



May 19, 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:
 - On May 19, the EMO arranged for an additional 300 food hampers and 3 pallets of water to be sent to Fort Simpson.
 - At the request of the Village of Fort Simpson the majority of evacuees were returned to Fort Simpson.
 - The Village of Fort Simpson is posting updates on their [Facebook page](#).
 - 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:
 - On May 19, a Regional EMO representative visited the community to provide recovery guidance. These efforts will continue.
 - 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 Regional EMO is working with the community to ensure resources are in place should flooding occur and support be requested.
- Fort Good Hope:
 - On May 19, local EMO continued to coordinate evacuation of residents 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 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.
- 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):

- Emergency Social Service supplies from the Federal stockpile are on their way from Alberta and will be prepositioned in Yellowknife until requested by hosting communities to ensure they have enough blankets, towels and pillows during their time away from home.
- NTHSSA staff have returned to the Health Centre in Fort Simpson. The temporary nursing station running out of the Nogha Enterprises office has been closed. Regular phone lines are functional again, and Fort Simpson residents can contact the Health Centre by calling 867-695-7000.
- NTHSSA will work closely with MACA/EMO on the demobilizing of evacuees, specifically those who require Home Care and the Long Term Care Residents.
- Two boil water advisories issued can be found here:
<https://www.hss.gov.nt.ca/en/services/boil-water-advisories>

From the Department of Infrastructure (INF):

- Jean Marie Airport continues to operate under daytime use only as there is no airfield lighting. Arrangements are being made to purchase a regulator for the Jean Marie Airport field electric centre. When that arrives, the airport electrician will arrange for it to be installed.
- A maintenance coordinator is assessing the damage to the buildings in Jean Marie River.
- Three charters are transporting about 115 evacuees today (May 19) back to Fort Simpson, while one charter is bringing in freight.
- INF's inspection team is working with a local electrical contractor assessing flood damaged buildings in Fort Simpson. Power, water and sewer services have been restored to most of Fort Simpson.
- The INF office in Fort Simpson is reopening tomorrow (May 20).
- 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.
- 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.
- Fuel supply is secure in Jean Marie River and Fort Simpson.

- Fuel Services will be conducting inspections and assessing the potential for flood damage in INF's fuel storage facilities in Tulita and Fort Good Hope between today (May 19) and Friday.

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

- Flood preparation efforts down-river:
 - Continued preparation and assistance from fire crews and regional staff in Fort Good Hope.
 - Scaled down support in Norman Wells and Tulita as risks have subsided.
 - Participating in monitoring to prepare for potential flooding in Beaufort Delta.
- Water monitoring intelligence:
 - Identified ice jam present downriver near Fort Good Hope as of May 18 evening.
 - 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.
- Assessment of flooding on Taltson River by helicopter.
- Continuing assistance to Jean Marie River:
 - Cutting firewood for those at tents.
 - Delivery of fish donated by community of Deline.
 - Delivery of emergency camping supplies donated by Dene Nation .
 - Renewable Resource Officer on site to monitor for bears and other wildlife.
 - Continued support to responsible parties to identify and report spills and ensuring that spills are assessed and cleaned up.
- Continued assistance to Fort Simpson effort:
 - Regional office re-opened to provide regular services.
 - Delivery of donations of fish collected from other communities.
 - Delivery of emergency camping supplies donated by Dene Nation.
 - Renewable Resource Officer on site to monitor for bears and other wildlife.

From the Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment (ITI):

- Providing ongoing advisories on the nwtparks.ca website.
- Notices on the NWT Parks Facebook and Twitter platforms detailing ongoing issues with flooding in Fort Simpson, Fort Providence and Little Buffalo River Crossing (latter now resolved).
- Auto-generated letters through the nwtparks.ca reservation system to residents that booked in Fort Providence and Fort Simpson Territorial Parks indicating Fort Providence is planning to open on May 27th, and Fort Simpson will likely remain closed for the season due to severe flooding. Refunds have been provided up to May 26th for the Fort Providence park and for the season for Fort Simpson.

- Advising residents/campers to check nwt-parks.ca Park Advisories for updated information.

From the Department of Lands:

- Fort Simpson Lands office is open and is available to offer assistance to the Village of Fort Simpson.

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 NWT Housing Corporation:

- Fort Simpson:
 - The assessment team, under Taylor Architecture Group, are on 24 hour notice to enter the community. NorthWest Builders are on site for emergency repairs.
 - The Local Housing Organization Manager is working out of Yellowknife. Many Fort Simpson residents are still living in tents. Many units are without power. NTPC requires electrical inspection before re-energizing.
- Jean Marie River:
 - All four buildings flooded. The NWTHC may consider raising the top of floor elevation above the flood line. Chief Sanguez said one unit in particular, the burgundy unit, had flooded in 2020. Two stick-built units show no signs of structural distress; it is assumed all are salvageable.
 - Two modular buildings have damage which may be permanently affected by the flooding. If the NWTHC is to salvage these buildings, remedial work must begin in the next day or two. Temperatures in the region are projected to be above 20C degrees by the weekend, which will accelerate deterioration.
 - Tenants will be provided a work plan, including how personal effects would be handled.

- Arcan Construction Company is mobilizing to Fort Simpson and could go to Jean Marie River to do the initial demolition work as early as tomorrow. Northwest Builders, a contractor, is already in Ft Simpson.
- Tulita:
 - There are currently no units at risk. We will continue to monitor the situation.
- Norman Wells:
 - There are currently no units at risk. The situation will continue to be monitored.
- Fort Good Hope:
 - Waiting for ice at Ramparts to release.
 - The Local Housing Organization has been asked to identify flood prone units to secure fuel and sewer tanks. People living in Zone 1 have been evacuated. Fuel tanks emptied, sewer tanks pumped, the RCMP and Rangers have secured and sealed the houses.
 - Zone 2 notifications were given out yesterday. Units on low ground are to start relocating today. Draining of tanks well commence today. Fort Good Hope remains on High Risk.
- Inuvik:
 - A risk assessment is in progress to identify if there is a need to remove contaminated soil from MTS.
- Aklavik:
 - Flooding is occurring when ice jams at Horseshoe Bend, on main channel of Mackenzie River. Peel River broke at Ft. McPherson yesterday. Historically the river at Aklavik breaks 7-10 days later.
 - Construction material is being moved from the Local Housing Organization yard to high ground and they are tying down fuel tanks. Contingency shelter planning is in progress, lead by the community. Another meeting is scheduled for Friday.

From the Northwest Territories Power Corporation (NTPC):

- NTPC has extended customer service hours by three hours daily to support Jean Marie River and Fort Simpson customers seeking information or to have their power restored
- The electrician and mechanic who will be making repairs to the Jean Marie River power plant have been delayed by critical work in Fort Simpson but are expected in JMR by Thursday
- Owners of buildings in Jean Marie River have been notified if their property requires repair before the electrical inspector will allow them to be re-energized
- Two teams, including a GNWT electrical inspector and NTPC line staff started to inspect properties on Tuesday morning in areas impacted by flooding – this work continued into Wednesday
- Restoration of service to these customers will be dependent on the completion of an electrical inspection and subsequent sign-off by the electrical inspector -- NTPC has been removing meters on any buildings that require repair before power can be restored

- A notice is being left on doors, directing owners/tenants in these buildings to contact the electrical inspector before contacting NTPC regarding power restoration
- Water levels near most downstream communities have subsided over the past day or so – although risk of flooding appears to be easing, NTPC continues to monitor the situation closely.