



KENT COUNTY SHERIFF DEPARTMENT
Lawrence A. Stelma – Sheriff

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



For Immediate Release
April 30, 2013

Emergency Management Division Flood Update

Kent County – The Kent County Department of Equalization has drawn up a preliminary damage report for submission to the state. With about 65% of the assessments complete, damage estimates are currently at \$4.67 million for private property (this includes homes and businesses) and more than \$1.3 million for public property. “This is an early estimate, with about 35% of the damage not yet assessed,” Matt Woolford, Kent County Director of Equalization said. “There are still flood waters in homes and businesses. It is quite likely those properties have suffered major damage due to the duration of the water being in the structures.” The Kent County Road Commission says its early estimate of damage to county roads is \$210,000. The state requested the preliminary damage estimate this morning, but it could be two to three weeks before a final calculation of the damage is determined.

Many areas within Kent County have been affected by flooding, and some well water supplies may be vulnerable. Contaminants such as bacteria and chemicals may enter the water supply if your well is flooded, damaged, or if there is a loss of pressure in your water supply piping. “Flood water contains bacteria, viruses, parasites, and chemical toxins which can make people terribly sick,” said Adam London, acting Health Officer for Kent County. “This polluted water can contaminate a well and enter the home's drinking water. If a well is contaminated, a licensed well driller or plumber can disinfect the well with chlorine.”

The Kent County Health Department (KCHD) can test well water for bacteria. “It only costs \$16 to have the KCHD test a water sample for contamination,” London said. “In any case, health departments across the country recommend testing your well water for bacteria once per year. It's a best practice to ensure that wells are providing safe drinking water.” Bottles for testing are available at the Kent County Health Department, 700 Fuller NE in Grand Rapids, KCHD satellite clinics, and township offices throughout Kent County.

Kent County Emergency Management Division remains concerned about debris, swift current and safety issues. The **No-Contact Advisory** remains in effect for the Grand River until further notice. **DO NOT come into contact with the water until the advisory is lifted.**

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 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.

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. Many residents may be using generators for power or kerosene heaters. Use these items carefully:

- Read and follow the manufacturer's operating instructions before running any equipment;
- DO NOT use a generator inside your home, garage, crawl space, or other enclosed areas. Fatal fumes can build up;
- Generators should be located in a dry area outdoors, away from open windows, vents, or doors;
- Keep a battery-powered carbon monoxide detector near the area where you are running a generator;
- Do not use heaters or generator near combustible materials.

4. Many areas within Kent County have been affected by flooding, and some of your water supplies may be vulnerable. Floods can damage drinking water wells and lead to ground water and well contamination. Contaminants such as bacteria and chemicals may enter the water supply if your well is flooded, damaged, or if there is a loss of pressure in your water supply piping. Ingesting contaminated water can cause stomach illnesses which can be especially severe in the elderly, in children and those with weakened immune systems. In the event that your well has been flooded or damaged, then there are steps that you should follow to ensure that your drinking water is safe. The purpose for this notice is to advise you if you have a well that is flooded or damaged, then do not use the well water for potable use such as cooking, drinking, food preparation, bathing and brushing teeth. Follow these steps if your well has been affected:

- Do not use the well water for drinking, food preparation, ice making, food contact, bathing or brushing your teeth.
- Use bottled water for potable use.
- After the flood water recedes, flush the well thoroughly and have the well and affected plumbing disinfected prior to use. Due to the electrical, well construction and safety issues involved in this process, contracting a registered well driller or master plumber to do this work is recommended for safe and effective treatment and repairs.
- Test your water for contaminants after all chlorine has been flushed from the water supply. Collect the water samples before using the well water for potable use such as cooking, drinking, food preparation, bathing or brushing your teeth. At a minimum you should collect bacteriologic samples. Draw water from a drinking water outlet to get two consecutive bacteriologic samples that are collected a minimum of 24 hours apart, which do not detect the presence of contamination before allowing potable use of the tap water.

Repeat testing one to two weeks later is also recommended to ensure that the source of the contamination has been eliminated. The Kent County Health Department recommends that all well owners test their water annually to ensure that the water quality is safe for consumption. Bottles for testing are available at the Kent County Health Department, 700 Fuller NE in Grand Rapids, KCHD satellite clinics, and township offices throughout Kent County.

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. 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 can be found at: http://www.accesskent.com/Departments/DPW/sat_collections.htm.

8. The local State of Emergency declaration, signed April 19, remains in effect for all Kent County villages, townships and cities, through May 24, 2013.

April 30, 2013 ROADS CLOSED

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

North

Tisdell from 20 Mile Rd and 21 Mile Rd (impassable)
Mowry from Lehman to Tisdell (impassable)

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

South

66th St from Whitneyville to McCords
108th St from Morse Lake to Moe St
4 Mile Rd from McCabe to Boynton
Causeway Dr

Southwest Complex

92nd St from Ivanrest to Byron Center