

Dubai to build \$8 bn stormwater runoff system after record floods

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Cars are stranded on a flooded street in Dubai following heavy rains on April 18, 2024. Dubai's giant highways were clogged by flooding and its major airport was in chaos as the Middle East financial center remained gridlocked on April 18, a day after the heaviest rains on record.

Dubai on Monday announced an \$8 billion plan for a stormwater runoff

system, two months after an unprecedented deluge and widespread flooding brought the desert state to a standstill.

The rainwater drainage network announced by Dubai ruler Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al-Maktoum on social media platform X is set to be completed by 2033 with construction to start immediately.

"It will cover all areas of Dubai and will absorb more than 20 million cubic meters of water per day," Sheikh Mohammed said of the plan for Dubai, the futuristic business hub of the United Arab Emirates.

It "will increase the capacity of rainwater drainage in the emirate by 700 percent and enhance the emirate's readiness to face future climate challenges," he said, calling it the region's largest such network.

Record rains lashed the UAE on April 16, flooding homes and turning streets into rivers. The downpour, worsened by a lack of storm drains, hobbled Dubai airport, the world's busiest for international passengers.

The [rainfall](#), the UAE's heaviest since records began 75 years ago, killed at least four people, including three Filipino workers and one Emirati.

UAE authorities have not released an official toll.

The glamorous hub of Dubai faced severe disruption for days, in a blow to its polished image. Without drainage for excess water, authorities relied on trucks to pump up the water with giant hoses and drive it away.

The World Weather Attribution group said global warming caused by [fossil fuel emissions](#) "most likely" exacerbated the intense rains that also hit the neighboring sultanate of Oman, where 21 people died.

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