

## Transcript

**Station:** ABC Channel 2      **Date:** 31/01/2008  
**Program:** ABC News      **Time:** 07:16 PM  
**Compere:** Newsreader      **Summary ID:** C00029479304  
**Item:** Scientists have established an environmental disaster rating system for home dwellers using 15 years of environmental data.

Interviewees: Professor John McAneney and Roy Leigh, Risk Frontiers

**NEWSREADER:** Storms, fires and floods, it's been a month of extreme weather around the nation but just how safe from disaster is your property? With more extremes of climate predicted more often a group of scientists has taken a bold step. They've created a rating system which will soon give every homeowner or homebuyer a realistic assessment of the dangers facing their particular piece of Australia.

**Sarah Clarke, Environment Reporter:** The Canberra fires five years ago caught hundreds of homeowners by surprise, as flames engulfed the outlying suburbs built in bushland. As populations grow and cities expand these kinds of disasters are more and more likely.

**Professor John McAneney:** It is true that more and more people are living on the coast or near bushland so there's a lot more vulnerable people and this is the main reason why the costs of natural disasters keep going up.

**Sarah Clarke, Environment Reporter:** Now those risks can be assessed for virtually every address across the country. Using 15 years of data scientists have created a rating system, spelling out the biggest dangers threatening your home.

**Professor John McAneney:** It's the sort of information that we would usually provide for the insurance industry and, in this case, we're making it available to the general public.

**Sarah Clarke, Environment Reporter:** It's as simple as entering your address into the computer. The main natural risks include bushfires, storms, cyclones, earthquakes and floods.

**Roy Leigh:** This particular property is greater than 700 metres from the edge of the bush land and therefore has a very low risk rating.

Future floods could easily be more severe than past floods so even though an individual may think they have a good understanding of flood history based on what's happened on even the last 50 years, it's still possible to get more severe floods.

**Sarah Clarke, Environment Reporter:** This program is by no means a substitute for a property inspection but it will help banks, governments and investors get a better idea of the environmental risk. While some risks are obvious, the CSIRO says what were once extreme and unpredictable weather events are likely to become more commonplace. A warning system like this can only help. Sarah Clarke, ABC News.

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