



LANDSLIDES

Be prepared for a landslide

South Africa is a country located at the southern tip of the African continent, known for its diverse landscapes and unique geological features. One of the major natural hazards that affect the country is landslides. Landslides can occur in various forms and intensities from small rockfalls to large-scale slope failures and can cause significant damage to infrastructure, property and human life. The occurrence of landslides in South Africa is influenced by various factors, such as climate, geology, topography and human activities.

A landslide is rocks, earth or other materials moving down a slope. Mudflow is a landslide that is combined with up to 60 percent water.

Landslides:

- can strike with little or no warning;
- travel 90 to 160 km per hour;
- can be caused by heavy rainfall, earthquakes, erosion, rockfalls or changes to land; and
- can result from flooding.

If you are under a landslide warning:

- Find safe shelter right away.
- Evacuate early to avoid landslide risk.
- Listen for emergency information and alerts.
- Watch out for signs of a landslide.
- Watch out for flooding.

Prepare now

- Know the landslide risk in your area.
- Learn about the types and signs of landslides common in your area.
- Know your community's landslide evacuation plans. Practise driving evacuation routes and identify possible shelter locations.
- Gather supplies in case you have to leave immediately or if services are cut off. Keep in mind each person's specific needs, including medication. Do not forget the needs of pets.
- Avoid building in areas at risk of a landslide, such as steep slopes or property close to cliffs, or near drainage ways or streams.
- Plant ground cover and build walls to direct the mudflow around buildings.
- Drainage management: Proper drainage management can help to prevent landslides by reducing the saturation of soil and rock materials.
- Public education programmes aimed at raising awareness of the risks associated with landslides can help to prevent and manage the occurrence thereof.
- Keep important documents in a safe place. Create password-protected digital copies.
- Review insurance coverage. Landslide damage may not be covered.

Survive during

- Monitor the area for signs of potential slide activity. These can include cracks or bulges in the ground, street pavement, or sidewalks; soil moving away from foundations; tilting of patios or foundations; broken water lines; or leaning telephone poles, trees, walls, or fences.
- Evacuate an area immediately after authorities tell you to. Signs of a landslide may not be visible, but the danger still exists.
- Watch out for flooding. Floods sometimes follow landslides because they may be started by the same event

Be safe after

- Listen to authorities to find out if it is safe to return.
- Reserve phone calls for emergencies. Phone systems are often down or busy after a disaster.
- Use text messages or social media to communicate with family and friends.
- Use your community two-way radio and keep a spare battery.
- Stay away from downed power lines and report them immediately.

