



KENT COUNTY SHERIFF DEPARTMENT
Lawrence A. Stelma – Sheriff

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



For Immediate Release
April 24, 2013

Emergency Management Division Flood Update

Kent County – The Kent County local State of Emergency issued last week remains in effect for all Kent County villages, townships and cities. County officials are preparing to request an extension of that declaration for the next 30 days, as damage assessments are just getting started. The Kent County Board of Commissioners will hear the resolution requesting the extension Thursday, April 25, during their regular board meeting. This could aid Kent County in assessment, and the possible request for state or federal funding to cover costs incurred on both public and private property.

We have a total of approximately 700 residents within Kent County who were evacuated from their homes in the past week (please note this does not include residents of the city of Grand Rapids). About 150 have been allowed to return home. “Local authorities are working with families who were evacuated, to inspect property for any damage or building integrity issues that the flooding may have caused,” said Lt. Jack Stewart, Emergency Management Coordinator for Kent County. “As those individual assessments are completed, Consumers Energy will make sure it is safe to restore power, and residents will be contacted regarding when they can return.”

There are numerous health and safety issues that continue to create concern. The Kent County Health Department’s No-Contact Advisory remains in effect for the Grand River. There is dangerous debris and contamination from a number of sources. **DO NOT come into contact with the water until the advisory is lifted.** Several rescues of kayakers and canoeists have put an additional burden on first responders. Some communities may charge individuals for the cost of these rescues, and some individuals may even be issued a citation for these actions. Barricades remain posted on a number of roads throughout the county. Please follow detours. “Several motorists have driven into areas in spite of barricades,” Lt. Stewart said. “On four occasions, the vehicles did not make it through the water over the roadway, and required first responders to come to their aid. If a law enforcement officer or deputy witnesses someone driving around a barricade, the driver will be issued a ticket.”

Health and safety are still the number one priority for residents and county personnel, as we move into the next phase of this disaster. Working with the Kent County Department of Equalization, a process for damage assessment has been developed. Equalization staff will be training personnel from cities, townships and villages that were affected by flooding, as well as volunteers, to log damage estimates. It could be several weeks before an estimate of the damage is determined.

Updates and information on the flooding can be found at www.accessKent.com/News. If you require additional information (or an on-camera interview) please contact Lt. Jack Stewart, Kent County Emergency Management Coordinator, at 616.632.6255, Undersheriff Jon Hess at 616.632.6236, or PIO Lisa LaPlante at 616.632.7182.

These concerns remain:

1. If you were evacuated from your home, **DO NOT RETURN** until authorities say it is safe to return. Local officials are working to determine when it is safe for residents to return to their homes, and with Consumers Energy to restore power when safe. If your power is out and/or your gas shut down, do not attempt to turn these on yourself. Do not light matches in a house or business until it is deemed safe. More information at:

<http://www.accesskent.com/Health/EmergencyPrep/pdfs/CleaningUpFactSheet.pdf>.

2. The no-contact advisory for the Grand River throughout ALL of Kent County will remain in effect until further notice. Concerns include a fast-moving current, debris, and contamination. Our first responders have had to save several people who ventured into the water (via kayak or raft) and ended up in trouble. **Stay out of the water - period.**

3. We are continuing to ask people to **conserve water**:

- Flush the toilet less;
- Shower for a shorter time;
- Avoid doing laundry, or do larger loads at once;
- Avoid the dishwasher - hand-wash dishes instead.

4. If you have well water and the well head was submerged at any time, your water may be contaminated. It should not be used for drinking, cooking, brushing teeth, dish washing, or bathing. Water testing sample bottles are available from the Kent County Health Department and their four satellite clinics, as well as most township offices throughout Kent County. Until testing results are complete, use bottled water, **DO NOT** use your well water. People drinking or washing with water from a private well that has been flooded will risk getting sick. If you are uncertain about the integrity of your well, call a registered well driller or licensed plumber. (The Kent County Health Department recommends testing well water annually, regardless of weather conditions.)

5. Clean and disinfect businesses and homes where the flooding occurred within 24-48 hours of returning. Wear gloves when handling anything that may have been in flood water or sewage. These areas could have organisms that cause illness to humans and pets. Be careful to avoid sharp metal while cleaning, as cuts can lead to tetanus concerns. Again, more information can be found here:

<http://www.accesskent.com/Health/EmergencyPrep/pdfs/CleaningUpFactSheet.pdf>

6. Throw away any food that came in contact with floodwater or sewage, or, if in a freezer or refrigerator, throw out food with an unusual color, odor, or if the temperature is above 45° F internally.

7. Hazardous waste, such as gasoline, insect repellent, antifreeze or motor oil, can be taken to these drop-off sites:

Transfer station at North Kent Landfill

2908 10 Mile Rd NE
Rockford, MI 49341

The Kent County Road Commission

1500 Scribner NW
Grand Rapids, MI 49504

The Wyoming Waste Water Treatment Plant

2350 Ivanrest Ave SW
Grandville, MI 49418

Kentwood Public Works

5068 Breton Rd SE
Kentwood, MI 49508

More information, including hours for Saturday drop-off, can be found at:

http://www.accesskent.com/Departments/DPW/sat_collections.htm.

The American Red Cross continues to operate two shelter locations in Kent County: First Baptist Church in Lowell, and the Alpine Baptist Church in Comstock Park. These locations are open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Those needing overnight shelter should call 211. The locations also can provide residents with clean-up kits, which include a mop, gloves, broom, bucket, scrub brush and cleaning chemicals. For more information, contact the American Red Cross at 616.456.8661.

April 24, 2013 ROADS CLOSED

*****This list is subject to change as conditions change throughout the day*****

North

15 Mile from Stout to Shaner (impassable) access address 6610 from west and 6645 from east
Tisdell from 20 Mile Rd and 21 Mile Rd (impassable)
Mowry from Lehman to Tisdell (impassable)
Ashley from 7 Mile Rd to M-44

Central

Canright & Briggs
4 Mile & Briggs
Forest Ridge & Coit
West River Dr & Abridador Trail
West River Center & Abridador Trail
West River Dr & St Lawrence
West River Dr & Karcher Dr
Jupiter & Konkle
West River & Indian
Indian & River Point
Walnut Park & Northland Dr
Willow Dr & Bailey Park
Willow Dr & Canright
Shady Dr & Knapp St
Reeds Lake Blvd from Duchess to Manhattan
Reeds Lake Blvd from East Beltline to Hall
Michigan from Twin Lakes to Crahen

South

Vergennes between Parnell & Boynton
36th St between Quiggle & Cherry Lane
68th from Wingeier to Pratt Lake
64th from Pratt Lake to Montcalm
66th St from Whitneyville to McCords
108th St from Morse Lake to Moe St
2 Mile Rd from Alden Nash Ave to Murray Lake Ave
4 Mile Rd from McCabe to Boynton
Pratt Lake from 68th St to 64th St
68th St from Pratt Lake to Montcalm
Ada Dr from Headley to M-21
McPherson from Alden Nash Ave to Parnell
Jackson St from M-21 to Grand River
Grand River Dr from Jackson to Montcalm
Causeway Dr
Division north of Oberly
McCords from 68th St to 76th St

Southwest Complex

92nd St from Ivanrest to Byron Center

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