



## Public Advisories & Alerts

Justice and Public Safety  
\* Public Alert - River Watch

### Province enters early stages of flood recovery

10 May 2018

FREDERICTON (GNB) – The following advisory was issued today by the New Brunswick Emergency Measures Organization (NBEMO), River Watch 2018:

As the level of St. John River recedes, the government is getting a clearer picture of the impact on transportation infrastructure.

"In many cases, the first step to getting people back in their homes is making sure there are safe roads to get them there," said Department of Transportation and Infrastructure operations manager Ahmed Dassouki. "Inspection teams have been assembled and are reviewing roads, culverts and bridges as soon as the water allows access."

Many provincial and municipal roads have been covered by a significant amount of water for more than a week. While some of those roads may be dry now, it does not mean they are safe to travel on. Municipal and provincial officials must inspect closed roads, culverts and bridges before they are reopened to determine if remedial work is necessary to make them safe for motorists.

Despite the receding river level, New Brunswickers are reminded some communities remain above flood stage and the St. John River remains a potential threat. The current in the river is strong and the water is cold and carries debris. The floodwater itself can also be heavily contaminated with sewage and pose health risks such as sickness and infections.

With this in mind, New Brunswickers are asked to remain patient and act with their safety and the safety of others in mind. Barricades on closed roads should be obeyed regardless of what a road may look like and personnel at the barricades should be respected.

The river level forecast is favourable, but people should only return to their homes when it is safe to do so. Evacuees who return sooner than safety allows are putting themselves and emergency responders at risk.

For the latest flood-related information, New Brunswickers can go to follow provincial and municipal governments website and follow them on social media such as Facebook and Twitter. These sites have information regarding road closures, cleanup procedures, disposing of flood debris and arrangements for special pickups.

#### Flood cleaning kits

The Canadian Red Cross is offering flood cleaning kits to New Brunswickers who are able to safely re-enter their homes and begin cleanup. The free kits can be picked up at its offices at 120 MacDonald St. (Loch Lomond Place) in Saint John and 318 Maple St. in Fredericton from 8:30 a.m. until 7 p.m., including during weekend.

There's a limit of one kit per household. The kits are self-contained in a 20-litre (five-gallon) plastic container that also serves as a bucket and lid, and is filled with useful items such as a mop, broom, squeegee, scrub brush, sponges, work gloves and latex gloves, masks, garbage bags and a bleach-based, all-purpose cleaner.

Before cleaning a home that was flooded, residents are urged to contact insurers where applicable, and to record and register all damage with Service New Brunswick online.

#### Well water

If residents find sewage has backed up into their home, they should wear rubber boots and waterproof gloves if in contact with water and during cleanup. They should wash their hands with warm water and soap after removing the rubber gloves.

The Public Health website has more details about safe cleanup procedures.

Residents who rely upon well water should be aware that private water supplies contaminated by flooding should not be used while the wellhead is flooded. Once flood waters have receded, the well should be disinfected and water quality should be tested prior to use.

Private water supplies may also be affected by chemicals such as furnace oil, gasoline or agricultural chemicals. If residents believe their well has been contaminated by such chemicals, they should not use the water, even if it has been boiled.

The provincial government is providing free testing for water from private wells that have been directly affected by recent flooding. Beginning May 17, water sampling kits will be available at Service New Brunswick Centres for owners of private wells. Residents must wait 10 days after water has receded from the well area before beginning the chlorination and sampling process.

#### Media Contact(s)

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More information regarding well safety can be found by visiting the Department of Environment and Local Government's website.

#### **Report issues with water**

It is important that residents remain vigilant as water levels remain high, particularly in southern regions of the province, and are not forecast to decline significantly until later this week. Residents should heed the advice of officials as flooding will continue to affect a number of communities in the days ahead. A flood level forecast can be found online. Residents can call 1-888-561-4048 for current flood levels.

#### **Volunteer opportunities**

Many have expressed an interest in volunteering. NBEMO is developing a team to facilitate and co-ordinate this and will have an update soon.

#### **Sandbag disposal**

The Department of Environment and Local Government encourages people to dispose of sandbags via pickups or at their regional landfill.

Residents are reminded that the bags may not be emptied into or within 30 metres of any watercourse or regulated wetland. An alteration permit is required for any work within 30 metres of a watercourse or regulated wetland.

If these options are not viable, people may dispose of their sandbags as part of their flood-related debris.

People are advised to contact one of the department's regional offices for more information if the sandbags are clearly contaminated (by oil, odour, etc.).

For any questions related to locations of remediation sites and proper disposal of flood-damaged items, contact a regional office of the Department of Environment and Local Government:

- Bathurst Region, 506-547-2092
- Miramichi Region, 506-778-6032
- Moncton Region, 506-856-2374
- Saint John Region, 506-658-2558
- Fredericton Region, 506-444-5149
- Grand Falls Region, 506-473-7744

#### **Canada Post**

Residents living in areas where flooding has impacted Canada Post delivery service can pick up their mail by showing their identification at the following locations:

- Saint John: 125 Rothesay Ave.
- Grand Bay-Westfield: 1 Woolastook Rd.
- Norton and Hatfield Point: 223 Route 124
- Fredericton: North side Jean Coutu (598 Union St.) or north side Superstore (116 Main St.)

Plans are being put in place to repair and clean the community mailboxes in flooded areas. Residents are asked to have patience as delivery will continue to be impacted until flood waters recede and roads open up. Canada Post is offering free mail forwarding service to residents of southern New Brunswick affected by the flood.

#### **Canadian Red Cross**

Residents affected by flooding can get assistance by calling the Canadian Red Cross at 1-800-863-6582. People who have already evacuated and did not require accommodations should still register with the Red Cross. The registry will assist the Red Cross with its support efforts.

To date, 655 households consisting of 1,516 people have registered with the Red Cross.

Donations can be made to the Canadian Red Cross to support those affected by the flood. Funds will be used for immediate and ongoing relief efforts, long-term recovery, resiliency and preparedness. Anyone interested in donating can call 1-800-418-1111 or visit [www.redcross.ca](http://www.redcross.ca).

#### **Road closures**

The Trans-Canada Highway (Route 2) remains closed between Moncton and Fredericton in both directions. Those travelling between Moncton and Fredericton will be detoured to Route 1 through River Glade and Route 7 at Oromocto.

Route 10 between Chipman and Fredericton is open, but there is a 12-tonne restriction on the bridge until further notice.

Drivers must follow closure notices and are not permitted to move or drive around barricades. Drivers should also avoid driving on water-covered streets, as this not only puts vehicles at risk, it also pushes water into nearby homes. Check online for the latest road closures, or call 511.

Drivers are urged to watch for wildlife on roads. The presence of wildlife on roads should be reported to local authorities.

#### **Heritage concerns**

There are indications that some heritage and archaeological resources may have

been impacted by flooding and wave action. Once water levels recede, archaeologists and archaeological field technicians from the Department of Tourism, Heritage and Culture will conduct assessments of these resources.

If members of the public encounter evidence of flood damage to archaeological or heritage resources they are encouraged to contact the archaeological services branch with the Department of Tourism, Heritage and Culture at 506-453-2738.

#### **Federal assistance**

The Canadian Coast Guard, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and Transport Canada continue to provide assistance where it is most needed. The provincial government continues to consult with municipal and federal officials, including the RCMP, the Coast Guard and the Armed Forces regarding relief efforts.

#### **Advice concerning flooded basements**

People are advised to be cautious when pumping water out of their basements. Pumping it out too soon could cause structural damage or collapse the basement. As a safety precaution, basement water levels should not be more than 30 centimetres (one foot) lower than the outside water level.

The following links provide information useful to residents impacted by flooding:

- [After a Flood \(Public Health advice\)](#)
- [Homeowners Checklist – Flood Recovery](#)
- [Flood Cleanup: Electrical Systems](#)
- [How to chlorinate your well water](#)

#### **Emergency Preparedness Week**

Emergency Preparedness Week is an opportunity to encourage Canadians to take concrete actions to be better prepared to protect themselves and their families during emergencies. This year's theme is *Be Emergency Ready*. Information and resources are available online.

#### **Information to residents**

New Brunswickers are also reminded to:

- avoid visiting flooded areas, as it is a safety concern;
- avoid boating, kayaking or other water activities this time of year as currents are strong. Large quantities of debris and ice have been reported coming down the St. John River, increasing safety concerns for watercraft;
- avoid the banks of waterways, as they are extremely dangerous at this time of year;
- contact NB Power if they are concerned about water making contact with their electrical equipment at 1-800-663-6272; and
- read helpful tips, the latest forecasts and public advisories by visiting the River Watch website, or by following the Emergency Measures Organization on Twitter and Facebook.

Updates on information related to the potential for flooding or ice jams, including 24/7 emergency updates, are available online.

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