

Men rescued from neck-deep water in flooding elevator as record EIGHT inches of rain drenches New York in one day

By [Daily Mail Reporter](#)

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Firefighters had to race to rescue two construction workers on Staten Island, who became trapped in a fast-filling hotel elevator during a record downpour in New York.

The men, who had been using the elevator while converting the Staten Island Hotel into senior housing, became trapped in the elevator yesterday after a fault with the doors forced them down into the basement level.

Unbeknown to Ed Tyler, 26, and his 48-year-old colleague Wendell Amaker, the basement was flooded after a record eight inches of rain had fallen in a single day in New York.



That sinking feeling: The Staten Island Hotel, where two men became trapped in an elevator quickly filling with flood water

Mr Tyler, of New Jersey, told the New York Daily News: 'We thought we were dead. I literally thought I was going to die.'

He said that the elevator doors had stopped working, and he and Mr Amaker, also of New Jersey, had taken it down to the basement in a bid to force the doors open and get out.

But things soon moved from bad to worse when the elevator descended into the flooded basement.

Mr Tyler said: 'We felt it hit the water. Immediately, the water started rushing in.'

Despite being in a situation reminiscent of a horror film, neither man panicked - until the water rose to waist-deep, and showed no signs of stopping.

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They used a mobile phone to dial 911 and call for help.

Ladder Company 86 responded to the call, and just in time - as the fire crew found the two workers up to their necks in floodwater.

Captain James Melvin told the New York Times: 'We've had plenty of elevator emergencies, but never one that's down sinking in water.'

The men were removed in the nick of time and, despite emerging uninjured, were allowed a hot shower and a chance to clean up back at the fire station.

Captain Melvin said: 'We let them clean up in our facilities because we assumed that the water might have been sewer water.'

New Yorkers must be wondering where their summer has gone after the largest rainfall in more than 100 years has drenched the city for the past three days.

Signs that the incessant deluge was lifting today did little to boost the dampened spirits of those having to endure lengthy traffic jams, choked up public transport and flooding to streets and homes.

Up to eight inches of rain soaked New York and Long Island on Sunday, a new record for a single day of rainfall.