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**KENT COUNTY SHERIFF DEPARTMENT**  
**Lawrence A. Stelma – Sheriff**

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701 Ball Avenue, N.E. • Grand Rapids • Michigan • 49503



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**February 21, 2018**

**Contact: Lisa LaPlante – 616.632.7567**

**Emergency Management, County and City Agencies  
Respond as River Levels Rise**

**GRAND RAPIDS** – Kent County Emergency Management, along with numerous agencies, continues to monitor and respond to flooding emergencies being seen throughout the area. Floodwaters are having a dramatic impact on transit and housing. The waters will likely continue to rise through Saturday, causing many additional concerns for businesses and residents.

“The Sheriff’s Office and I are working closely with the National Weather Service, State and County agencies, the City of Grand Rapids, other impacted communities, as well as American Red Cross and Salvation Army,” said Jack Stewart, Kent County Emergency Management Coordinator. “Our primary goal is the safety and well-being of our residents and first responders. While the levels are not expected to be as high as they were in 2013, we still need to be as diligent in our response.”

The City of Grand Rapids is working closely with Kent County Emergency Management and the National Weather Service on monitoring water levels and is prepared to activate its flood plan, Fire Chief John Lehman said.

“We are working to communicate to all parties directly impacted if flooding occurs and who have flood protection measures in place,” Lehman said. “We are well-prepared to respond if flooding occurs.” The City’s upgraded flood wall system provides protection up to 25 feet of river crest. **Grand Rapids residents** with concerns about the water levels and questions may call the City’s 311 Customer Service at 311 or 616.456.3000.

The Kent County Road Commission (KCRC) is updating information on road closures regularly on its website as well as social media accounts. “KCRC crews continue to investigate standing water and flooded areas and are placing barricades and flashers where necessary. We are assessing roads and are closing/opening them as conditions warrant. Motorists are asked to slow down and heed warnings and closures,” said Steve Warren, Managing Director of the Road Commission. “Today, our crews will continue clearing catch basins, cleaning spillways, repairing washouts and patching potholes. In these conditions, heavy grading equipment would worsen conditions on gravel roads. Therefore, crews will grade gravel roads when dryer conditions allow.” (See next page for road closures.)

Again, reminders regarding flooding:

- **Turn Around, Don’t Drown.** This National Weather Service motto reminds us of the danger of floodwaters. Just two feet of floodwaters can sweep away a car. If you see flood water in the road, or barricades/signs posted on roads, for your safety and that of first responders, please turn around and take a different route.

- Do not try to walk or swim through flood waters. River and creek waters can move fast and carry debris that can be dangerous. Six inches of fast-moving flood water can knock people off their feet.
- If you have water in your home/basement, it could be contaminated with pollutants. Handle items that come in contact with flood waters with care, either by disposing of wet items or when possible, cleaning wet items with a disinfectant.
- Keep pets away from flood waters.
- If you live in an area prone to flooding, make sure personal identification items (i.e. passports and birth certificates) are protected. Back up computer files and keep them in a safe place or store them in a cloud-based service.
- Stay tuned to alerts via TV, radio or weather apps for your phone.
- If you are in need of shelter, contact American Red Cross at 616.456.8661.

**KCRC Roads Closed Due to Water over Road (February 21, 2018 at 8 a.m., subject to change)**

Sorensen (22 Mile Rd to Sprague)  
 Grosvenor (west of Ritchie)  
 5 Mile Rd (Ashley to Montcalm)  
 Division Ave (Fonger to 11 Mile Rd)  
 Ashley (5 Mile Rd to 6 Mile Rd)  
 6 Mile Rd (Ashley to Montcalm)  
 Summit (12 Mile Rd to 13 Mile Rd)  
 Friske (12 Mile Rd to Rector)  
 Reeds Lake Blvd (East Beltline Ave to Manhattan)  
 Peach Ridge Ave (8 Mile Rd to 9 Mile Rd)  
 2 Mile Rd (Pettis to Egypt Valley)  
 Division Ave (7 Mile Rd to 8 Mile Rd)  
 Konkle (east of Jupiter)  
 McPherson (Lincoln Lake Ave to Alden Nash Ave)  
 Cherry Valley Ave (84th St to 76th St)  
 60th St (Bancroft to M-50)  
 60th St (Pratt Lake Ave to Montcalm Ave)  
 64th St (East of Pratt Lake Ave)  
 Wingeier Ave (64th St to 68th St)  
 Pratt Lake Ave (64th St to 68th St)  
 Montcalm Ave (Flat River Dr to Covered Bridge Rd)  
 Patterson Ave (28th St to Burton) right lane in both directions  
 Northbound US-131 off ramp to 54th St  
 Northbound US-131 off ramp to 28th St

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