



News Release

WISCONSIN EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Joint Force Headquarters ▪ 2400 Wright Street ▪ Madison WI ▪ 53704

DATE: September 28, 2010
12:20 p.m.

TO: Governor Jim Doyle

FROM: Mike Hinman
WEM Administrator

SUBJECT: Situation Report #10 on Severe Weather/Flooding

Wisconsin Emergency Management (WEM) is currently in Level 4 status due to the flooding in the State. A Duty Officer and Senior Duty Officer are monitoring the events and responding to inquiries and requests for support from county emergency management departments and state agencies. A State of Emergency remains in effect for Buffalo, Jackson, Columbia, Clark, Trempealeau, Marathon, Portage and Wood Counties.

Below is the latest update:

Columbia County: County had originally encouraged the evacuation of 100 homes in the Blackhawk area. Around two dozen homes were not evacuated. Many of the homes in the Blackhawk area will not be directly affected by the water, but all are affected by the closure of Blackhawk Road. Blackhawk Road will remain closed until the water drops and officials can get into the area to inspect its condition.

Levee Road remains closed from Highway 33 to County Highway T in Sauk County.

There is high water on County Highways O, P, U and V, and many other small town roads are affected with closures to all but local traffic. A bridge is closed on County Highway VJ, with water over the top.

Press Release from WI Department of Natural Resources:

START***

SUBJECT: Portage Levee
CONDITION IMPROVING, WATER LEVELS EXPECTED TO DROP

PORTAGE – Conditions have stabilized along the 14-mile century-old Caledonia-Lewiston here and water levels on the Wisconsin River are now expected to drop rapidly.

“There was no change overnight along any of our three work sections (Caledonia, Lewiston and Blackhawk) as far as discovering new problem areas of boils (water bubbling through the levee) or seepage,” said DNR Incident Commander Aaron Young.

The Blackhawk section, which has been a cause of major concern over the last two days, “is still eroding, but at a slower pace,” said Young.

Ironically, authorities are predicting a drop in the Wisconsin River’s water level of up to three feet in the next 24 hours and “this could cause sloughing (erosion) on the river side of the levee,” said DNR public affairs manager Greg Matthews.

“We would prefer that the river drop more gradually, at a lower rate per day to avoid further damage to an already saturated structure. Nevertheless, we will try to handle whatever nature deals us,” he added.

The Wisconsin River peaked at around 20.6 feet yesterday and had been expected to maintain that level for several days before starting to drop. But reports of the rate of water passing through upstream dams seem to indicate that the river will drop quickly.

DNR’s Incident Management Team will continue to maintain surveillance along the 14-mile long levee as long as needed, according to Young.

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Mississippi River Counties: Counties along the Mississippi River are experiencing minor to moderate flooding as a result of runoff from last week's rain. According to the National Weather Service, the levels are expected to remain high throughout the week and begin dropping towards the weekend. Wisconsin Emergency Management has received no requests for assistance from the counties.

Adams County: Flow rates at Castle Rock and Petenwell have decreased. Water is receding at locations in the southern part of Adams County. County Emergency Management is working with town chairs/clerks on damage estimates. Adams County Emergency Management sent out a press release yesterday asking residents to report any major or minor damages to their town officials or the Emergency Management team.

Iowa County: The water has risen to within 5 feet of covering Helena Road west of Arena. At this time, town officials and residents continue to monitor the situation and are still confident that they are OK. There are some small summer cabins north of Arena that are inaccessible at this time and are not visible from where the road becomes impassable due to water.

Up to this point, structure damages have been kept to the bare minimum because of the sandbagging. Approximately 5 houses are sandbagged in Avoca. Many of the homes along the Avoca Lake front are not primary residences.

Jackson County: Local officials will begin conducting damage assessments. Flooded roads had prevented assessments in rural areas.

Lincoln County: Local officials are completing assessments of local roads today.

Marathon County: Continues to gather assessment information and plans to submit a damage assessment to the state later today.

Portage County: Portage County officials continue with damage assessments. However, several county and town roads remain closed. Water has receded in most places.

Trempealeau County: Arcadia closed their EOC at the town hall yesterday. Damage assessments continue.

Wood County: Local officials will do damage assessments in Wisconsin Rapids today. Assessment of county roads will begin tomorrow. The 2nd Avenue area around the state office building remains closed.

National Weather Service: Flood warnings remain in effect for Mississippi River counties and Columbia County. The dry weather should continue for the rest of the week.

Road Update: For current road conditions, dial 511 or visit <http://www.511wi.gov>