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What Will A Sydney Dust Storm Do To The Home

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A Sydney dust storm is coming again. It's not the only wild weather we get, there's been a tornado in Kurnell, hail the size of softballs, and flooding during the wet season. Perhaps the craziest of them all is the dust storms that occasionally like to poke their head in and say hello. The last time this happened was 2009, the insane color cloaked the city and its iconic buildings making it look like a scene from a Mad Max Movie. Should we be worried about our homes or our health during a dust storm?



Dust Storm Harbour Bridge

2009





Dust Storm Centre Point

Tower 2009

Important Information To Know About A Dust Storm

According to the [NSW Government Health Website](#), dust particles can be very increasingly dangerous the smaller they get. Larger dust particles will be caught by the nose and throat, the smaller ones may enter further into the body. People with prior health issues such as asthma and emphysema should be extra careful. Some of the main symptoms are an irritation to the eyes and upper airways. If breathing outside air during a Sydney dust storm for a long period of time it can lead to chronic breathing and lung issues and possibly heart disease. We should be extra careful during a dust storm. Some precautions we can take are:

- wearing masks or breathing through a damp cloth
- staying indoors
- closing all windows and doors
- staying in air-conditioning where possible
- avoiding rigorous activity
- being extra cautious when driving and preparing to pull over
- Switch the car air conditioning to re-circulate

What Is Making This Dust Storm?

This is described as a '[perfect](#)' storm as it needs just the right conditions to come to life. These conditions are a cold front that moved through South Australia and a low-pressure trough over NSW. The NW winds started to

bring moisture into NSW is has brought about a conceivable Sydney dust storm. There is another forecasts deep low-pressure system coming from SA. As the frontal system generates some powerful gusts it adds tot he low-pressure system in the south of Australia and this has a snowball effect on the winds becoming more and more powerful.



So to sum up, there are strong winds coming for Sydney, if the winds slow down it might not even make it to Canberra. It's currently 10.30am 22/11/2018 here in The Sutherland Shire and tree bark is being blown off trees and sprawled across the yard so the wind is quite high. The Sky is a very light sandy orange, my windows and doors are shut pre-emptively.

Update – Midday, the sky is ble and not much dust can be seen, gusts of wind are coming and going.

Should We Be Worried For Our Homes?

It is very important to keep the [house dust free](#) and closed during a dust storm. The dust can travel inside and get into our curtains, sheets, carpet and just about anything you can think of especially if there is high wind. Don't get me started about the washing! It is best to hang clothes inside or use a dryer. The days following a dust storm you will still find residue on the home which, with some rain will be washed off and shouldn't cause too many issues.

Homes are attacked by dust daily just in a lot smaller doses. A lot of this dust ends up on the roof and the next time it rains it will end up in the gutters. A well-maintained gutter will have no issues directing this dirty rainwater into the downspouts and off to storm drains. If gutters are blocked this could have negative implications the homes. The extra dirty water will build up onto the already blocked gutter and can spill onto the outside of the house causing

cosmetic damage to paint, concrete or render. If it comes inside the roof cavity it can prompt mold to grow and cause structural damage. As climate change continues to make our outback drier, a Sydney dust storm may be a more common occurrence.

If worried about safety, for emergency assistance call the SES at 132 500.

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