofing your trees.

Ensuring trees are storm-resistant not only safeguards the trees but also protects your home and property. Additionally, it can substantially cut down the expenses related to cleaning and maintenance in the aftermath of a storm.

1. Keep your trees healthy.

Healthy trees are far stronger and more stable compared to unhealthy ones. Their branches are less prone to breaking off, causing minimal to no damage to the surrounding areas. Regular maintenance of trees enhances their ability to withstand storms and extreme weather conditions.

2. Strategic Pruning.

Pruning young trees in a proper manner encourages the development of a sturdy central trunk, leading to a stronger and more stable tree. Correct pruning involves removing dead or weak branches and fostering the right growth patterns and structure. This not only minimises the risk of branches breaking during storms but also enhances the trees' resilience against storm damage. It's important to note that improper or inappropriate pruning can cause more harm than good to trees.

3. Keeping roots strong.

To maintain strong and deeply grounded tree roots, it's essential to minimise activities that could compromise the integrity of the soil around them. This means avoiding excavations, construction work, or any activities that might disturb the soil. Trees with robust root systems are better equipped to withstand storms and extreme weather conditions, increasing their chances of survival.

To ensure the optimum health and condition of your trees, it is always recommended to consult an appropriately qualified and professional arborist. Their expertise will guarantee that your trees receive the necessary care and maintenance they require.