

A summer's worth of rain overwhelmed New Zealand's largest city Friday

More than 10 inches of rain triggered severe flooding in Auckland that forced evacuations, blocked roads, closed airports and washed away a bridge.



By [Scott Dance](#)

January 27, 2023 at 11:50 a.m. EST

P An entire summer's worth of rain fell in a single day in Auckland, New Zealand, on Friday, triggering severe flooding that forced evacuations, blocked roads, closed airports and washed away a bridge.

At least one person died as a result of the 10-inch deluge, local media reported, though authorities said the disaster's toll wouldn't be fully known until daybreak Saturday.

Mayor Wayne Brown declared a state of emergency: "Infrastructure and emergency services alike have been overwhelmed by the impacts of the storm."

The country's National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research said it was the wettest single day on record for multiple locations in Auckland, New Zealand's largest city.

5th

NIWA Weather

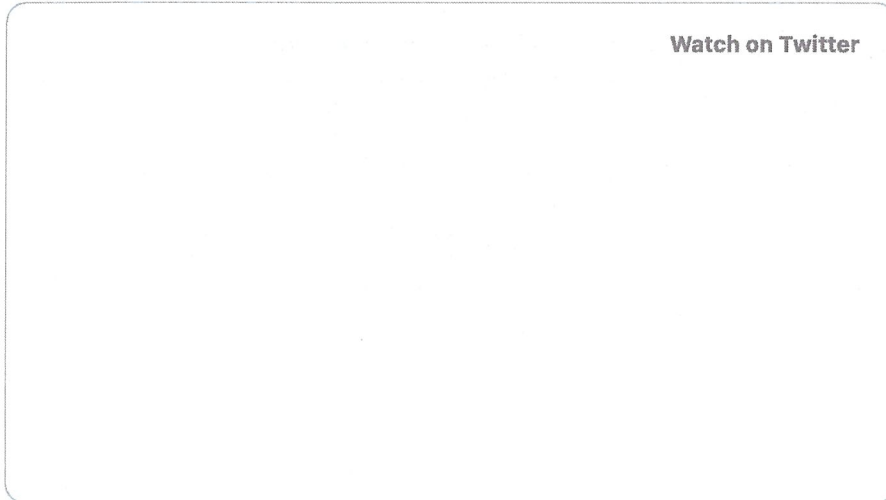
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27 Jan 2023 - provisionally, the wettest day on record for multiple locations in Auckland.

These locations have set a new all-time daily rainfall record.

This is approximately an entire summer's worth of rain (DJF) in one day! 🤯



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Waist-deep water surged into homes, forcing some evacuations, Ricardo Menéndez, a member of the New Zealand Parliament, [said on Twitter](#). Flooding and landslides closed numerous roads, authorities said.

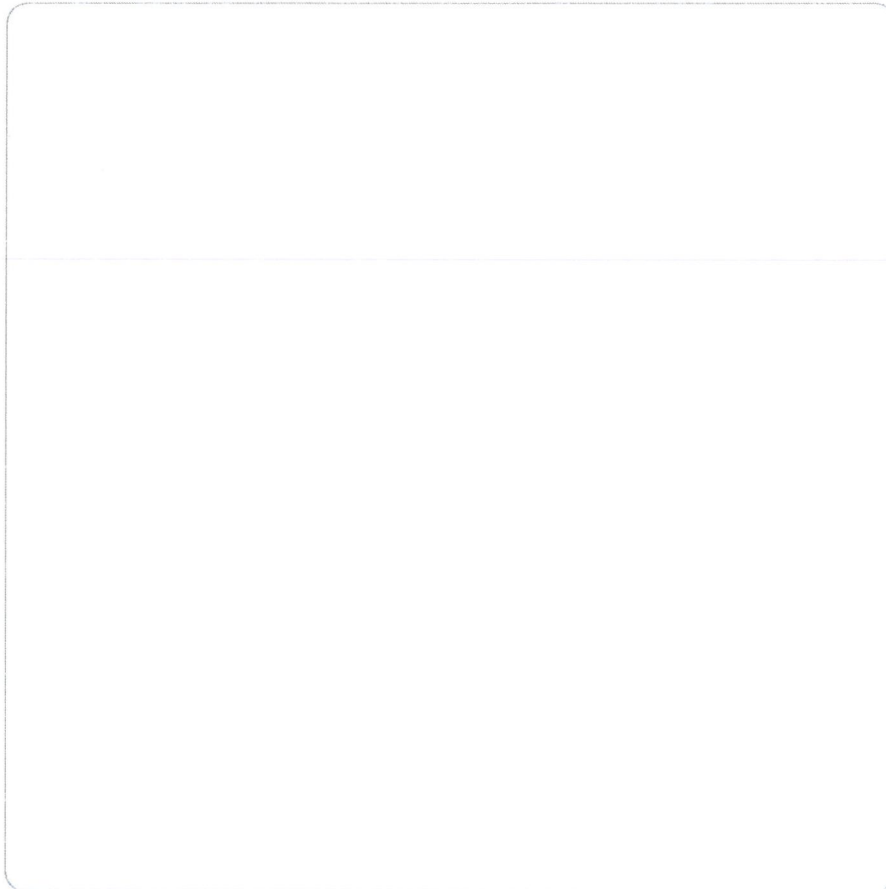
P Auckland Airport was closed, and videos shared on social media showed floodwaters surging into its terminal. As many as 1,000 people were stranded there, the New Zealand Herald reported.

Simon Wong

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This wet floor sign at Auckland Airport really doing some heavy lifting tonight



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More than 10.3 inches of rainfall was observed within 18 hours in Albany, a northern suburb. Within just two hours, Auckland Airport received over 5 inches of rainfall — more than half its record-setting total of 10.2 inches for the day, according to the country's MetService.

The torrential rains come during what is typically a dry stretch of the year on much of New Zealand's North Island, home to its most populous and developed areas, with about 1.7 million residents in the Auckland region. About 2.8 inches falls in an average January in Auckland, according to the MetService, while fall and winter are typically wetter; average July rainfall there is about 5.3 inches.

Scientists expect that climate change will mean less annual precipitation for the Auckland region and northern and eastern parts of the North Island, but an increase in “very extreme” precipitation events for the entire country, according to a government report based on data from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

The storms hit northern communities on the North Island just ahead of what is a holiday for that region, the annual observance of its provincial anniversary Monday.

The flooding forced organizers to cancel an Elton John concert just before it was scheduled to begin Friday.