



May 18, 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:**
 - The Regional EMO is arranging for additional camping supplies in case of a need to support evacuees in tent environments.
 - At the request of the Village of Fort Simpson the process of sending evacuees home has begun; the Village will be providing guidance to evacuees.
 - The Village of Fort Simpson is posting updates on their Facebook page.
 - 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.
 - 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.

- **Tulita:**
 - The local EMO continues flood watch in the community.
 - The Regional EMO is working with the community to ensure resources are in place should flooding occur and support be requested.
 - Community members should be starting to prepare in the event that an evacuation is necessary.

- **Fort Good Hope:**
 - The local EMO continues flood watch in the community.

- The local EMO coordinated evacuation of residents living and relocation of property in the most at risk areas in the community as a precaution. Evacuees remain in the community of Fort Good Hope.
- The EMO is supporting the community's request for cots and blankets.
- Other:
 - The EMO is planning for water level surveys to be completed in Hay River, KFN, Jean Marie River and Fort Simpson.

Monitoring of flood conditions continues across the NWT. Risk is also ELEVATED in the following communities:

- Aklavik
- Fort McPherson

From the Department of Health and Social Services (HSS):

- A mini clinic temporary shelter has been deployed by the Department of Health and Social Services. It has been assembled at the evacuation site to serve as a health centre for evacuated residents. The temporary clinic will remain active until further notice while operations at the health centre are assessed for reinstatement, any change in services or locations will be communicated.

From the Department of Infrastructure (INF):

- The MV Lafferty ferry is open for the season with periodic delays due to fluctuating water levels and work being conducted on the landings.
- Jean Marie Airport is open with two-hour prior permission required. It is operating under daytime use only as there is no airfield lighting.
- INF's electrical inspections team and facilities staff remain in Fort Simpson, assessing damage to buildings and homes.
- Fort Simpson Airport continues to deliver wood to residents camping in the tenting area.
- Airport staff continue to help with offloading supply planes when they come in or escorting crews picking up the supplies airside.
- The access road in Jean Marie River has been graded and is operational.
- Once power is restored to Jean Marie River, INF's gas/boiler inspectors will assess the damage to commercial boilers, pressure vessels and gas systems to ensure they are safe to operate.

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

- Water monitoring intelligence:
 - Daily briefings and reports on water levels and ice conditions are provided to local, regional, and territorial EMOs to inform risk assessments and preparation.

- Coordinating acquisition and interpretation of satellite imagery from the Government Operations Centre and Natural Resources Canada, and optical imagery from Joint Task Force North and other sources.
- Consulting with Alberta river ice experts to better predict potential ice movement.
- Continued assistance to Fort Simpson effort:
 - Renewable Resource Officers deployed from other regions on site to assist local staff in patrolling for bears and other wildlife.
 - Patrolling emergency camping area.
 - Assistance with logistics to the Town of Fort Smith for hosting Fort Simpson residents who have been evacuated to the recreation centre.
 - Supporting responsible parties to identify and report spills and ensuring that spills are assessed and cleaned up.
 - Provision of food and supplies.
- Continuing assistance to Jean Marie River:
 - Renewable Resource Officer on site to monitor for bears and other wildlife.
 - Supporting responsible parties to identify and report spills and ensuring that spills are assessed and cleaned up.
 - Assisted with distribution of food hampers and other supplies to the community.
 - Provision of food and supplies.
- Flood preparation efforts down-river:
 - Deployed four person wildfire crew and two renewable resource officers to Fort Good Hope to help prepare for potential flooding and respond.
 - Regional office in Beaufort Delta working with local and regional Emergency Measures Offices to monitor and prepare for potential flooding.
- Disaster relief programs:
 - Began advertising Hunters and Trappers Disaster Compensation Fund on social media and radio. Hunters and trappers may be eligible for support if they have lost equipment or cabins.

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.

- The Office of the Chief Public Health Officer reviews exceptional circumstance requests submitted to ProtectNWT to isolate in small, non-regional hub communities and will take into consideration the risk of possible flooding as part of the overall health risk assessment.
- 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:

- 1 staff member has offered assistance to the local EOC
- 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
- 1 staff member (EMO Representative) has been in touch with Village of Fort Simpson Staff regarding the return of power and water

From the NWT Housing Corporation:

Fort Simpson

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

Jean Marie River:

- Assessment Team chartered in today.
- NorthWest Builders on site for emergency repair
- An assessment report will be provided to determine needs for repair/replacement

Tulita:

- LHO asked to identify flood prone units to secure fuel and sewer tanks
- Currently no units at risk
- Planned actions will proceed if the situation changes

Aklavik

- Flooding occurs when ice jams at Horseshoe Bend on main channel of Mackenzie River.
- Identifying flood prone units to secure fuel and sewer tanks.
- Contingency shelter planning in progress

Norman Wells:

- No units currently at risk

- Planned actions will proceed if the situation changes
- Identifying flood prone units to secure fuel and sewer tanks

Fort Good Hope:

- LHO asked to identify flood prone units to secure fuel and sewer tanks
- People living in Zone 1 have been evacuated.
- Currently no units at risk
- Planned actions will proceed if the situation changes

Inuvik

- Risk assessment in progress to identify need to remove contaminated soil from MTS yard
- No unit flooding anticipated

From the Northwest Territories Power Corporation (NTPC):

- An emergency generator has been installed in Jean Marie River and is now providing power to the community – repairs to the local power plant are required due to water inflow during the flood
- When JMR residents return, most will have access to power in their homes -- some buildings require repairs before the electrical inspector will allow them to be re-energized
- The power plant in Fort Simpson has been restarted and power restored to critical buildings such as the sewer and water treatment plants, health care centre and elder care facilities
- Most homes and businesses in FS that were not directly impacted by floodwaters have had their power restored
- The return of service to customers in flood-impacted areas in FS will be dependent on any requirements to repair powerlines and the completion of an electrical inspection and subsequent sign-off by the electrical inspector
- NTPC is closely monitoring water levels in downstream communities and developing contingency plans in the event of flooding