

EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTRE (EOC)



INFORMATION RELEASE

Tuesday, April 21, 2020

EOC Update: Prepare Now for Spring Freshet

Emergency Preparedness, Response and Recovery

Spring freshet typically occurs in May and it is important for property owners to prepare now by understanding the risks in advance. In British Columbia, property owners are responsible for taking the necessary steps on their property to protect their home and property from flooding, while government emergency programs focus on broader flood response measures.

Annual snowmelt is beginning throughout the South Okanagan and Similkameen. When temperatures rise above 20 degrees Celsius for more than a few days, freshet or spring melt usually begins. Above average snowpacks in various isolated areas within the RDOS indicate spring runoff could be vigorous, and may last well into June. Freshet can become a problem when winter snowpacks melt rapidly, overwhelming stream channels and creating floods. Low lying areas may have high levels of groundwater that could contribute to overland groundwater movement. Spring freshet can also destabilize soil and rock causing mudslides, landslides and rockslides. These conditions can be unpredictable and occur with little or no warning.

Now is the time to prepare if you live in vulnerable areas on, or near floodplains, or if you've experienced spring flooding previously. Assessing your property and buildings for potential drainage issues, is an important proactive step you can take before the snowmelt begins.

Having emergency plans in place in the event of any emergency is extremely beneficial. Pre-planning to ensure the needs of all family members are considered is key. Taking steps to reduce potential damage to your home or property from the impacts of flooding, wildfires or other events will take away some of the stress. In addition, this is also the time to make plans to safely relocate pets or livestock.

Please visit the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen Emergency Operations Centre (RDOS EOC) website for information updates, resource links and preparedness tips. You can also find updated sand and sandbagging locations and information about how you can prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Sandbagging Information and COVID-19 Precautions:

http://www.rdosmaps.bc.ca/min_bylaws/NewAndEvents/Press_Releases/2020/20200403_1630_EOC_Sandbagging_COVID19_Info_Release.pdf

Sandbag Location Map:

<http://rdos.maps.arcgis.com/apps/opdashboard/index.html#/d20df799971f448aa330effcc38bd0fd>

Please see the links below for current information about freshet conditions in the region.

For more information, please visit <http://emergency.rdos.bc.ca> or call 250-490-4225

Issued by Director of RDOS EOC

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Freshet Conditions

Current snowpack conditions and water supply: [River Forecast Centre](#)

Provincial advisories and flood information: [EmergencyInfoBC](#) | Twitter: [@EmergencyInfoBC](#)

Preparing for floods: [PreparedBC](#) | Twitter: [@PreparedBC](#)

Definitions You Should Know:

- **Evacuation Order:** You are at risk. Leave the area immediately. Local Police or RCMP enforce Evacuation Orders.
- **Evacuation Alert:** Be ready to leave on short notice. If you leave before or during this alert, it's called a Voluntary Evacuation.
- **Evacuation Rescind:** All is currently safe and you can return home. Be prepared for other possible Evacuation Alerts or Orders.
- **Flood Warning:** River levels have exceeded bankfull or will exceed bankfull imminently. Flooding of areas adjacent to affected rivers is expected.
- **Flood Watch:** River levels are rising and will approach or may exceed bankfull. Flooding of areas adjacent to affected rivers may occur.
- **High Streamflow Advisory:** River levels are rising or expected to rise rapidly. No major flooding is expected. Minor flooding in low-lying areas is possible.

Follow the RDOS EOC on Social Media:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/RegionalDistrictOfOkanaganSimilkameen/>

Twitter: [@EmergMgtRDOS](#)

Emergency Preparedness Week – May 3-9, 2020

Emergency Preparedness Week (EP Week) takes place each year during the first full week of May. EP Week is an opportunity to encourage Canadians to take concrete actions to be better prepared to protect themselves and their families during emergencies. Emergencies happen. Depending on their severity, your household could be on its own for several days while officials help those who need it most.

Coping with the stress of being out of your home during an Evacuation Order is easier if you have a plan.

- **Prepare** and practice your family and business emergency plan
- **Prepare** a 72-hour emergency kit for your family and vehicle

PreparedBC

Please visit the link below for tips on how to get prepared for an emergency:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/preparedbc>

If you have not done so already, download the COVID-App for information about COVID including statistics, symptom self-check, resources, and updates: <https://www.thrive.health/canada-covid19-app>

CivicReady® Mass Notification System – sign up for routine and emergency notifications: <https://emergency.rdos.bc.ca/civic-ready/>

For more information, please visit <http://emergency.rdos.bc.ca> or call 250-490-4225

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