

Southern Rural Water's role during floods in Werribee and Bacchus

Water storages in the area are not designed to manage floods

Southern Rural Water helps to provide river flow information during floods

Please keep clear of dams and spillways during floods

The Werribee and Bacchus Marsh Irrigation Districts rely on three major storages upstream, all managed by Southern Rural Water:

- Pykes Creek Reservoir, which has a capacity of 22,119 megalitres (ML)
- Melton Reservoir, which has a capacity of 14,340 ML
- Merrimu Reservoir, which has a capacity of 32,215 ML

None of these storages were designed to manage floods. They simply store water for various uses – mainly irrigation, and in some cases drinking water. They have fixed crest spillways, so that once they are full any excess water coming into the reservoir will flow over the spillway into the river or creek downstream. Therefore Southern Rural Water does not have the ability to deliberately surcharge (over full) the dams.

The reservoirs do not have ability to pre-release enough water to have an effect on a possible flood, but they can help reduce flood peaks a little by temporarily storing water if they have room. None of them are large storages, however, once they are full, they have little impact on flows.

Southern Rural Water provides weekly updates on its website (www.srw.com.au) about the water levels in local storages and also has a web page which has links to Bureau rainfall forecasts, flood warnings, river levels and emergency assistance provided by the SES.

Keep clear of infrastructure

During high river flows we urged all visitors to stay well away from any infrastructure, especially the spillways. Please:

- follow any requests from Southern Rural Water staff
- take note of signage and fencing, and
- stay away from any prohibited areas, particularly the dam walls and spillways.

Playing on or near a spillway during a flood is a recipe for disaster.

We strongly recommend that if you are in a flood prone area that you and your family familiarise yourself with the SES's "Flood Safe information brochure" and take all necessary precautions.

More information

Contact us on **1300 139 510** for more information or to make an appointment to chat to one of our assessment staff. More information can also be found at www.srw.com.au