



## NEWS RELEASE

**NEBRASKA EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY (NEMA) – 1300 MILITARY ROAD – LINCOLN, NE 68508-1090  
Joint Information Center (JIC)**

June 3, 2011, 3:30 p.m. CDT

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### **Nebraska JIC Daily Update**

*\*All times are CDT, unless otherwise noted\**

**(Lincoln, Neb.)** – “We are taking the projected flooding in the Missouri and Platte Rivers very seriously,” said Major General Judd Lyons at a news conference Friday, morning. As adjutant general for the Nebraska Military, General Lyons serves as director of Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA). “We are taking proactive steps to help the citizens of Nebraska deal with situations brought on by this flooding.”

NEMA is working closely with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and other state, local and federal agencies to develop a number of flood response plans, General Lyons said. Some of the proactive steps being taken include:

- Working with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to identify and build levees;
- Helping local emergency managers to procure sandbags;
- Identifying critical infrastructure (bridges, roads, power plants, utilities) that will be affected by the flooding and developing strategies to protect them;
- Contacting emergency managers daily in affected counties.

General Lyons said, “Even though you might not be experiencing flooding right now, due to the expected levels of water that are projected to flow through these two rivers, that doesn’t mean you won’t be affected in the weeks and months to come. Any proactive steps you can take now could help you tremendously down the road.

Officials urged citizens of Nebraska to pay particular attention to instructions given to them by state and local emergency management officials.

“Due to the high volumes of water entering the Missouri and Platte Rivers, it will be some time before the waters can recede. You need to prepare to be affected for weeks and months,” said Al Berndt, assistant director of NEMA. “We need the citizens of Nebraska to be proactive and assess their personal situations and take whatever proactive measures they can.”

Both Rivers are rising as we speak,” said Brian Dunnigan, director of the Nebraska Natural Resources District. “The next two or two and a half weeks are critical. If you have experienced flooding in the past along the Missouri or Platte you can expect to experience flooding this year.”

*\* New Items are in Red\**

A collection of flood-related resources and links to information can be found on the NEMA website at [www.nema.nebraska.gov](http://www.nema.nebraska.gov)

### **State Response**

Nebraska Emergency Management is working with its State partners within the State Emergency Operations Center (EOC). Nebraska and Iowa are working hand in hand with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to ensure a safe response to the continual flooding threat. The EOC is monitoring both the Platte and Missouri rivers and encourages residents to remain vigilant, stay tuned to local news and follow directions from local and state officials if asked to evacuate the area.

Survey Crews are currently assessing the affected areas along the Platte River to determine what effects the water may have on homes, businesses, roads, bridges and other critical infrastructure.

In conjunction with the state emergency, several counties have declared disasters; Knox, Dakota, Burt, Washington, Douglas, Sarpy, Cass, and Lincoln counties.

**The Coast Guard issued a restriction on recreational boats on the Missouri River along the Nebraska-Iowa border effective at 5 p.m. Thursday.**

### **Flood Hotline**

A Nebraska Emergency Management Agency public information phone line, (855) 211-2453 or (855) 211-2454, will be staffed from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily, including weekends, until further notice. The hotline has been busy, please use patience when calling.

### **Weather**

For updated weather information weather: [www.noaa.gov](http://www.noaa.gov) and [www.weather.com](http://www.weather.com)

### **Road Information**

**US- 30 Closed** - North Platte to Maxwell due to water over the road near mile marker 183.

North Platte to North Platte Airport is OPEN – the closure is East of the airport. Authorized Vehicles Only. No through traffic permitted (This is being enforced!) This closure will remain until the North Platte River Subsides.

**N-92 Closed** - Tryon to Arthur due to water over the road near mile markers 193-194, near Snyder Hill. Travel over a flooded roadway is not advised. Local traffic only. Use alternate route. This closure will remain until water in this watershed area subsides.

For the most current road information visit the Nebraska Department of Roads website at [www.511nebraska.gov](http://www.511nebraska.gov). Citizens are encouraged to find alternate routes and not attempt to drive over any road that is covered with flood waters. Do not remove road closure barricades. Barricades are in place for your safety.

### **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers**

Joint Information Center – (402) 996-3877 [www.nwo.usace.army.mil](http://www.nwo.usace.army.mil) email: MRJIC@usace.mil

## **Federal Emergency Management Agency**

If you are not sure if you are in flood prone area, check out the FEMA map service center <http://msc.fema.gov>

**Flood insurance claims** -- According to a FEMA official, flood insurance is available and policy claims will be covered regardless of how a flood is caused.

## **Local Health Departments**

Every county in Nebraska is served by a local health department. Here's a link to a listing of health departments and the counties they serve: [www.dhhs.ne.gov/puh/oph/lhd.htm](http://www.dhhs.ne.gov/puh/oph/lhd.htm) Call if you need local health information.

## **Animal Health**

Flood waters displace wild animals as well as humans. The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) warns people to be watchful for wild animals. The wildlife may be acting abnormally due to the stress of displacement. As animals interact and compete for the same resources, diseases such as rabies have an increased chance of transmission. DHHS always recommends avoiding direct contact with wild animals; however, under these circumstances they may be in unexpected places and act more aggressively.

Flood waters may also displace reptiles such as snakes and turtles. Information on reptiles indigenous to Nebraska can be found at <http://snr.unl.edu/herpneb/>

## **Evacuations**

Be safe listen to public officials. Please evacuate to a safer location if told to do so.

**Washington/Burt County:** Mandatory evacuations have been ordered. Some voluntary

**Richardson County:** Some Voluntary North of Rulo

**Nemaha County:** Voluntary leaving low land

**Cass County:** Lake Waconda 40-110 homes

**Sarpy County:** Iske and Elbow Bend some voluntarily, 6-12 homes all voluntary leaving

**Dixon County:** Potential evacuations of large portions of the town of Newcastle and Ponca.

**Dakota County:** No mandatory evacuations. Some voluntarily and one shelter has been opened

**Lincoln County:** Some voluntary

## **Shelters – Red Cross**

The Red Cross has opened a shelter at the Ft. Calhoun High School, 1506 Lincoln St., Fort Calhoun. It will be open today at noon and will remain open until further notice. For the most current information check [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org) or call 1-800-RedCross to find the chapter serving your area.

**South Sioux City Shelter** – has opened at 3625 G St. in the South Sioux City Middle School

Or call 211 (human services helpline) to find out what resources are available; or visit the United Way of Midlands 211 website at <http://www.ne211.org> an additional number is (402) 444-6666.

## **Water Testing**

Residents outside the Lincoln area can contact the Central District Health Department in Grand Island to test well water for Coliform bacteria in the majority of public and private wells statewide. Call (308) 385-5175 ext 160 for more information.

Homeowners can also order kits from the Nebraska Public Health Environmental Laboratory by calling (402) 471-3935 and request a Colilert test kit (\$10) which can test for Coliform and E.coli. Homeowners need to collect the sample and return it to the lab within 30 hours of sample collection. Remember, if your drinking water looks, tastes, or smells odd...test it. Even if water has tested okay, it should be retested later to ensure bacteria hasn't permeated the well.

### **Flood Clean-Up Scams**

Homeowners and businesses that have experienced flooding are asked to remain vigilant when it comes to hiring services or purchasing goods. For tips on avoiding home repair scams, please visit the Nebraska Better Business Bureau's website at [www.nebraska.bbb.org](http://www.nebraska.bbb.org) or the Attorney General's website at [www.ago.ne.gov](http://www.ago.ne.gov). If you feel you have been a victim of a clean-up or home improvement scam, contact the Attorney General's Consumer Protection Division at (800) 727-6432.

### **Insurance**

The Nebraska Department of Insurance has flood insurance claim guides available on its website at [www.doi.ne.gov](http://www.doi.ne.gov). Insurance-related questions can be directed to the Department's Consumer Affairs Division Monday-through-Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., by calling (877) 564-7323.

### **Fire Safety**

The State Fire Marshal reminds citizens that if your power is out, and you need to use a generator to make sure your generator has been tested /approved and is in proper working order. Try not to overload circuits, and continue to be cautious when there's a threat of lightning.

### **Additional Resources**

#### **Phone Numbers**

Nebraska Flooding Hotline: Toll Free (855) 211-2453 or (855) 211-2452 8 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Nebraska Department of Insurance (877) 564-7323

Iowa Flooding Response (515) 725-3231

South Dakota (605) 773-3132 or toll free at (877) 579-0015

US Army Corps of Engineers – Information Center (402) 996-3877

#### **Web Sites**

Nebraska Emergency Management Agency website [www.nema.nebraska.gov](http://www.nema.nebraska.gov)

The Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services' website has a comprehensive listing of flood resources at: <http://www.dhhs.ne.gov/SevereStorms/>

Weather: [www.noaa.gov](http://www.noaa.gov) and [www.weather.com](http://www.weather.com)

River Levels: <http://water.weather.gov/ahps/>

NEMA on Face book: <http://www.facebook.com/nema.page>

Nebraska Department of Roads [www.511nebraska.gov](http://www.511nebraska.gov).

### **County Updates:**

#### **Cass County Emergency Management**

Voluntary evacuations continue at Lake WaConDa. A public meeting of WaConDa residents is scheduled for Sunday morning. Two pumps arrived Thursday. Engineers are being consulted to determine feasibility of

raising the height of the levee. Plattsmouth is sandbagging the water treatment plant and sewer plant and is nearing completion to three feet above the 1993 levels.

**Sarpy Emergency Management** Haworth Park and Marina is affected and remains closed. City of Bellevue EMA received 5,000 sandbags on Thursday. Gifford Farm is self evacuating to the Sarpy County fairgrounds. Burlington Northern is shutting down the rail line along the Missouri River south through Bellevue and Sarpy County.

### **Region 22 Emergency Management**

The Corps of Engineers projects that within the next six to nine days there will be 12,000 cubic feet per second passing through the Scottsbluff, Gering, Terrytown area. This translates into imminent flooding of the low lying areas because of the river rising two to three feet above its current level.

There is a high potential for evacuation in Terrytown and Gering. Scottsbluff wants its residents to watch for potential surface water flooding of their residences in the Westmoor and Hunt's Acres areas, and businesses south of the South Beltline Highway.

All communities involved are currently calling special meetings to discuss the river conditions. Maps showing the potential flood areas are available at the City Halls and Libraries for Scottsbluff and Gering, at the Terrytown City Offices, and Region 22 Emergency Management at 1801 Avenue B.

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