

Branstad, Reynolds, Brig. General Hill Remind Iowans of Dangers of Spring Flooding

DES MOINES – Gov. Terry E. Branstad and Lt. Gov. Kim Reynolds were joined at the administration’s weekly press conference today by Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division (HSEMD) Administrator Brig. General Derek Hill to remind Iowans of the dangers of flooding, and to brief them on the preparations being taken to minimize the effects of potential flooding.

The most recent update from the National Weather Service indicates elevated river levels in the Big Sioux basin as a result of snow melt this past week. The crest is expected on the Big Sioux River early this week, with mostly moderate flooding expected. The City of Akron, on the Big Sioux, may reach major flood stage, however no major impacts beyond agricultural flooding are expected.

“As Iowans know, with spring comes the risk of flooding,” said Branstad. “Our administration is bringing together local, state and federal partners to ask questions and discuss planning and response actions that could be put into place to prepare for potential flooding.”

During a briefing at the State Emergency Operations Center in Johnston last month, the Des Moines National Weather Service provided a spring flooding outlook to agencies that are instrumental in a flood response, including the Governor’s Office, local county emergency management, Iowa Departments of Transportation, Natural Resources, Public Health, Human Services, Inspections and Appeals, and Public Safety, the Iowa National Guard and the Army Corps of engineers.

“Based on current predictions, HSEMD is compiling an inventory of flood-fighting resources, discussing local flood concerns with the Army Corps of Engineers, developing staffing patterns and reviewing policies for resource deployment,” said Brig. General Hill. “HSEMD has been, and will continue to work with partners at all levels to remain aware of and monitor ongoing forecast information.”

Gov. Branstad has proclaimed March as Flood Awareness Month in Iowa. HSEMD, along with the Iowa Insurance Division, Department of Natural Resources, and Rebuild Iowa Office, have promoted flood awareness and safety statewide through outreach with the media and the public.

HSEMD recommends all Iowans follow these steps to ensure safety during flood season:

Step One: Build an Emergency Supply Kit

Keep a kit at home and in your car. Include:

- Water and non-perishable food for 3-5 days
- A first aid kit

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- A battery-operated flashlight and radio along with extra batteries
- Extra clothing
- Special items, such as prescription medications, baby formula and diapers
- Copies of important documents, such as birth certificates and insurance information

Step Two: Make an Emergency Plan

- Designate a family contact in case you are separated during an emergency. Choose an out-of-town friend or relative to be a contact point since phone service can be affected during a disaster.
- Develop an evacuation plan. Contact your local emergency manager to learn about evacuation routes and shelter locations.
- Plan for your pets. Most shelters don't accept pets so prepare a list of kennels, friends and family members who could care for your pet.
- Plan for special needs. Make sure elderly people or those who depend on life-sustaining health-related equipment such as a ventilator, have what they need if they must leave their home.

Step Three: Be aware of the Hazards that Can Affect Your Community

- Learn about the hazards that can affect your community.
- Pay attention to local radio and television stations for up-to-date information.
- Invest in a NOAA weather radio to receive alerts for your area 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Iowans can learn more about family preparedness at www.BeReadyIowa.org or www.Governor.Iowa.gov.

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