



KENT COUNTY SHERIFF OFFICE
Lawrence A. Stelma – Sheriff

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



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 25, 2018

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State of Emergency Declaration

GRAND RAPIDS – Staff from Kent County Emergency Management and the National Weather Service were out this morning surveying the damage from the near-historic flooding over the past week. It is anticipated that the floodwaters will start to recede in the coming days. Saturday afternoon, the Kent County Board Chair cleared the way for more availability of State and Federal resources for communities when he signed a Local State of Emergency Declaration. Kent County joins numerous counties and cities across Michigan in requesting a State of Emergency.

“The Declaration is not an indication of crisis. Think of this really as a tool in our toolkit,” said Jack Stewart, Kent County Emergency Management Coordinator. “We want to be sure our communities have access to resources and potential reimbursement for municipal property damage for Kent County and our townships.” (County, State, or Federal funding is not available for those who suffer personal property damage.)

Crews continue to monitor the flooding around the clock. The LaBarge Dam (on the Thornapple River at 84th Street in Caledonia Township) was inspected yesterday by an expert who determined the integrity of the dam and embankment was safe. “I had never seen anything like this winter’s flooding here in all my life,” said Ken Yonker, Drain Commissioner of the County. “It is reassuring to know that the work done Friday helped protect homeowners and passed the inspection of a federal expert.”

Two orders remain in effect asking residents to stay away from floodwaters during this flooding situation. The Kent County Health Department issued a “no-contact advisory,” and the City of Grand Rapids has issued an order to close the Grand River within city boundaries to recreational use, including anglers and watercraft. Individuals violating this order are subject to arrest or fines. The order remains in effect until further notice.

Residents returning to their homes after the flood waters recede should be cautious. “Floodwaters carry a variety of pollutants that can make people and pets sick,” said Adam London, Administrative Health Officer for the Kent County Health Department. “If you have floodwaters that came into contact with human or pet food, throw these in the trash.”

Reminders regarding flooding:

- If you feel you are in a dangerous situation, evacuate immediately. If you need assistance leaving, call 911. Do not try to ‘ride it out’ if there is a potential for injury. If you live in a flood-prone area, have an evacuation plan. Be sure you have a preparedness kit with a flashlight, batteries, first aid supplies and cash. Put all medications and important documents where they are easily accessible if you need to leave immediately. Make sure you communicate your whereabouts with loved ones.

- **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.
- Kent County Road Commission (KCRC) reminds residents and motorists experiencing an emergency situation on roadways to call 911. KCRC will respond as directed by law enforcement. KCRC will update County road closures twice a day on their website at www.kentcountyroads.net/news/entry/flooding-information, as well as the KCRC Facebook and Twitter pages. Please slow down and heed road warnings and closures.
- 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.
- For updates on river conditions and the City's response, visit www.grandrapidsmi.gov/Home/Emergency-Announcements/Important-Weather-Update. **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.
- 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.
- County, State, or Federal funding **is not available** for those who suffer personal property damage. Residents who experience property damage should contact their insurance company immediately.

KCRC Roads Closed Due to Water over Road (February 25, 2018 at 9:15 a.m., subject to change)

Whipple (Shaner to Myers Lake)
 Ashley Ave (7 Mile Rd to M-44)
 Ashley Ave (5 Mile Rd to 6 Mile Rd)
 Joyce Dr (Cannonsburg Rd to Ramsdell Dr)
 West bound Chicago Dr on ramp to west bound I-196
 Konkle (east of Jupiter)
 Indian (off West River)
 River Point (off Indian)

Abrigador Trail (off West River)
Abrigador Trail (off West River Center)
Willow (off 4 Mile Rd)
Willow (off Canright)
Willow (off Bailey Park)
Walnut Park (off Northland Dr)
Shady Dr (off Knapp St)
Forest Ridge (off Coit Ave)
Michigan St (Twin Lakes Ave to Crahen)
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)
68th St (Wingeier to Pratt)
Jackson St (M-21 to Oberley Dr)
Vincent (92nd St to 100th St)
Thornapple River Dr (Fase St to Ada Dr)
Grand River Dr (Jackson St to Montcalm Ave)
Mall (off West River Dr)
Austerlitz (off West River Dr)
Turner Ave (West River Dr to 131 ramp) (City of Walker)
Riverbend (between Butterworth and Veterans Dr) (City of Walker)
Veterans Dr (between Maynard and Butterworth) (City of Walker)
White St (West of Franklin Ave) (City of Grandville)
Division Ave (North of RR Tracks) (City of Grandville)
Indian Mounds Drive (City of Grandville)
Sanford Ave north of Nardin (City of Grandville)
Busch Drive (City of Grandville)
Franklin Avenue north of RR Tracks (City of Grandville)
Broadway north of RR Tracks (City of Grandville)
Chicago Dr at Wyoming/Grandville City Limit (City of Grandville)
Wilson between RR Tracks and White Street (City of Grandville)

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