

20 Times Water Went Out of Control

If you could ask a pirate, like the Pirates of the Caribbean kind, or any other person that loves water to tell you a thing or two about the water, they'd probably give you one word – unpredictable. Water can be calm and beautiful. And there are times when it pulls a nasty card from out of nowhere.

From Niagra River and Falls to the Sayano disaster, here are 20 times water went out of control.

20. Niagra River and Falls

If you've ever been to Niagra River and Falls, you'd know that it's undoubtedly one of the best places to be in the whole world. I mean, not very many places come close. Do you know that you don't have to be a water lover to fall in love with Niagra? Just looking at the waterfalls and the rush of the river is enticing enough. However, the Niagra River and Falls also has the reputation of being a ruthless killer. Who knew something so beautiful could be so deadly, right?

For years, officials in charge of this Niagra River and Falls have been warning visitors and tourists off certain areas of the river as it's got a current so strong it can pull you under in the blink of an eye. Their rescue team have had to pick up bodies from the river at several moments over time and even they find it hard to navigate the currents. Authorities have also ensured that the place is tight with security to prevent the slightest inkling of mishap from spiraling into something serious. And you can't blame them. Niagra River and Falls has had its fair share of death. For the superstitious kind, the deaths are enough to believe the place is haunted. Even watching the falls is enough to find yourself hurling towards the bottom; that's how dangerous it is.

19. Boscastle Flood

People who know Boscastle, know it for its history of flooding. It's happened in 1847, 1957, 1958, and a couple of years after that. But the most recent in memory is the Boscastle Flood of 2004. Can you imagine a body of water strong enough to move 150 cars? That was the fate of multiple of residents of Boscastle on the 16th of August 2004. And it gets even curious when you realize that the cause of such carnage was actually rainfall. Yeah, rainfall! Most times when people run out from under the rain, it's to save themselves from getting wet. You can even walk right under it if you've got an umbrella. The point is that rainfall's pretty normal in its season.

However, when it came on Bocastle, it came with a twist. The rainfall was so torrential that different locations within Bocastle were recording inches of rain in a couple of minutes. In about an hour, the river levels had gone up by 7 feet and. But that was just one hour, the entire rainfall lasted for 8 disastrous hours. Like one party beckoning to a member of his kin, the rivers Valency and Jordan burst their banks, rolling into Bocastle and joining the inches of rain water that were already waiting there.

Among the structures flooded were 150 cars and 58 properties. Whole houses were submerged in water and people had to be saved with helicopters. It's a good thing they were there. Swimming in 440 million gallons of moving water is not a good idea.

18. Chanaral Chile Flood 2020

If you've ever lived in a dry region, you'd know how valuable rainfall is. It's like Alibaba stumbling across the treasure of the forty thieves. It's really precious. If you haven't lived in such a place before, you'd have to take my word for it. To the people of Chanaral, rainfall is welcome whenever it comes because of the level of aridity they have to deal with all year long. In places like this, you can't think of any other thing other than the cool or wetness. What's even better, the rain was heavy. However, this heavy rainfall came with an unexpected twist.

Before people knew what was going on, they were surrounded by flood water of about 1 meter deep. Now, one meter isn't too deep for swimmers, but what do you do when the water is also muddy as hell. I haven't taken a swim in mud before, don't wish to, but I'm pretty sure it's a thousand times trickier to try out swimming strokes there than in clean water. The water rolled through Chanaral and other communities in the Atacama region, destroying properties. People even got lost, although the Chile government reported later that they were all found.

In retrospect, the people of Chanaral might have had it better because the last time water went out of control was back in 2015. 125 people were reported missing, 8000 homes destroyed, and about 26 dead.

17. Burst Water Main Causes Disaster in Brazil

The last thing anyone would ever expect from a water main is catastrophe or worse, death. Water is after all life, and a water main directs water and helps it go where it needs to go. Now, here's a piece of trivia for those of you who don't know. The water main isn't your regular pipe. It's large, underground and carries water at an astounding force. The water main supplying water to different houses of a Rio de Janeiro suburb in Brazil had kept everything under control, until the water decided it was time to go nuts.

At about 6 am local time, that time when people were still grappling with the decision of whether to catch some more sleep or get out of bed, disaster struck. The water main burst, releasing a torrent of water so heavy that it flew 65 feet into the air. It would have been amazing, you know, watching the water show Superman that he didn't have the monopoly of flying, if it didn't cause untold damage shortly afterwards. The water had burst over the Campo Grande area of the city. Remember when I told you about the force of the water in a water main? Well, this one was so strong that it swept cars off the streets like toys. It destroyed homes and tossed people around like they were rag dolls. Before any of the residents would know it, they were surrounded by 6 feet of water and struggled to gain elevation. Sadly, that also cost the life of a 3-year-old and injured more than 16 people.

16. Sayano Dam Disaster

As unpredictable and powerful as a large body of water can be, a dam is one of the ways man, once again, asserts his dominance over nature, and keeps the ruggedly beautiful water in control. Dams are amazing, but only when they work. The Sayano Dam Disaster of August 2009 is one instance of water going out of control, but it as a damn expensive one.

The Sayano Dam is responsible for about 6400 megawatts of Russia's total supply. In fact, before the disaster, it as Russia's largest hydroelectric power station and the sixth largest in the orld by average power generation. However, it lost all of that, the power generation, the prestige and more on the 17th of August, 2009 when one of its turbines failed.

No sooner after the turbine had failed, water flowed in filling up the turbine hall real quick. It spread, damaging all other ten turbines, leaving only one unscathed. The damage to the turbines shut the

entire dam down, making it lose all of its power supply. But the water didn't only take generated power. It also took people's lives – about 75 of them. The steel gates governing the intake of water through the turbines had to be shut manually to keep the water under control, but there was no changing the havoc it had already wreaked.

15. Two Dams Fail, Central Michigan

Still on dams, the people of Central Michigan didn't have it any easy as they had not one dam to face, but two. A heavy rainfall that seemed totally normal took a turn for the worse when it overflowed the Edenville and Sanford Dams causing them to fail after days of holding the bursting waters back. Residents in the towns of Edenville, Sanford and Midland were forced to leave immediately as they faced the risk of being buried under water that was as much as 10 feet above flood levels. 11,000 people had to leave their homes in a matter of twelve hours or take the last swim of their lives. Bridges across the Tittabawassee River were closed, some half under water, while roads were completely under. In Sanford, the flood was so high up that it nearly covered the doorways of single-story buildings. To add salt to injury, the rain didn't stop falling, adding more inches to the water in the next couple of days. Thankfully there were no deaths or major injuries. But can you imagine what would have happened if the warning hadn't come earlier?

14. Water Main Disaster, Australia

It's quite ironic when structures designed to keep water under control get defeated by the same thing they're supposed to control. It's like the water's just decided to play the good boy all the while, only for it to get wild when it wants to.

Australia's southeast coast suffered one such fate as its rivers and dams overflowed, flooding through residential areas, leaving a trail of havoc in its watery wake. And what's the cause? You don't have to think too hard. It's rainfall. Perhaps, after this video, you'd begin to see rainfall with different eyes. Days of torrential rainfall was enough to make Australia's waters go coo-coo and send over 18,000 people out of their homes for fear of raising the damage to more than destructions of infrastructure alone. Roads were forced to go under for a drink, homes were destroyed even the runway at Newcastle Airport wasn't exempted from the dip. There were also reports of landslides and little tornadoes west of Sydney. That was one hell of a disaster.

Thankfully, no human lives were lost, but the Prime Minister noted that could have changed if any of the people had been adamant to the warning put out by the government.

13. Mississippi River Flood 2011 – USA

If you haven't seen the Mississippi River, at least you'd remember it for its long, hard-to-spell, name. And for a river with such a name, it's not a surprise that it would go out of control, yeah? After all, the letters in its name are kind of running out of control as well.

It may sound funny now, but back in 2011 it wasn't. People who weren't alive for the flooding of 1937, where seeing the Mississippi rise to its highest for the first time in their life. The river rose to about 48 feet and unable to rein itself in anymore, spilled over into parts of the Mid-South. Some people had it softer than others, but those who were hit the hardest had to struggle with flood waters that were 14 feet higher than the normal flood stage. It swallowed houses and destroyed tons of properties. Even casinos were under water. If there were any mermaids at the Mississippi River, there wouldn't have been a better time to hit jackpot.

The Mayor at the time said that parts of the flooding were attributed to the drainage system as the high-water levels stopped it from getting water out of the city. As a result, a \$30 million bond was passed to help improve the drainage system. In the event that the Mississippi tried to do more than make people bite their tongue, the city would be ready.

12. Ukraine Water Pipe Explosion

Hearing the words 'explosion' side by side with 'water pipe' sounds like a really bad combo to me. I don't know about you, but water pipes are the last things that come to mind when I'm thinking about things that can have about the same effect with a grenade. I couldn't be more wrong. Because, clearly a water pipe can make you think someone just set off a bomb in the area.

Residents in Kiev, the capital of Ukraine, were left with slack jaws when a water pipe burst out from right underneath the ground on a quiet Monday afternoon. As you can see, that water pipe wasn't resting underneath mere soil. It was right underneath a tarred road, and we all know what goes into tarring roads – more earth, rocks and all that.

When the earth above the water pipe began to tremble, no one was around to take notice. And that, people, was good fortune because the pipe burst the next moment, rupturing the earth above, and sending debris flying in different directions. Through the rain of debris, a pillar of sludgy water rose as high as 7 floors, adding the finishing touch to the mess it had already caused. Thankfully, no lives were lost, but the water took its pound of flesh from the cars and buildings nearby.

11. Cauca River Dam Floods

Already, in this video, we've seen complete dams unable to stop rivers from going crazy. In the case of the Cauca River Dam floods, the water didn't even let the dam get to its full strength before striking. The Cauca Dam was still nearing completion when it was given the ultimate test and it failed woefully as about 600 people had to flee their homes in the first flood wave.

But how did it all go down?

The Cauca Dam was only a few months away from completion when a landslide nearby blocked one of the tunnels created to divert the river during construction. Two other similar tunnels had already been sealed before the event for the purpose of the construction, ensuring that the tunnel blocked by the landslide was the only way out for the Cauca River. The construction company decided to control the rising river by flooding the turbine rooms. And it worked, but only for two days.

Two days later, one of the blocked tunnels gave, causing the first wave, destroying a whopping 59 homes, a health center and a school, and leaving over 600 people with no place to stay. As if that was not enough, the entire Cauca River Dam was projected to fail completely as more landslides continued to pepper the region. Once the dam gets compromised, you all know that you can say goodbye to any attempts of keeping the water under control.

10. Oroville Dam Failure

Do you know that back in 2017, over 180,000 people living along the Feather River in California stood the risk of being flooded?

The Oroville Dam close by was supposed to stop stuff like this from happening, but the dam began to find keeping the water off something of a tough nut to swallow – mostly because of some structural failure. A series of torrential downpours at the time had left an indelible mark on the

surrounding Californian side and on the dam as well, damaging its main spillway. To stop the spillway from further damage, the dam's engineers decided to limit the burden the spillway carried. But that kept most of the water back in Lake Oroville. Clearly, when you don't take out water regularly from the second largest reservoir in California, you're asking for trouble. The Lake began to rise rapidly, even threatening the strength of the hills holding it in. The moment that begun to happen, authorities knew that hell was about to come on earth. Can you imagine an entire lake rolling down towards a river? Tough picture, right! That was what was about to happen and the people living around the Feather River were going to get the worst of it, but they were evacuated before that could ever happen.

Thankfully, the mountains didn't give and the spillway has been fixed, but who can tell with these things, huh? I mean, it's water we're talking about here.

9. Street Filled with Boiling Water

Every religion has its own idea of heaven and hell, and if you want to see what that must look like for Aquaman's people, all you need to see is this event in Samara where a 15-meter sinkhole of boiling water opened right in the middle of the road.

If you've ever been to a geyser, you'd know how hot the water that shoots out is. The city of Samara in Russia must have thought "why let people travel to go see geysers when I can bring geysers to them", before water pipes carrying hot water from the central heating system burst, taking in two cars along with it.

The water was so hot that if anyone had been in those cars, the world would have had its first sighting of what a boiled human looks like. Truly horrible, isn't it? There was no way anybody could have survived something like that. The steam from the sinkhole alone was like blanket of fog on a cold wet morning. Fortunately, no one was in the car and the heating system had to be turned off before people pulled it out.

However, a couple of men in the Russian city of Penza were not that lucky. It seems as though sinkholes of boiling water aren't that rare in Russia, and these men paid the price with their lives. Boiled to death – that's such a horrible way to go.

8. Morocco Flash Flood

Morocco is common for its tourist sights. They've got really nice places to visit in the summer or whenever you've got the chance, and if you're a fan of Bond movies, you must have seen James in Morocco at least once. However, tourism isn't the only thing Morocco is known for. They've also managed to rack up a nasty reputation for flash floods. And when they come, they come heavily, sweeping off whole vehicles like they weighed nothing, and damaging hundreds of buildings. About 100 roads, including six major national highways hit the bottom of the water. I didn't know it was possible for roads to drown, but the Moroccan flash flood gave us a first. Of course, that's not a first, but it still doesn't take the fact away. Even tour buses were affected by the flash flood. The authorities had to release about 130 all-terrain vehicles, 335 inflatable boats, and even helicopters to search for people missing in the flood. In some places, they were successful, in others they were too late. Some people died from getting stuck in the vehicles that were swept away by the flood. In Guelmim alone, 24 people were killed.

In Tangier, 28 out of 40 workers trapped in a basement as a result of the flooding were found dead. But these men didn't just die from suffocation. They were electrocuted as the water levels rose, swallowing the power cables.

7. Three Gorges Dam

Sometimes, when water gets out of control, they don't just destroy dams or whatnot, they also test its integrity. That was the fate of the Three Gorges Dam in China. Southern China was experiencing the worst flooding in 80 years, and the dam fought to keep up. It's not every time you see a hero dam, so we should, I don't know hold a moment's silence for the Three Gorges Dam?

Large volumes of water were already running rampant through the city, swallowing up houses, roads, and even people. The rains were pouring down heavily from the skies and the rivers drunk it all up until there was nowhere for it to go but out. The Yangtze and Qijang rivers were unhinged as they claimed gas stations, street lights, phone polls, and a lot of other infrastructure for their own. Perhaps, what was the most disastrous occurrence in all this was that the flooding occurred in different areas, the Guizhou province carrying the heaviest. Over 13 counties in this province were affected. And even as authorities tried to keep tabs on the death toll and missing people, they were

aware of the task the Three Gorges Dam faced. River Qijiang is a tributary of River Yangtze, so in other words, the dam had two crazy rivers to keep under control, and it looked primed to lose the battle.

6. Water Main Break Causes Massive Flooding in Houston

While we talk about flash floods and failing dams, we shouldn't be too quick to forget that burst water mains can just be as nasty. If anything, East Houston can boast of this as one of its lessons as it suffered flooding from a burst water main back in 2020. The flooding was so large that it quickly ate up freeways, streets and even cars. That's a lot of water, right! Well, it may not be as shocking when you learn that the burst water main had been responsible for supplying 50% of the city's water. So, at the time of the flooding, half of Houston's water supply was soaking up every inch of land it could find. People who had been caught right in their cars during the flood had to climb up to the roof to stay clear of the water before they were rescued.

The water main explosion was attributed to old age as it was about 35 years old. That may not be enough time to make a human get cranky, but for a water main, clearly, that's donkey years.

5. Banqiao Dam Failure 1975

If you're asking yourself why this sounds like the name of a movie, maybe that's because it's one of the deadliest typhoon disaster ever. In case you never heard about it, let me just tell you that this was an absolute shipwreck of a disaster.

The Banqiao Dam in China had been built as the ultimate warrior against floods. The Banqiao Dam was even projected to operate further, helping the country produce electricity by keeping a firm tab on the Yellow River. This dam was 118 meters tall with a storage capacity of 17.4 billion feet; enough to suit China's masterplan, which was to withstand the kind of high flood levels expected every 1000 years. Then came Typhoon Nina and all the King's horses and all the King's men couldn't save the dam. The first day alone, the amount of water collected surpassed the maximum measurement. Three more days of torrential rainfall sent everything to dust. The dam collapsed, sending a spate of water 10 meters high and 11 km wide, traveling at 50 km per hour. That flood wiped out a town of 9600 people.

But it didn't stop there, about 61 dams failed that same day including the Shimantan Dam, killing 26,000 people. About 145,000 more died from diseases caused by the flooding, and over 10 million were affected by this disaster.

Pheew. And there you were thinking The Titanic was the only true tragic event in the world.

4. Lagos Flood

Lagos may enjoy the appellation of being Africa's most populous city, but not very many people are aware of its pitfalls. As a matter of fact, the city has nothing to do with seasonal floods. We're talking floods that occur on a yearly basis.

Every year, from the months of March to November, when it's usually the rainy season, Lagos is susceptible to floods. The floods get so high that they swallow cars, and in some sectors, chase people out of their homes. Not just that, the constant flooding also makes the economic hub loose about \$4 billion every year. Eeesh! That's one hell of a price to pay for being the most populous city, don't you think?

The flooding in Lagos doesn't just come from the heavy downpour, rising sea levels also get some of the blame as Lagos lies across the Atlantic Coast. Most experts think the whole thing is compounded by poor drainage systems and incompetent urban planning. Without any plans of mitigation in sight, most authorities fear that this cultural and economic hub might become uninhabitable by the end of the century. That's it, people! A whole city at the verge of being wiped out. Add that to the list of things the sea has stolen from humans.

3. Baldwin Hills Dam Collapse 1963

You can imagine the Baldwin Hills Dam being the pride and joy of the people upon the completion of its construction in 1951. It was built to supply water to the south and southwest parts of Los Angeles. And it was all good until December 1963.

The Baldwin Hills Dam was a mammoth that stretched to a height of 232 feet and 650 in length. It wasn't just massive; it sat at the top of the tallest hills in the area – the King of the Jungle, confirmed and unrivaled. However, not even kings are exempt from the impact of tragedy when it strikes. If you doubt me, you can ask the Greeks for a lesson.

On December 14th, at around 11:15 am, the reservoir's caretaker noticed something odd with the dam's drainage and brought it up. Everyone knew there was fire on the mountain and got to work trying to put it out. During that time, they put out a warning, allowing about 1600 of the people living downhill to be evacuated. They tried real hard, but it was futile as a section of the Dam collapsed, releasing a large portion of the 250 million gallons of water on the town below, killing five people and damaging properties worth \$11 million. It was a sad outcome, but it could have been far more than that if people hadn't been evacuated before that horrendous slip.

2. Brumadinho Dam

The latest version of water getting out of control takes us to Brazil, and trust me, there's nothing romantic about this. On the 25th of January 2019, the Brumadinho tailing dam belonging to the iron mine controlled by Vale failed disastrously. The disaster was even exacerbated, considering it was a sequel to a similar collapse back in 2015. But how could things have gotten this worse?

Experts reveal that the structure of the Brumadinho Dam had been saturated with water months before its collapse, causing erosion of the soil holding it firm. This, in turn, compromised the integrity and strength of the dam. The thing about the Brumadinho Dam collapse is that it isn't just ordinary water flowing out. It was muddy water, chuck full with hazardous mining waste infecting the river and destroying properties. The previous dam collapse had claimed the life of about 20 people, the Brumadinho Dam collapse took that number up by several notches. As of January, the following year, the death toll stood at 259 people with 11 still missing. A lot of us dream of ways we'd die. Losing yourself to a sludge of poisonous substances is definitely not in the equation.

1. Tsunami

A tsunami is one of the world's largest outcomes of water going out of control. Tsunamis have absolutely no mercy and take casualties in both human life and property damage. It doesn't even care if it has to wipe out an entire settlement or civilization. Simply put, it's a force of wild destruction rising from the depths of the ocean.

If you didn't know jack about a tsunami before now, pay close attention. A tsunami is actually a group of ocean waves, really huge ones that are generated by earthquakes along tectonic plates at

the bottom of the ocean. Once these tectonic plates shift or move, it causes a disturbance in the water above, sending massive waves that control the water sending it as high as 100 feet, sometimes even more. This indelible portent of destruction now rushes towards land, no-holds-barred, and unleashes all the destruction in its DNA.

They can even be caused by landslides or volcanic eruptions that occur underwater. And boy, are they fast! Tsunamis run across water at about 805 kilometers per hour, losing very little power on the way.

The best way to defend yourself from Tsunamis...no, dummy, it's not Aquaman. Don't let DC fool you. You have to heed to early warning signs and seek higher ground. That's it.

We've seen a lot of disasters here today, guys. What do you think about water now? Is it still beautiful or is it an element of disaster just waiting to be unleashed?

Also, check out our other cool stuff showing up on the screen right now. See you next time!

Miracle Edoziem's Work Sample