

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Flood management and GMW

What is GMW's role in flood management?

The role of Goulburn-Murray Water (GMW) is to support and work with the SES to minimise the impact on customers and the community affected by flooding. GMW helps emergency services and the Bureau of Meteorology to prepare flood warnings by providing information about the operation of its storages.

During a flood event in Victoria, the Victorian State Emergency Service (SES) is the lead agency for the emergency. The Bureau of Meteorology's flood warnings for rivers and streams are distributed by the SES via the VicEmergency website at www.emergency.vic.gov.au

Can GMW's delivery system stop flooding?

GMW's irrigation system is not designed to mitigate floodwaters. The floodwaters follow the natural drainage lines where possible.

What happens when a storage reaches 100 per cent of capacity?

When storage levels reach close to full supply, GMW may increase flows above the normal downstream requirements to release the extra water flowing into the storage to help manage the rate of filling and maintain the storage close to the full supply level.

At storages with spillway gates (i.e. Cairn Curran and Eildon), releases are managed to maintain the storage level close to the full supply level.

How can a storage be over 100 per cent of capacity?

At non-gated storages (i.e. Nillahcootie, Tullaroop and Eppalock), the water level can rise above full supply level because the dams have spillways to let water pass downstream when they reach capacity. The amount measuring above 100 per cent is the water

passing over the spillway. The design of the spillways means flows downstream are less than the flows entering the dam upstream, when inflows are rising.

When does GMW operate Loch Garry?

If the Goulburn River at Shepparton exceeds 10.36m GMW begins to operate Loch Garry in accordance with its operating rules. A text alert will be sent to customers in the flood protection district advising operation of the structure will start in 24 hours.

When does GMW decide to release water from its storages?

Releases can help GMW return storages to full supply level. This helps make room in the storage in case it is needed for inflows created by further rain and subsequent inflows. Releases are made in accordance with our flood operations policy.

Will there be an impact on water quality?

We urge our customers to be on the lookout for changes in water quality, as rainfall or floods may cause changes. Please monitor your water supply source and make alternative arrangements if water quality deteriorates.

Water users are reminded that water supplied by GMW is not fit for any use that may involve human consumption, either directly or indirectly, without first being properly treated.

Can I pump excess flood water into a channel?

Before pumping any excess flood water on your property into GMW irrigation or drainage channels, please seek permission from your local GMW Customer Service Centre. This is to ensure that additional water pumped into these systems does not exceed the channel capacity and cause additional flooding.

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Can I cut my channel to remove flood water from my property?

No, GMW's irrigation system is not designed to mitigate floodwaters. In a flood event, the system may need to be locked to prevent the movement of flood water travelling down the system and flooding other land holders.

If you have any concerns, contact your local GMW Customer Service Centre or phone our 24-hour Emergency Line on 1800 064 184.

Are my farm dams safe?

Increased rainfall is experienced during most flooding events, please remember to check all farm dams regularly. Not only can a collapsed farm dam cause significant damage to the environment and neighbouring downstream properties, but the owner may be liable for all associated costs.

If you have any concerns, contact your local GMW Customer Service Centre or phone our 24-hour Emergency Line on 1800 064 184.

For more information

Keep up-to-date with storage levels at www.gmwater.com.au/water-resources/catchments/storage-levels, this shows the current storage levels and past storage levels, which gives an indication on how quickly the water is rising.

For river height data and rainfall bulletins, visit www.bom.gov.au/vic/flood/rain_river.shtml

For road closure information, visit www.vicroads.vic.gov.au or phone 131 170.

Emergency contacts

For the latest warnings or emergency information go to the VicEmergency website at www.emergency.vic.gov.au or follow @vicemergency on Facebook or Twitter.

For flood or storm emergency assistance from the SES phone 132 500.

For emergencies phone Triple Zero (000).



Figure 1 Goulburn Weir on 31 August 2022 with around 12,000 ML/d release.



Figure 2 Lake Eildon 2022.