



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Feb. 9, 2019

Contact: Lori Latham
PH: (616) 401-1743 (mobile)
EM: lori.latham@kentcountymi.gov

KENT COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT CONSOLIDATES EMERGENCY SHELTERS AND PROVIDES RESIDENTS WITH HELPFUL TIPS AS THEY RETURN HOME

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (Feb. 9, 2019) – As power is restored throughout the County, emergency shelter consolidation efforts are being initiated. As of 1:00 p.m. today, residents can expect the following regarding shelter operations:

- Walker Fire Station will be closed today at 6:00 p.m.
- North Rockford Middle School will close tomorrow, February 10, at 12:00 p.m. Residents currently at North Rockford Middle School who still need shelter will be moved to the City Impact Center located at 288 N. Main, Cedar Springs, MI. City Impact Shelter will provide overnight shelter services. **Please note: pet boarding services will not be available at the Cedar Springs location.**
- People seeking shelter in the northern and eastern portions of Kent County should go directly to the City Impact Center in Center Springs.
- Ottawa Hills High School and Union High School are open and *not* impacted by the above consolidation plans.

The Kent County Emergency Management personnel is providing the following guidance to residents returning home.

If you are returning home and have power, please consider the following:

1. When in doubt throw it out. Food that has been exposed to temperatures greater than 40 degrees for two (2) hours or more should be destroyed. A full freezer will hold the temperature for approximately 48 hours.
2. If water pipes are frozen, do not use open flames, torches or welders to thaw them as this presents a fire risk. To safely thaw pipes, open cabinets to allow ambient heat or utilize a hair dryer on a high setting. If you are not successful, consider calling a qualified plumber.

If you are returning home and you are still without power, please consider the following:

1. To prevent frozen pipes allow water to drip from faucets served by exposed piping. See the following link for more information - <https://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies/winter-storm/frozen-pipes.html>.
2. If using a generator, make sure it is running outside your home and never use gasoline powered devices inside the home. Carbon Monoxide is created by these devices and dangerous levels can be fatal. Here is a link to other helpful information: <https://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies/power-outage/safe-generator-use.html>

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3. With generators, be sure to utilize a transfer switch to isolate power from distribution system external from your home. This will protect power company representatives that are trying to restore power in the area, from shock or electrocution.

Flooding Conditions

Lastly, the Emergency Management staff is monitoring the potential for flooding along portions of the Grand River. The primary concern at this time is localized minor flooding in the Comstock Park area; however, current flood conditions in this area are not out of the ordinary and are consistent with past conditions. The Michigan State Police Aviation Unit, with the help of a hydrologist from the National Weather Service, will be providing aerial surveillance along the Grand River from Portland to Ottawa County. Any pertinent updates following their surveillance operation will be communicated immediately.

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