

Frequently Asked Questions

River Murray Flood Event – December 2022

Overview

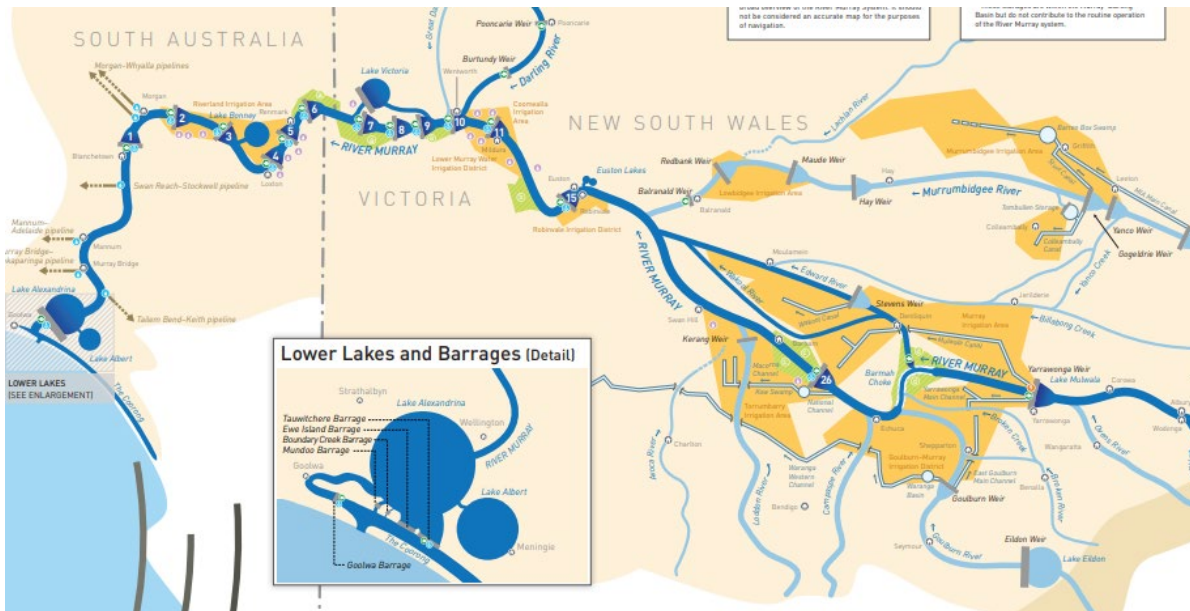
On Monday 21 November 2022, Police Commissioner Grant Stevens declared the River Murray flooding a Major Emergency under the *Emergency Management Act 2004*.

The River Murray water level is rising due to a large amount of water flowing in from interstate. Areas along the river may begin to see flooding to properties and infrastructure over the coming weeks, particularly in the shack areas between Mannum and Cadell. The South Australian State Emergency Service (SASES) is encouraging property owners to regularly check river conditions and prepare their properties for flooding impact.

The River Murray levels are hard to predict exactly. Interstate, the river systems are still filling and re-filling due to further rainfall. This affects the level of the River Murray here and community members should check the predicted levels [here](#).

The River Murray water level is expected to keep increasing and will most likely remain over 100 GL per day for at least two months, given that rainfall continues in the Murray Darling Basin which feeds the River Murray.

The Murray Darling Basin covers a large area of inland Victoria and New South Wales. A lot of the rain that falls in the areas marked below makes its way into the River Murray, as it flows through South Australia.



A lot of water from the Murray Darling Basin makes its way into the River Murray in South Australia

Image - Map showing the River Murray system (from Murray Darling Basin Authority)

Image from the Department of Environment and Water River Murray Flow Report - Report #45/2022, released on 18 November 2022.

We have produced a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document below to answer your most commonly asked questions.

Frequently Asked Questions

- Where can I find information on sandbags?
- What is happening with flows on the River Murray?
- What water levels can I expect in the upcoming peaks?
- Is it safe to go to the River Murray for recreational purposes?
- What is at risk of being flooded?
- Will ferries and roads be affected by flood?
- Will water-based activities be affected by flood?
- What is the difference between 'high flow', 'minor flooding' and 'moderate flooding' of the River Murray?
- Will the flood impact power supply to my property?
- Where can I find information about flood risk at my property?
- How do I prepare my property for flooding?
- Where can I find more information about the River Murray flood?
- I need to relocate from my house, but I don't have anywhere to go, who can help?
- Will Evacuation Orders be issued for low lying areas?
- I have seen dead fish, or animals stranded or injured, who can help?

Information is valid as from Friday 2, December, 2022.

**Always check the SASES website for the most up-to-date information.*

Q - Where can I find information on sandbags?

A – The SASES will put information on sandbag locations on our Facebook and Website. We have asked the Media and your local Council to help promote this information too.

On our website, we have information on how to lay sandbags

www.ses.sa.gov.au/sandbagging

Sandbag locations

www.ses.sa.gov.au/incidents-and-warnings/sandbag-locations

SASES will be providing sandbags to affected community members and can provide advice to on how to best prepare your property. It's recommended to check the SASES website for sandbag locations to see when sandbags, sand and assistance are available around the River Murray area.

Sandbags can be purchased from many hardware stores as well.

Q – What is happening with flows on the River Murray?

A - Due to heavy rains in the Eastern states water levels in the River Murray are still rising.

The Department for Environment and Water (DEW) advises on **2 December 2022, the water flow in the River was 151.9 GL/day at the Victoria-South Australia border.**

The current level of flow is causing flooding in some low-lying areas near the River. Check the SA Gov website www.sa.gov.au/floods for all up-to-date information.

It is expected that the flow will peak in coming months and remain over 100 GL/day for at least two months.

Further flooding is likely to occur in low-lying areas near the River where campsites, caravan parks and shacks are located.

Q - What water levels can we expect in the upcoming peaks?

A - The flow at the South Australian border is approximately 151.9 GL/day on 2 December 2022.

It is expected to reach **175 GL/day in early December 2022 with the first peak** and **185 GL/day with the second peak in late December 2022.**

With the **second peak**, there is a moderate risk of flows reaching 200 GL/day with a lower probability of 220 GL/day.

Further increases beyond these peaks are possible if there is more rainfall over the Murray-Darling Basin in the coming weeks.

Up-to-date River Murray salinity, flow and water level information can be accessed at the SA Water and Murray-Darling Basin Authority websites:

- <https://water.data.sa.gov.au>
- <https://www.sawater.com.au/water-and-the-environment/south-australias-water-sources/river-sources/river-reports-daily-flow>
- <https://riverdata.mdba.gov.au/system-view>

Q - Is it safe to go to the River Murray for recreational purposes?

A - Yes, people are currently able to enjoy the River Murray, while being aware of the hazards and acting responsibly. As River flows are high, it will contain debris and other submerged hazards and being on or in the River has become more hazardous.

For advice on how to enjoy the River Murray safely visit: www.sa.gov.au/floods

Some areas that people expect to be available for recreation will not be available (e.g. some shacks, campsites or boat ramps), in or on the River. Some roads to access these places have become impassable.

People should check for updates, closures and alerts about National Parks at the National Parks and Wildlife website at: www.parks.sa.gov.au/know-before-you-go/closures-and-alerts

Also, check road closures www.traffic.sa.gov.au and ferry closures www.sa.gov.au/topics/boating-and-marine/river-murray-ferries/ferry-locations-and-operational-status before you travel through areas along the River Murray.

Q – What is at risk of being flooded?

A – As flow levels increase over the next couple of weeks, 3000 – 4000 properties by the River will come under threat of flooding. Residents are encouraged to check the SASES Flood Mapping Tool: www.ses.sa.gov.au/mappingtool.

Consider the impacts to you. Your home or shack could be above the River level but your road may be flooded or power may be out in your area for safety reasons. Both DEW and the SASES are closely monitoring the situation and more information will be issued if changes occur. Some lower lying buildings and roads have now been impacted.

Information of how to prepare for a flood can be found at: www.ses.sa.gov.au/flood

Q - Will ferries and roads be affected by flood?

A – Operation of most ferries on the River Murray will be impacted by the increased flows.

Ferry locations and whether or not they are operating can be found at: www.sa.gov.au/floods

Road closures may also be in place. People can find up to date traffic information from their local Council websites, social media pages and from the Department for Infrastructure and Transport Traffic SA website: www.traffic.sa.gov.au

Q - Will water-based activities be affected by flood?

A – Yes. The river is now in Moderate flood levels. It is important to be aware of the risks and hazards when considering swimming activities or operating watercraft on the River Murray at all times. Check local conditions. Many areas of the River will be unsafe already, while others may become unsafe in the coming weeks. Also be aware that during moderate flood levels many facilities and amenities along the river may be affected by power disconnection.

Restrictions on water-based activities can be found at www.sa.gov.au/floods

Follow these safety tips:

- Wear a lifejacket when boating or using watercraft. Always wear a lifejacket when in the water.
- Check conditions before entering the water.
- Enter the water slowly, feet first.
- Take care around crumbling riverbeds and slippery dam edges.
- Avoid underwater obstacles such as rocks, branches, rubbish.

Take care when walking on unstable or slippery riverbeds.

Q - What is the difference between 'high flow', 'minor flooding' and 'moderate flooding' of the River Murray?

A - High Flow is defined by SASES as 40 - 100 GL/day.

Minor Flooding is defined as 100 -130 GL/day - with the exception of the area between Cadell and Mannum where 'minor flooding' is defined when the level reaches 60 GL/day.

Moderate Flooding is defined as 130 – 200 GL/day. This is when you need to consider following your emergency plan. Consider your personal circumstances (medical, financial, etc), the likelihood of losing power for up to three months, what you need to do if you decide to leave, and more. Make sure you advise your family, friends and neighbours of your plan and if you decide to leave. If you are leaving, consider leaving early and carefully consider last minute decisions to leave.

Q - Will the flood impact power supply to properties?

A – Yes - For safety reasons or from flood impact, power may be interrupted in some areas. Where possible SA Power Networks (SAPN) will communicate with customers via SMS messaging. Please call SAPN on 13 13 66 to register your mobile phone to receive SMS messaging.

Q - Where can I find information about flood risk at my property?

A – Information regarding properties at risk of flood can be found at:
www.waterconnect.sa.gov.au/Systems/RMIM/SitePages/Home.aspx

You can also view the SASES River Murray Flood Mapping Tool: www.ses.sa.gov.au/rivermurray

Q - How do I prepare my property for flooding?

A – Detailed information of how to prepare yourself and your property for potential flooding can be found at: www.ses.sa.gov.au/flood. **Your local Council office** also has copies of this and other useful information.

To prepare your home and or/property for flooding:

- Roll up rugs, move furniture and electrical items to a higher level. Consider removing items from the property to alternative locations outside the predicted flood area.
- Secure large items such as fridges or freezers to prevent them floating away.
- Elevate your household goods with electrical items on top. Consider removing items from the property to alternative locations outside the predicted flood area
- Block toilets and floor drains with sandbags to prevent sewage back-up.
- Isolate solar panels, consider removing inverters and battery systems in consultation with your installer or electrician.
- Secure all outdoor items or move them to higher ground.
- Secure LPG gas cylinders and poly water tanks. Where appropriate, remove gas cylinders from site.
- Visit www.ses.sa.gov.au/sandbagging for sandbagging guides and videos.
- Bricklayer's sand is recommended to fill sandbags.
- Check with your local gardening or hardware supplier for sand.
- Check www.ses.sa.gov.au/incidents-and-warnings/sandbag-locations for up-to-date sandbag locations

Q - Where can I find more information about the River Murray flood?

A – Information from all SA government departments, SA councils and key organisations can be found by typing sa.gov.au into your browser or follow the link below:

www.sa.gov.au/floods

SASES information related to flood along the River Murray

www.ses.sa.gov.au/rivermurray

For flood alerts and warnings, visit the SASES website:

<https://www.ses.sa.gov.au/incidents-and-warnings/current-warning-list/>

Q – I need to relocate from my house, but I don't have anywhere to go?

A – Housing SA are the SA Government agency who can help with Housing Relief. They have a support phone number you can ring for assistance. Please call them on 1800 302 787

Q – Will Evacuation Orders be issued for low lying areas?

A – At this stage, evacuation orders won't be issued. We encourage people to relocate away from the danger areas well in advance, to keep themselves and our crews safer. Leave early, don't wait and see if you believe you may be in danger.

There are resources available to provide support in creating an emergency plan and an emergency kit.

The SASES emergency kit checklist: <https://www.ses.sa.gov.au/public/download.jsp?id=121604>

Emergency Plan preparation on the Red Cross website: <https://www.redcross.org.au/prepare/>

Q – I have seen dead fish, animals stranded or injured, who can help?

A – Primary Industries and Regions SA (PIRSA) can help, please phone them on 1800 931 314.