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HSEMD Holds Spring Flood Briefing

DES MOINES – Today, the Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division (HSEMD) brought together local, state and federal partners to assess and prepare for potential spring flooding.

During a briefing at the State Emergency Operations Center in Johnston, the Des Moines National Weather Service provided a spring flooding outlook to agencies that are instrumental in a flood response, including local emergency management and federal agencies.

“At this point, the outlook does not indicate we are facing the kind of flooding we had last year, but that doesn’t mean we shouldn’t prepare,” said J. Derek Hill, HSEMD Administrator. “The information the National Weather Service shared with us today highlights the importance of working with our response partners to plan for the possibility of flooding.”

According to National Weather Service personnel, the greatest risk of significant flooding is along the Mississippi River on Iowa’s eastern border, as well as portions of the Big Sioux River along Iowa’s border with South Dakota. In addition, the outlook shows the risk of flooding and flash flooding remains higher than normal through at least late spring. An updated outlook will be issued March 3. Detailed flood outlook information is available from the National Weather Service Offices servicing Iowa: NWS Des Moines www.weather.gov/desmoines; NWS La Crosse www.weather.gov/lacrosse; NWS Omaha www.weather.gov/omaha; NWS Quad Cities www.weather.gov/quadcities; NWS Sioux Falls www.weather.gov/siouxfalls.

Participants in the briefing had an opportunity to ask questions and discuss planning and response actions that could be put into place. In addition to HSEMD, other participants in the briefing included county emergency management coordinators, Iowa Departments of Transportation, Natural Resources, Public Health, Human Services, Inspections and Appeals, and Public Safety. Representatives from the Governor’s Office and the National Guard also participated. The Army Corps of Engineers had representation from their Saylorville, Omaha and Rock Island offices.

“As we do every year with the approach of spring, we are in close communication with our response partners, gathering and sharing information and planning for potential flooding threats,” said Hill. “HSEMD’s job is to ensure Iowa and Iowans are prepared, ready to respond, and have the ability to recover from flooding and all hazards.”

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