

1/11/2022

SA flooding threatens electricity supply

SA Power Networks is preparing for flooding along the River Murray which is expected to impact electricity supply to low lying properties and infrastructure.

It's also issued warnings about the significant safety risk posed by electrical assets in floodwaters.

The electricity distributor has been making urgent assessments around the potential impact on customers and infrastructure of floods up to anticipated daily flow levels of 135GL up to 160GL.

"We are currently assessing electricity infrastructure at risk based on latest official flood predictions," said Head of Corporate Affairs, Paul Roberts. "Some of our infrastructure is already standing in floodwaters on floodplains beyond the banks of the river."

Mr Roberts said it was certain that electricity supply would be disconnected to some flooded areas as the flood surge moved down the river over coming weeks.

"That may involve disconnecting isolated shacks or multiple properties in low-lying areas. We will also monitor any impact on the higher voltage parts of our network that may be at risk," he said.

"We will communicate directly with customers affected where we can via our SMS system, but we are aware that many shacks will be unoccupied."

In terms of safety, Mr Roberts said there were many issues that the public needs to be aware of, including:

- Avoiding downed or low powerlines
- Staying clear of all electricity infrastructure in floodwaters as it may be energised
- Being aware that powerlines – particularly those that cross the river – may be low over flood waters (and therefore clearances may be breached)
- Not to approach electrical infrastructure (ie boaties and yabby hunters need to make themselves aware of the location of electrical equipment if exploring areas beyond the normal extent of the river).

"There is a real potential risk to the community from electric shock or other issues associated with our infrastructure in flood waters and we also believe it is important customers are aware of the risk posed by electrical wiring and appliances within the property.

"Ideally solar panels should be shut down and people with batteries should consider moving them above expected flood levels. This is a job for a qualified electrician."

Mr Roberts also said reconnection of electricity supply after flooding may take some time and, for property impacted by flood waters, a certificate from a qualified electrician would be required to confirm it would be safe to restore power.

Further information is available via our website at www.sapowernetworks.com.au or on our social media.

Media contact: 0403 582 500 (Please do not text this number - voice calls only)