The Great Falls Tavern provided lodging for C & O Canal travellers for nearly 100 years after it was constructed in the 1830s.

In the fall of 2003, Hurricane Isabel threatened the East Coast of the USA, placing this historic tavern at risk of flooding from the Potomac River and the C & O Canal.

Maccaferri Inc. approached the C & O Canal National Park engineers and offered Flexmac® as an alternative to the traditional solution of sandbag protection.

Flexmac® can be installed up to eight times faster than the equivalent volume of sandbags - a critical factor with the rapidly approaching storm.

The 5m x 1m x 1m Flexmac® units were deployed and filled with sand. An impermeable membrane was wrapped around the filled units to improve the overall performance of the installation given the value and heritage of the buildings.

The Flexmac® protected the Tavern during the storm from the rising waters.

After Isabel had passed, the Flexmac® units were easily removed using a lifting frame. The fill material drops out of the bottom of the unit as it is lifted clear.
PROJECT PROGRESS PHOTOGRAPHS

Filling Flexmac® units with sand

Completed barrier ready for Hurricane Isabel (note impermeable membrane)

Removing Flexmac® units with lifting frame

Lifting empty Flexmac® unit

Folding empty Flexmac® unit after use

Storing empty Flexmac® units for future use