

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 5, 2011

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Missouri River Flooding – State Joint Information Center Update

DES MOINES – This update is provided by the Joint Information Center at the State Emergency Operations Center.

Media Conference Calls

This week's conference calls will be held on Tuesday (July 5) and Thursday (July 7) at 3:30 p.m.

- Conference Call Dial-In Number – 1-800-645-8878
- Conference Code: 003252

Same conference call information to be used on each call

NEW - Joint Preliminary Damage Assessments to be Conducted July 6

On Wednesday, July 6, teams of state, local and federal officials will begin assessing damage to homes and businesses impacted by Missouri River flooding.

Teams of representatives from the Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Small Business Administration (SBA) and county officials, will conduct assessments in six counties: Fremont, Harrison, Mills, Monona, Pottawattamie and Woodbury.

Information collected during the assessments will be used to determine if damages that have occurred thus far are sufficient to warrant a request for federal Individual Assistance Program funding. The Individual Assistance program provides funding to eligible homeowners, renters and businesses to help pay for temporary housing, home repairs and other disaster-related expenses not covered by insurance or other aid programs.

Foreclosure prevention

Disaster-impacted homeowners that feel they may begin to struggle with their mortgage payment are encouraged to call Iowa Mortgage Help at 877-622-4866 or visit www.IowaMortgageHelp.com. Iowa Mortgage Help offers free, confidential mortgage counseling for Iowa homeowners.

Governor Branstad Requests Agricultural Disaster Designation for Six Iowa Counties

On June 29 Governor Terry E. Branstad sent a letter to U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack requesting a Secretarial Disaster Designation for six Iowa counties due to damages caused by recent flooding along the Missouri River and its tributaries.

Counties included in the disaster designation request are: Fremont, Harrison, Mills, Monona, Pottawattamie and Woodbury.

Read the press release at:

<http://www.governor.iowa.gov/>

http://iowahomelandsecurity.org/news_room/press_releases.html

State Response Summary

- **Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division (HSEMD)**
 - HSEMD continues to work closely with personnel from various local, state, federal, voluntary and faith-based organizations as well as private partners in response to flooding along the Missouri River in western Iowa.
 - The State Emergency Operations Center will be staffed as warranted to respond to requests from impacted counties.
 - HSEMD has requested technical assistance from the Army Corps of Engineers for all counties along the Missouri River from Woodbury County south.

- **Iowa Commission on Volunteer Service**
 - Ongoing support of missions assigned, including access of volunteer and AmeriCorps resources.

- **Iowa Department of Public Health (DPH)**
 - Continued support in responding to public health concerns that have been raised in impacted counties.
 - The Iowa Department of Public Health has issued information on the health-related dangers of flood waters, the emotional toll flooding can have, and healthy habits that are critical during stressful times. See this and other flood-related health information at: www.idph.state.ia.us/EmergencyResponse/Flooding.aspx.

- **Iowa Finance Authority (IFA)**
 - **Foreclosure prevention;** Disaster-impacted homeowners that feel they may begin to struggle with their mortgage payment are encouraged to call Iowa Mortgage Help at **877-622-4866** or visit www.IowaMortgageHelp.com. Iowa Mortgage Help offers free, confidential mortgage counseling for Iowa homeowners.
 - IFA has developed a rental housing resource guide for individuals who are seeking long term housing due to flooding. Access the guide at: www.iowahomelandsecurity.org/disasters/disaster2011.html and select "Housing Resources."

- **Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS)**

- Continual monitoring of impacts to agriculture sector.

- **Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS)**
 - The DHS Disaster Behavioral Health Response Team (DBHRT) continues to distribute information and provide resources to flood-impacted residents who may be feeling anxious and overwhelmed. For additional information on resources provided by the DBHRT, visit <http://www.iowadbhrt.org/>.

- **Iowa National Guard (NG)**
 - National Guard liaisons are in place in all county EOCs.
 - Providing support through Guard Emergency Situational Awareness Contacts in impacted counties.

- **Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT)**
 - **NEW** - The DOT is delaying installation of the flood barrier wall along portions of the north side of U.S. 30 from the Missouri River crossing at Blair, Nebraska, to Interstate 29 near Missouri Valley.
 - The DOT has made numerous road closures. For complete information on road closures, visit www.iowadot.gov/floods/index.html or www.511ia.org, or call 5-1-1 or 1-800-288-1047.
 - Call center established for road closures: 1-866-452-851

- **Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR)**
 - Local officials have been hearing statements that DNR is classifying used sandbags full of sand as hazardous waste and they must be disposed of at a landfill. Neither statement is true. There are several options for using leftover sand. In general, we will discourage the disposal of used sandbags full of sand at landfills. It is acceptable to dispose the empty used sandbags (burlap, poly, etc.) at the landfill. There is guidance on DNR's disaster website at <http://www.iowadnr.gov/InsideDNR/SocialMediaPressRoom/DisasterAssistance.aspx>
 - People who have been evacuated because of flooding along the Missouri River will be able to camp in certain areas of Iowa State Parks without having to pay a camping fee or having to leave after 14 consecutive days. Camping spots that are not part of the reservation system will be open to people evacuated from their homes on a first come, first serve basis. Evacuees may call the DNR at 515-281-8004 to check on availability of campsites for long-term use.
 - DNR is opening Lewis and Clark State Park, near Onawa, for day use only beginning at 8 a.m. on July 1. The campground will remain closed.
 - DNR is closing state boat ramps on the Nishnabotna River due to high water levels.

- DNR is restricting boats operating on Lake Manawa to no-wake speeds. The DNR said the restriction is intended to minimize the impact of high water to public and private structures and infrastructure around the lake.
- DNR is providing technical assistance to waste water facilities, water supplies, industry, fuel stations, etc.
- Weather-related park closure information is available at <http://www.iowadnr.gov/parks/construction/weather.html>

● **Iowa Department of Corrections (DOC)**

- The DOC has had inmates assisting sandbagging efforts in Woodbury County.
- In Mills County inmates will be filling sandbags and working on the levee system.
- Inmates in Clarinda continue to fill sandbags that will remain on site at the facility until they are needed.

● **Iowa Department of Public Safety (DPS)**

- The DPS continues to provide flight imagery of the affected counties.
- The DPS continues to monitor roads, road closures and other public safety issues including assisting local law enforcement with security.

EVACUATION SUMMARY

County	Location	Population
Woodbury		0
Monona	17 Homes	39
Harrison	Modale	200-300 voluntary evacuation
Pottawattamie	143 homes in the county	unknown
Mills	June 23-mandatory evacuation notice issued for residences/businesses south of Gaston Ave. and west of I-29.	unknown
Fremont	Mandatory evacuation in effect in the South Hamburg area – between Hamburg and the Missouri River (south end of City of Hamburg) June 22-Fremont County issued evacuation orders for all areas of the county west of I-29 from the north county line to the south county line.	300+ unknown

SHELTER SUMMARY – IOWA SHELTERS

Presently, there are no shelters open in Iowa. Numerous shelters remain on standby and are ready to receive residents if needed.

County updates

- **Woodbury**
 - The county is working with the Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) regarding repairs to the ACOE road built earlier this month to access a sandbagged collector well head.
 - Inmates are providing sandbagging assistance.
 - <http://www.woodburyiowa.com/>

- **Monona**
 - No new information to report.
 - <http://www.mononacountypublichealth.org/>

- **Harrison**
 - No new information to report.
 - <http://www.harrisoncountya.org/>

- **Pottawattamie**
 - The ACOE is continuing to work with the City of Council Bluffs to ensure stability of the levees.
 - The City of Council Bluffs issued an Alert Level One late June 22, urging citizens to make preparations to leave the area should the need arise.
 - <http://www.pottcounty.com/departments-services/emergency-management/flooding.php>

- **Mills**
 - The ACOE is working on identified boil areas on the county's levee structures.
 - Mills County issued a mandatory evacuation order on June 23 for citizens living west of I-29 from Gaston Ave. south to the Fremont County line. County officials said there is no imminent threat to the levee system, however, rural roads that would have to be used in an evacuation in the area are becoming impassable due to the rise in groundwater.
 - <http://www.millscoia.us/flood2011.htm>

- **Fremont**
 - The ACOE continues work on the Hamburg levee.
 - AmeriCorps volunteers began patrol of the Hamburg levee on July 1.
 - On June 22 Fremont County issued evacuation orders for all areas of the county west of Interstate 29 from the north county line to the south county line. The evacuation order was the result of deteriorating levees and additional expected releases from Gavins Point.
 - <http://www.co.fremont.ia.us/fremontcoemergencymanagement.htm>
 - <http://www.facebook.com/pages/2011-Fremont-County-IA-Flood-Support/232438310105233>

Donations and Volunteering

- **Donations of items such as clothing, food, furniture, etc, are NOT needed at this time.** Unsolicited donations cause additional staffing and storage problems that local officials do not have the resources to manage.
- **If you want to help, cash is best.** It doesn't need to be sorted, stored or distributed, and cash allows the receiving voluntary agency to direct the donation to the most urgent needs. To donate cash, visit www.aidmatrixnetwork.org/CashDonations/Default2.aspx?ST=Iowa.
- If you wish to make a donation to a local organization, information on these funds can be found on the websites listed in the "County Updates" section of this release.
- Those wishing to volunteer in a disaster-related capacity may sign up to do so at www.volunteeriowa.org.

Scams

Iowans along the Missouri River should be aware of the potential for disaster-related scams and price gouging. For information, visit the Iowa Attorney General's website at: www.IowaAttorneyGeneral.gov.

For More Information

- For more information, please visit www.IowaHomelandSecurity.org.
- <https://governor.Iowa.gov/news/missouri-river-flooding>.