

Dam Safety Incidents and Emergencies

Dam safety is the responsibility of the person who owns the dam or the person who owns the land covered by water when the dam is full.

What is a Dam Incident? (defined under the *Water Management Act 1999*)

A dam incident means any incident or event relating to the structural integrity or safety of the dam which causes, or has the potential to cause -

- *death or injury to a person.*
- *damage to, or loss of, property or services.*
- *material environmental harm or serious environmental harm.*

Dam Safety Hotline

Phone: 1800 316 377



A dam incident must be reported to the Department on the Dam Safety Hotline.

In the case of life threatening dam emergencies, contact 000.

More specific arrangements for identified hazards or functions relating to dam safety can be found in the State Special Emergency Management Plan - Dam Safety Emergencies.

This Plan can be found at [www.dpipwe.tas.gov.au/water/dams/state-special-emergency-management-plan-\(dam-safety-emergencies\)](http://www.dpipwe.tas.gov.au/water/dams/state-special-emergency-management-plan-(dam-safety-emergencies))

All dams, including levees and weirs and tailings, are regulated in Tasmania under the *Water Management Act 1999* and the *Water Management (Safety of Dams) Regulations 2015* for dam safety and in accordance with ANCOLD (Australian National Committee on Large Dams) guidelines.

What is a Dam Emergency? (defined under the ANCOLD guidelines)

- Any dam safety incident where there is an immediate Population at Risk, or there is a potential for significant economic or environmental damage.
- A dam safety emergency relates to dams that hold, permanently or temporarily, liquid, waste or other material.
- A dam safety emergency excludes the engagement of flood protection structures like levees during a flood and the management of the levee is focussed on flood protection.

What do I do?

1. Call 000 and ask for Police to report a dam safety emergency that threatens life or property. The Tasmania Police coordinate Dam Safety Emergency responses.
2. If you have a Dam Safety Emergency Plan, enact it now.
3. Ring the Dam Safety Hotline at first opportunity.

Dam Safety Emergencies

**Phone: 000
and ask for Police**



Types of Dam Emergencies

- An actual break in the dam causing a release of stored water.
- Collapse of the spillway or overtopping of the dam causing erosion and threatening a break in the dam wall.
- Failure of an intake tower or outlet works, leading to uncontrolled outflows.
- Potential failure deduced from surveillance or direct observations, such as increased seepage rates and cracking.
- Earth tremors of such intensity as to endanger the integrity of the dam wall.
- A combination of extreme weather and/or unstable soil conditions leading to potential dam wall collapse or breach.
- Unplanned release of stored water that endangers the community downstream, such as
 - Overtopping of dam wall
 - Unannounced water release due to operational error, malfunctioning valve system or sabotage.

More information can be found at www.ancold.org.au and www.thelaw.tas.gov.au

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