



**May 17, 2021**  
**Public Safety Notice**

**GNWT's Response to**  
**Flooding in the Dehcho, South Slave and Sahtu**

The Government of the Northwest Territories is actively working through the Regional Emergency Management Organizations (REMO) in affected communities to ensure that the response to flooding is coordinated, timely and responsive to the rapidly evolving situation. GNWT departments are working to provide a variety of assistance and support according to their respective mandates.

**From the Department of Municipal and Community Affairs (MACA):**

**Fort Simpson:**

- As of May 16, water receded and residents were being allowed on the island.
- The evacuation centre in Fort Smith, and most recently Hay River, continue to support Fort Simpson evacuees.
- The Village of Fort Simpson is posting updates on their Facebook page.
- Five evacuation flights have been provided from Fort Simpson to date, and the last flight went to Hay River Saturday evening with 26 evacuees on board.
- Approximately 133 Fort Simpson residents have been evacuated in total.
- On Saturday, May 15<sup>th</sup>, 11,000 pounds of groceries was flown to Fort Simpson by the GNWT. 10,000 pounds (200 food hampers) from the GNWT and an additional 1000 pounds of donated food.
- The GNWT is also aware of additional food donations made and flown to Fort Simpson through community and volunteer donations. This food has been made available to Fort Simpson evacuees through the Regional Emergency Management Organization (EMO) and community volunteers.
- The overall response has been overwhelming and appreciated.
- At this time the community of Fort Smith has indicated their ability to accept most donations has reached capacity.
- The Village is still accepting 'large' donations of cleaning supplies. Cash donations can be made through United Way NWT at: <https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/united-way-nwt/>

**Jean Marie River:**

- The evacuation centre in Fort Providence continues to support evacuees from Jean Marie River.
- Approximately 34 residents of Jean Marie River had been evacuated to Fort Providence as of Friday, May 14, 2021. The EMO is assessing the need for additional supports for evacuees. The GNWT is making preparations for an initial assessment of damaged buildings in the community.

**Hay River, and K'atl'odeeche First Nation:**

- As of May 10, the evacuation order has been lifted for Vale Island and West Channel.
- The Town of Hay River is conducting initial assessments of damages to public infrastructure that occurred during breakup/flooding.
- The Town will be coordinating with MACA.

**Tulita:**

- The local EMO has begun flood watch in the community.
- Community members should be starting to prepare in the event that an evacuation is necessary.
- ENR has completed assessments in the community to prevent spills should there be flooding.

**Fort Good Hope:**

- The local EMO has begun flood watch in the community.
- Community members should be starting to prepare in the event that an evacuation is necessary.
- Sahtu EMO in partnership with FGH is arranging a flight survey of flood and ice jamming conditions in the region.

**Other:**

Risk is also ELEVATED in the following communities:

- Aklavik
- Fort McPherson

**From the Department of Infrastructure (INF):**

- INF's Marine Transportation Division is getting the MV Lafferty in the water. The ferry opened at 4p.m. today.
- Three sea cans were brought into Jean Marie River for storage.
- INF's electrical inspections team and facilities staff are currently in Fort Simpson, assessing damage to buildings and homes.
- Fort Simpson Airport has been delivering wood to residents camping in the tenting area.
- Airport staff have been helping offloading supply planes when they come in or escorting crews picking up the supplies airside.
- INF worked with a local contractor to grade the access road in Jean Marie River. The road is operational.
- Employees from INF's Fuel Services Division worked with an electrical contractor to complete repairs in Jean Marie River's Fuel Services Division Oil Handling & Dispensing

Facility. They repaired a variety of electrical components that had been submerged in water. The facility is now operational and they are continuing to monitor the situation.

- INF conducted an electrical inspection in Jean Marie River to assess the flood damage to buildings and homes. A list was created to notify NTPC what buildings and homes can and cannot have their power restored.
- Once power is restored to Jean Marie River, INF's gas/boiler inspectors will assess the damage to commercial boilers and pressure vessels and gas systems to ensure they are safe to operate.

**From the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (ENR):**

- ENR onsite at Fort Simpson has established a community outreach hub for any displaced community members.
- Four members of ENR are currently coordinating the efforts, with an estimated 100 affected community members occupying the hub.
- At this time there is no reported crime, and moral in the community is assessed as high. Community members are working together to provide the necessities to each other while relief efforts are ongoing.
- These are the current amenities available:
  - Showers
  - Washrooms
  - Potable Water
  - Food (From community donations)
- Fort Simpson infrastructure is initially assessed to be in good order, with only a small number of exceptions.
- Currently there are efforts to restore power to the community. There is a concern of fuel contamination on the roadways, and fumes in the air, however no source has been identified at this time.

**From the COVID Secretariat:**

- Isolation centres are providing accommodations to anyone who may be in self isolation but must move to another location because of the flood.
- ProtectNWT is keeping track of Individuals who have filed Self-Isolation Plans and are self-isolating in communities at risk of floods and is in regular contact with them as the flooding situation evolves.
- Isolation Centre staff have confirmed there are sufficient rooms available to receive and host isolating community residents in the Regional-hub Isolation Centres, if needed.
- If required, COVID Secretariat will work with MACA and individuals to ensure they have safe transportation to an alternate isolation location.

- COVID Secretariat communications staff is collaborating with MACA to ensure information is provided to the public and impacted communities in a timely manner about the evolving flood situation.

**From the Department of Lands (Lands):**

- Lands – Fort Simpson shop was flooded and 4 out of 5 staff were displaced
- Lands has offered a sea can for storage and cots, however, due to the high water at the shop they were not able to be accessed
- 1 staff member is on the local EOC and helping coordinate efforts
- 1 staff member (EMO Representative) has been coordinating and shipping supplies to community members and the Village of Fort Simpson and the Community of Jean Marie River (JMR)
- 1 staff member (EMO Representative) has been in contact with Chief Stan Sanguiez of JMR to help assess their needs and coordinate with Hay River to bring supplies
- 1 staff member (EMO Representative) has been in communication with NTPC regarding the progress and intent to return power to the island

**From the NWT Housing Corporation:**

**Fort Simpson and Jean Marie River:**

- Assembled assessment team under Taylor Architecture Group and Buffalo Air charter on 24 hour notice
- NorthWest Builders on-site for emergency repair.
- Awaiting clearance from EMO to enter community

**Aklavik, Tulita and Norman Wells:**

- Planning to identify flood prone units to secure fuel and sewer tanks
- Planning to identify emergency shelter opportunities

**Inuvik**

- Arranged risk assessment to remove contaminated soil bags from MTS yard