



# Dam Safety Incidents & Emergencies

## FACT SHEET

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?

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.

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

**1800 316 377**

**In the case of life-threatening 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://nre.tas.gov.au/water/dams/state-special-emergency-management-plan-\(dam-safety-emergencies\)](http://www://nre.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?

- 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 focused 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.**

## 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](http://www.ancold.org.au) and [www.thelaw.tas.gov.au](http://www.thelaw.tas.gov.au)

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