

Flood extent in a 1% (or once-in-100 years) flood and evacuation routes

## How the SES can help you

The State Emergency Service is responsible for dealing with floods in NSW. This includes planning for floods and educating people about how to protect themselves and their property.

During floods, the SES is responsible for flood information, safety advice, evacuation, rescue and providing essentials to people cut off by flood waters.

FOR EMERGENCY HELP IN FLOODS AND STORMS CALL THE SES ON

**132 500**

Maitland City SES 02 4932 7444  
SES website [www.ses.nsw.gov.au](http://www.ses.nsw.gov.au)  
Maitland City Council (business hours) 02 4934 9700  
Bureau of Meteorology website [www.bom.gov.au](http://www.bom.gov.au)

## Prepare yourself

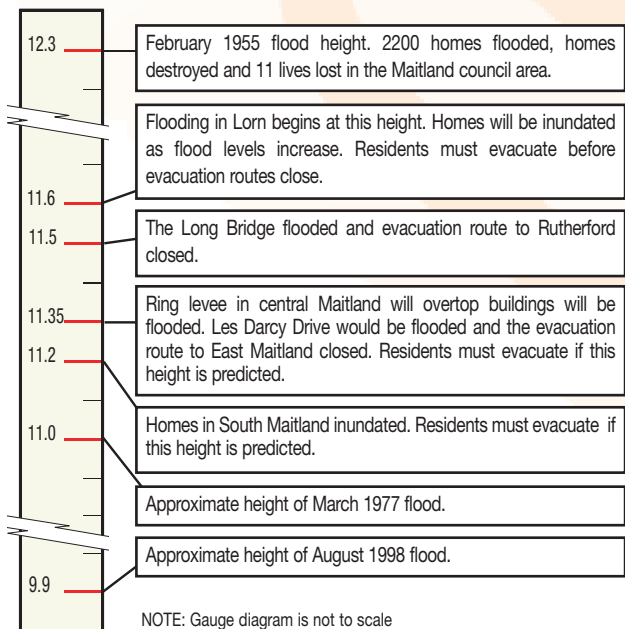
Some basic measures you can take right now include keeping a list of emergency numbers near the telephone and assembling an emergency kit.

Your emergency kit should contain at all times:

- A portable radio with spare batteries
- A torch with spare batteries
- A first aid kit
- Rubber gloves
- Candles and waterproof matches
- Copies of important papers including emergency contact numbers
- A copy of your emergency plan
- A waterproof bag for valuables

When flooding is likely, place in your emergency kit:

- A good supply of required medications
- Any special requirements for babies and the disabled, infirm or elderly
- Fresh food and drinks



NOTE: Gauge diagram is not to scale

Key heights (in metres) at the Belmore Bridge gauge and their consequences.



*Protecting yourself from a flood*

*Flood debris in the Maitland commercial area after the 1955 flood*



**FloodSafe for Businesses in Central Maitland – Lorn – Horseshoe Bend – South Maitland**

## Are you at risk from floods?

More than 200 floods have been recorded on the Hunter River since European settlement. Thirteen have peaked at levels above the major flood level of 10.7 metres at the Belmore Bridge gauge. The most severe flood in Maitland was in 1955 when 11 people lost their lives, 2200 homes were flooded (of which some were destroyed) and serious damage was done to infrastructure. In today's terms, the total damage bill for the Hunter Valley from the 1955 flood would be over \$2 billion. Few large floods have occurred since, but severe floods, some larger than that of 1955, can and will occur.

Extensive flood mitigation measures including levees, spillways and control banks have been established in Maitland. These measures give protection from smaller floods but cannot protect residents and businesses from severe flooding. Even in small floods, numerous roads may close making travel to and from work difficult and disrupting normal transport and supply routes.

When a height of 11.2 metres is predicted at the Belmore Bridge gauge, business owners and residents will need to prepare for evacuation by raising or moving stock, records and equipment including computers. Once this height is reached, some businesses in South Maitland outside the ring levee will be flooded.

The Maitland ring levee is designed to overtop at 11.35 metres at the Belmore Bridge gauge. When this gauge height is predicted, all businesses and residents inside the ring levee must prepare for evacuation. Once the ring levee overtops, Central Maitland, Horseshoe Bend and the remainder of South Maitland will be inundated with deep, fast-flowing water.

When a peak height of approximately 11.6 metres or higher is reached, water will begin to flow into the back of Lorn and businesses behind the levee will begin to be inundated. Businesses should evacuate when this height is predicted.

Flooding may last for several days. Remaining at your business in a serious flood can be dangerous. There may be no water, sewerage, power, telephone or other services for several days. You may be unable to call for help. The NSW Police and other emergency services will provide security in flooded areas.

Because evacuation routes close early in severe floods, you and your employees will need to leave well before water reaches your business. It is dangerous to evacuate too late in a flood as roads may be covered by deep, fast flowing water.



Infrastructure may be badly damaged in a severe flood

Photo courtesy Hunter Catchment Management Trust

## Stay informed

Maitland City Council has information on how flooding may affect your property.

The Maitland City SES Unit can give you information on what you can do to reduce the effects of flooding on your family and your property.

A copy of the Maitland City Local Flood Plan is available at Maitland City Council libraries.

## How you will be advised of a coming flood

Flood information including generalised flood forecasts, road closures and advice on evacuations and property protection will be broadcast over local radio stations 2HD AM 1143, KOFM 102.9, 2NUR FM 103.7, NEW-FM 105.3, NX FM 106.9, ABC FM 106.1, ABC AM 1233, Rhema FM 99.7.

## What you can do now

- Prepare a flood emergency plan for your business including a list of important contact numbers
- Decide what stock, records and equipment can be lifted, relocated or protected against water damage
- Make preliminary arrangements for transport and storage
- Familiarise yourself with your evacuation routes
- Make copies of important records and store them offsite in a flood-free location

## When flooding is likely

- Where possible stack stock, records and equipment on benches and tables, placing electrical goods such as computers on top
- Move equipment early, as roads may become congested or close
- Secure objects that are likely to float and cause damage
- Relocate waste containers, chemicals and poisons well above floor level
- Locate important papers, any valuables and mementoes, put them in your emergency kit and take them with you when you evacuate
- Ensure employees are able to get home before evacuation routes are closed

## During a flood

- Avoid driving or walking through flood water - it may be deeper and faster flowing than you realise
- Keep listening to a local radio station for further information and advice
- Keep in contact with your neighbours or neighbouring businesses
- Be prepared to evacuate if advised



Flood debris in the Maitland commercial area after the 1955 flood

Photo courtesy Hunter Catchment Management Trust

## If you need to evacuate

- Take your emergency kit with you
- Turn off the electricity, gas and water as you leave
- You will be told which evacuation centre to go to

## When you evacuate

You will need to leave well before roads to high ground are closed by flood water.

The last evacuation route to Rutherford is via High St. and the Long Bridge. The last route to East Maitland is via Les Darcy Dr.

Proceed to the evacuation centre you are asked to go to. Help will be available at the evacuation centre which will be established by the Department of Community Services (DoCS). This centre will also be staffed by representatives from community agencies such as the Red Cross, Salvation Army, Adracare, St Vincent de Paul and Anglicare. Information on the location of the evacuation centre will be provided at the time of the flood. Help available from the evacuation centre includes:

- Temporary accommodation
- Financial assistance
- Personal support
- Refreshments and meals
- Clothing and personal needs
- Contacting family and friends

## Recovering from a severe flood

A local recovery centre will be established by DoCS. This centre will be staffed by representatives from a range of government departments and community agencies to help you return to normal living. At the centre you will be able to get advice on everything from insurance to counselling. Advice for business owners will also be available.

In the event of a flood, information will also be available from the DoCS State Disaster Recovery Centre on 1800 018 444.