

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 13, 2011

Contact: State Joint Information Center
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Contact: Governor's Office
515-725-3518

Missouri River Flooding – Iowa 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

Beginning this week, the media conference call will be held once per week. The next call will be held today, July 13 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.

NEWS AND UPDATES

Lieutenant Governor and HSEMD Chief of Operations to Visit Western Iowa Tomorrow

NEW – Lt. Gov. Kim Reynolds and Homeland Security and Emergency Management (HSEMD) Chief of Operations Joyce Flinn will visit the flood affected communities of Onawa and Council Bluffs on **Thursday, July 14, 2011**. The following events are open to the media:

- **12:30 p.m.** Lt. Gov. Reynolds and HSEMD Chief of Operations Joyce Flinn hold press conference regarding Missouri River flooding
DOT Rest area; Interstate 29 at mile marker 110 - Onawa, IA
- **2:50 p.m.** Lt. Gov. Reynolds and HSEMD Chief of Operations Joyce Flinn tour Playland Park Levee
I-480 and North 41st Street - Council Bluffs, IA
- **4 p.m.** Lt. Gov. Reynolds and HSEMD Chief of Operations Joyce Flinn hold press conference regarding Missouri River flooding
Council Bluffs City Council Chambers, 209 Pearl Street - Council Bluffs, IA

Bleach in Basements

NEW – The Iowa Department of Public Health has received questions about leaving bleach in basements that may flood. Current rumors incorrectly assume that by leaving open containers of bleach or bleach tablets used in swimming pools in their basements, the chemicals will mix with flood water and prevent mold. This is not true.

Although bleach can be effective in cleaning and sanitizing basements after flood waters recede, there is no research to show that leaving open containers or tablets of bleach in basements prior to flooding is effective in preventing mold growth. In fact, leaving bleach out in the open, especially in large quantities, could negatively affect the health of you and your family. To learn more, visit <http://www.idph.state.ia.us/EmergencyResponse/Flooding.aspx>.

Heat, Storms Affecting Iowa This Week

NEW – National Weather Service forecasts indicate high temperatures and a potential for severe storms and localized heavy rain during the week. The potentially significant amount of rain could worsen existing flooding problems in western Iowa. Residents in this area should stay aware of weather conditions and be prepared to take precautionary measures, including evacuating, if necessary. High temperatures are also a concern for many people engaged in flood response efforts. For a list of ways to protect your health in high temperatures and humidity, view the Iowa Department of Public Health's press release at <http://www.idph.state.ia.us/IdphNews/Reader.aspx?id=3024FDD6-D9F3-4751-853C-05A42EA8D457>. For locations of cooling stations in your area, contact local officials.

Foreclosure prevention

NEW – Disaster-impacted homeowners that feel they may begin to struggle with their mortgage payment are encouraged to call Iowa Mortgage Help. Iowa Mortgage Help is a free, confidential mortgage counseling service for Iowa homeowners. Iowa Mortgage Help does not offer direct financial assistance. For more information, call 877-622-4866 (if calling from Iowa) or 515-331-8081 (if calling from outside of Iowa), or visit the website at www.IowaMortgageHelp.com.

Iowa Receives Agricultural Disaster Designation for Six Counties

In response to Gov. Branstad's June 28 request, U.S.D.A. Secretary of Agriculture, Tom Vilsack has signed an agricultural disaster designation on July 8, providing agricultural assistance for six Iowa counties. The designated counties are: Woodbury, Monona, Harrison, Pottawattamie, Mills and Fremont. This designation will also include the contiguous counties of Cass, Cherokee, Crawford, Ida, Montgomery, Page, Plymouth and Shelby counties.

Sandbag Disposal

Rumors that the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is classifying used, full sandbags as hazardous waste are false. The DNR generally encourages Iowans to reuse the sand and sandbags. For more information, including ways to reuse sandbags, visit the DNR's website at <http://www.iowadnr.gov/InsideDNR/SocialMediaPressRoom/DisasterAssistance.aspx>

SHELTER SUMMARY – IOWA SHELTERS

The Red Cross shelter at the Iowa School for the Deaf in Council Bluffs was open overnight for one resident. Numerous shelters remain on standby and are ready to receive residents if needed.

STATE RESPONSE SUMMARY

- **Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division (HSEMD)**
 - HSEMD, along with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Small Business Administration (SBA) and county officials conducted preliminary damage assessments on July 6 in Woodbury, Monona, Harrison, Pottawattamie, Mills and Fremont counties. Information collected during the assessments is being evaluated and will be used to determine if damages that have occurred thus far are sufficient to warrant a request for federal Individual Assistance Program funding.

- HSEMD Operations staff visited in Fremont, Mills and Pottawattamie counties with the emergency management coordinators, local officials and impacted citizens. Visits to Harrison, Monona and Woodbury counties will be planned.
- 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 to volunteer and AmeriCorps resources.

- **Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS)**
 - The DHS Disaster Behavioral Health Response Team (DBHRT) was invited to and will be attending town meetings in Missouri Valley and Hamburg. The DBHRT continues to provide assistance in declared counties as requested. For additional information on resources provided by the DBHRT, visit <http://www.iowadbhrt.org/>.
 - DHS is currently drafting agreements with facilities for volunteer housing assistance.

- **Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR)**
 - 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 move after 14 consecutive days. Evacuees may call the DNR at 515-281-8004 to check on availability of campsites for long-term use.
 - 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)**
 - Ongoing support of missions assigned. Continued coordination of inmate crews to assist with sandbagging operations as requested. Currently all missions have been fulfilled.

- **Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT)**
 - 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.

- **Iowa Department of Public Safety (DPS)**
 - The DPS continues to provide aerial photography of impacts to affected counties. Areas of focus include surveys of Highway 175 Bridge and anhydrous tanks in support of DOT and IDALS.

- The DPS continues to monitor roads, road closures and other public safety issues.
- **Iowa National Guard (NG)**
 - National Guard is performing levee patrol duties in Mills and Pottawattamie counties.
 - National Guard liaisons are in place in county EOCs.
 - Providing support through Guard Emergency Situational Awareness Contacts in impacted counties.
- **Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS)**
 - Continual monitoring of impacts to agriculture sector.
 - IDALS is drafting a memorandum of understanding with Pottawattamie County in the event that further pet sheltering is needed.
- **Iowa Department of Public Health (DPH)**
 - Continued support in responding to public health concerns that have been raised in impacted counties.
 - Continual monitoring of the situation with this week's added issue of high heat indices.
 - The Iowa Department of Public Health has posted flood-related health information at: www.idph.state.ia.us/EmergencyResponse/Flooding.aspx.
- **Iowa Finance Authority (IFA)**
 - **Foreclosure prevention counseling:** Disaster-impacted homeowners that feel they may begin to struggle with their mortgage payment are encouraged to call Iowa Mortgage Help for free, confidential mortgage counseling. Iowa Mortgage Help does not offer direct financial assistance. For more information, call 877-622-4866 (if calling from Iowa) or 515-331-8081 (if calling from outside of Iowa), or visit the website at www.IowaMortgageHelp.com.
 - 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 State University Extension**
 - ISU Extension has compiled a list of resources on dealing with stress, flood clean up, financial concerns, tips for businesses, crops, and livestock to help Iowans prepare for and recover from floods. Access these resources at: <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/topic/recovering-disasters>.
 - County Extension personnel in flood-impacted counties are responding to concerns.
 - ISU Extension has the Iowa Concern Hotline, 800-447-1985, that Iowans can call for help and referrals for dealing with stress, crisis and loss in times of disaster.

COUNTY UPDATES

- **Fremont**
 - Water has stabilized at the breach near Percival. Current elevation is 912’.
 - The city of Hamburg will take over the leases for the pumps at the levee.
 - AmeriCorps volunteers continue to provide levee monitoring in Hamburg.
 - <http://www.co.fremont.ia.us/fremontcoemergencymanagement.htm>
 - <http://www.facebook.com/pages/2011-Fremont-County-IA-Flood-Support/232438310105233>

- **Harrison**
 - DOT has completed the work on Highway 30 installing the TrapBag System. The road is now open.
 - <http://www.harrisoncountya.org/>

- **Mills**
 - The ACOE is providing direct assistance for two areas requiring seepage berms.
 - Work on Levee 611 – 614 at stations 760 and 790 should be completed on July 13, 2011.
 - <http://www.millscoia.us/flood2011.htm>

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

- **Pottawattamie**
 - There will be a final walkthrough of ACOE work on the the Council Bluffs levees on July 13.
 - <http://www.pottcounty.com/departments-services/emergency-management/flooding.php>

- **Woodbury**
 - Levee patrol duties are being performed by the Sioux City Public Works Department and the Sioux City Police Department.
 - The Army Corps of Engineers continues to provide technical assistance as requested.
 - <http://www.woodburyiowa.com/>

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=lowa.
- 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>.