



*Under embargo until Friday 13 December 2024*

## **Holiday mode activated – home unprotected** ***AAMI and NSWSES warn residents to prepare homes for storms before heading off on holidays***

Silly season is upon us, but national insurer AAMI and the New South Wales State Emergency Service (NSW SES) are warning homeowners to prepare now for ongoing wild weather this summer – especially if they're going away.

New research released today by AAMI, shows three quarters (78 per cent) of NSW residents are failing to plan and properly protect their biggest asset - their home - before heading off on holidays.

When preparing to leave for holidays, the research found one third (33 per cent) of NSW residents check the weather for the location of where they're heading – so they know what they need to pack, and what activities they'll be able to do – but fail to do this for where they live, leaving their home susceptible to damage from severe weather.

A further 26 per cent admit they don't bother checking the weather at all before they leave because it's 'out of their control' and they are in holiday mode.

AAMI's Executive General Manager Home Prevention and Protection Anna Cartwright said it's understandable that NSW residents are excited about taking a well-earned summer break, but it's vital that as part of holiday planning they prepare their home for potential summer storms.

"It's been a big year and we're all ready for a holiday, but the last thing anyone wants is to come home to a disaster zone thanks to a severe storm," Ms Cartwright said.

"Failing to properly plan and prepare your home leaves it vulnerable to the elements while you're away, which is a huge risk, and one that can be reduced if you plan ahead."

"Our research shows New South Wales residents are too focussed on where they are going, and not thinking enough about what they are leaving behind, and what could go wrong when they're not around."

"Before heading off on holidays make sure you trim trees and branches that could potentially fall onto your home or car, clean gutters, downpipes and drains of leaves and debris, and where possible inspect your roof for damaged or loose tiles.

"Most importantly, don't forget to secure and put away loose items around your backyard such as outdoor furniture and trampolines as these can turn into dangerous projectiles," Ms Cartwright said.

### **Wild Weather Hotspots Revealed**

To highlight how important it is that homeowners ensure their home is properly prepared, AAMI has partnered with NSW SES to release the state's top hotspots for weather-related callouts in the past financial year.

NSW SES responded to 21,000 storm related incidents in the past year. Most of these incidents were for damage from trees and water leaks, with Wyong, Gosford and Sutherland the top three hotspots. Half of



NSW SES' Top 10 storm hotspots were in Sydney metro areas, with the Central Coast hit particularly hard, making up two of the top three spots.

NSWSES Storm Hotspots			
Rank	Location	Region	Requests for Assistance
1	Wyong	Central Coast	884
2	Gosford	Central Coast	714
3	Sutherland	Sydney Metro	688
4	Ku-Ring-Gai	Sydney Metro	642
5	Penrith	Sydney Metro	542
6	Hornsby	Sydney Metro	530
7	Wollongong	Illawarra	506
8	Warringah-Pittwater	Sydney Metro	505
9	Nowra	Shoalhaven	442
10	Maitland City	Hunter	432

NSW SES Commissioner, Mike Wassing said NSW residents need to ensure they heed the warnings and prepare for the holiday period.

"It's no secret that summer weather is unpredictable - you never know when a storm will hit and how severe it may be. Planning and protecting your home from potential storms is the best course of action and will give you peace of mind enabling you to enjoy your summer holidays." Commissioner Wassing said.

"That's why we're once again partnering with AAMI to remind NSW residents that there are things they can do to be on the front foot and protect their homes this summer - whether they will be spending the holidays at home or away.

"I am urging all residents to know their risks and plan early."

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#### Notes to Editor

The research findings were compiled through a national survey with a representative sample of 1,000 Australians aged 18+ and was conducted by Pure Profile in November 2024 on behalf of AAMI.

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