

Flood Warning Information

Environment Southland has a monitoring network of 26 rain gauges and 46 water level recorders, 22 of which also record flow. This information is freely available to the public 24 hours a day, 365 days of the year.



Waiau Catchment

Flood Warning Information



How does the data get to Environment Southland?

Data comes in through VHF radio at some sites and cellphone at others. Important sites have both types of communications because during flood events, cellphone networks have been known to get overloaded.

How up-to-date is the data?

Environment Southland updates river level sites at least hourly, and every 15 minutes in the headwaters. During a flood event all sites are updated every 15 minutes. The EDI (Environmental Data Information) telephone system is directly connected to the telemetry system and is more up-to-date than the website, which is updated at half hourly intervals.

How do I access data?

There are two automated ways the public can get floodwarning information:

1. Through the telephone system EDI (*Environmental Data Information*);
2. Through the website www.es.govt.nz.

What do I do if either system is not working?

Contact technical support on (03) 211 5244. If the telephone system is not operational, try a local radio station. Significant events will be broadcast.

How do I interpret the data?

- River levels are reported on the EDI system and website as metres above normal, so a normal water level is zero. Values become negative when below normal. Tables overleaf show the levels of various large floods from the past and some recent floods to give a frame of reference for new property owners. It is prudent to note down the levels of upstream water level recorders for floods that affect your property. Add these to the table.
- Rainfall is reported on the EDI system as totals since midnight, and totals in the last 24 hours, 12 hours, 6 hours, and last hour. As a guide, significant totals would be:

24 hours – 50 mm on a wetted catchment or 70 on a dry catchment
12 hours – 25 mm on a wetted catchment or 45 on a dry catchment
6 hours – 15 mm on a wetted catchment or 35 on a dry catchment

The rainfall in the last hour indicates if it is still raining, so take careful note of the time it was updated. Very intense hourly rainfall (over 10mm/hr) can cause very sharp flood peaks. If you need help interpreting the data, call the flood duty officer at (03) 2115244.

How can I prepare for a flood?

Find out if your property floods from previous owners, neighbours or Environment Southland. District Plans contain maps identifying land that floods or may flood, or you can contact our Senior Planner (Hazard Mitigation) during office hours at (03) 2115115 for property specific information.

Use our website or contact us to find out how far above normal the river was during past floods. Similar magnitude events generally flood similar areas but be sure to note any flood alleviation work that has been done since, as this will affect the behaviour of the river. This information will help you plan for future floods, especially knowing when to move stock.

How do I find out if roads are closed?

During a flood, access to your property is more likely to be affected than your property itself. Road closure information is generally broadcast on local radio stations but some information may be available on the internet.

State Highway road closures are reported on the NZ Transport Agency website: www.nzta.govt.nz.

For secondary road closures you should refer to the local authority responsible such as the Southland District Council, Invercargill City Council or Gore District Council.

Disclaimer

Environment Southland makes every effort to keep the data given out on the Website and by the EDI telephone system accurate. As the data is derived from unchecked telemetry files, failures and malfunctions can occur at any time for which Environment Southland accepts no responsibility.

Office Hours Phone	03 211 5115
Environmental Data Information (EDI)	03 211 5010
After Hours Emergency Contacts	03 211 5225
Southland Free Phone	0800 76 88 45
Technical Support	03 211 5244
Web	www.es.govt.nz

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River Level Information

Waiau Water Level Recorders - Flood Peaks and EDI Contact Details

	Rainfall?	EDI Direct Dial	EDI Menu No	Past Flood Levels in Metres Above Normal						My Levels		
				1980	1983	1984	1988	1999	2007	2008		
Waiau River at												
Mararoa Weir		N/A	N/A					3.46	2.05	1.75		
Sunnyside		(03)2115061	161	3.60	3.93	5.07	4.31	4.16	3.12	2.31		
Clifden	Y	(03)2115062	162					3.88	3.28	2.70		
Tuatapere		N/A	N/A	3.62	3.76	5.65	3.17	4.08	2.84	2.25		
TeWaeWae Lagoon		(03)2115063	163					3.61	1.97	2.30		

Data from the Mararoa Weir and Tuatapere is kindly made available from Meridian and NIWA.

Waiau Catchment Rain Gauges - EDI Contact Details

Raingauge	EDI Direct Dial	EDI Menu No
Whitestone Aquifer at Te Anau-Mossburn	(03)2115083	213
Ohai at Wether Hill Station	(03)2115096	243
Waiau River at Clifden	(03)2115029	256

Waiau River Peak Times

Flood Peak Travel Times (hours)	Mararoa Weir	Sunnyside	Clifden	Tuatapere
Mararoa Weir		2	6	7.5
Sunnyside	2		4	5.5
Clifden	6	4		1.5
Tuatapere	7.5	6	1.5	

Travel times have been averaged over a large number of floods and may vary for individual flood events.

