



May 20, 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 300 food hampers and 3 pallets of water procured by EMO at the request of the Village of Fort Simpson arrived on May 19th at 6:00pm.
- At the request of the Village of Fort remaining evacuees in the Fort Smith and Hay River evacuation centres 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:

- The evacuation centre in Fort Providence continues to support evacuees from Jean Marie River.
- As requested by Jean Marie River, the EMO has procured 50 fans which are being sent to the community.
- 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 has stood down.

Fort Good Hope:

- The local EMO continues flood watch in the community.
- The local EMO remains activated and high risk areas of the community remain evacuated. All evacuees are being hosted within 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):

- The DHSS, Health Emergency Planner, joined JTFN on their flight to Tulita (May 19) to liaise with the local GNWT emergency response workers and activated Canadian Rangers.
- The JTFN team met to highlight the communities response to the potential of flooding risk. The community and its members had been preparing for a potential evacuation related to rapidly rising waters of the Mackenzie River this past week.
- DHSS HEP visited the local Health Care Center, met with the Nurse in Charge and other health care practitioners to gain a better understanding of what their local response might look like in an evacuation, so the most appropriate support could be deployed if and when requested.
- Health Care staff were knowledgeable and had a well-practiced plan in place and expressed that they worked closely with the local emergency teams and were confident in their roles.
- Travelling with our partner JTFN was a great opportunity to collaborate and understand each other roles in time of emergencies, in order for everyone to be successful.
- It is important for planners to get out and see the geography of the NWT, to understand the wilderness, rivers and landscapes and more importantly, to meet other planners in local communities, to build relationships for a successful coordinated response.

From the Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority (NTHSSA):

- The Fort Simpson Health Centre will be on emergency services only for May 20 and 21. Normal clinic hours will resume after the long weekend on Tuesday May 25, 2021

From the Department of Infrastructure (INF):

Jean Marie River

- Jean Marie Airport continues to operate under daytime use only as there is no airfield lighting. Flights continue to require two hour prior notice until community leadership requests otherwise. Arrangements are being made to obtain 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 assessed the damage to the GNWT buildings in Jean Marie River. The gym floor will have to be assessed once it's dry to determine if it needs replacing. The school had water in the crawl space, which will be dried out.
- Once power from the main power plant has been 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. Currently power has been restored by a temporary generator.
- Gas utilities and mechanical contractors are now working with INF's Boilers Division on repairs and replacements of boilers/pressure vessels that have been damaged. Once the repairs or replacements have been done, our inspectors will be doing final checks to ensure they are compliant. Permits will be required on all replacement boilers/pressure vessels and additional gas installations.

- Electrical contractors will need to apply for a permit to repair or replace damaged electrical systems in homes and buildings that were not deemed safe to restore power. Our electrical inspectors will be working with contractors on the repairs to the electrical work in these buildings.

Fort Simpson

- INF's inspection team is completing work today with a local electrical contractor to assess flood-damaged buildings.
- The INF office has reopened today (May 20).
- Airport staff continue to help with offloading supply planes when they come in or escorting crews picking up the supplies airside.
- Fuel Services Finance staff are returning to work in the Fort Simpson office over May 20/21. There was no damage to the office itself.
- Fuel Services has assessed the potential for flood damage to NTPC's fuel supply in Inuvik as very low risk.
- Gas utilities and mechanical contractors are now working with INF's Boilers Division on repairs and replacements of boilers/pressure vessels that have been damaged. Once the repairs or replacements have been done, our inspectors will be doing final checks to ensure they are compliant. Permits will be required on all replacement boilers/pressure vessels and additional gas installations.
- Electrical contractors will need to apply for a permit to repair or replace damaged electrical systems in homes and buildings that were not deemed safe to restore power. Our electrical inspectors will be working with contractors on the repairs to the electrical work in these buildings.

Tulita:

- Fuel Services has completed its assessment of potential flood damage in Tulita.

Fort Good Hope:

- Fuel Services is in the process of conducting the same assessment in Fort Good Hope.

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

- Flood preparation efforts down-river:
 - Continued preparation assistance from fire crews and regional staff in Fort Good Hope.
 - Monitoring water levels and ice in Beaufort Delta.
- Continuing assistance to Jean Marie River:
 - Delivering firewood to tent camp.
 - Renewable Resource Officer on site to monitor for bears and other wildlife.
 - Continued work with responsible parties to identify and report spills and ensuring that spills are assessed and cleaned up.
- Continued assistance to Fort Simpson effort:
 - Continued work with responsible parties to identify and report spills and ensuring that spills are assessed and cleaned up.
- 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.

From the Department of Education, Culture and Employment (ECE):

- Schools in Fort Simpson and Jean Marie River are scheduled to re-open to students on Tuesday, May 25.
- The ECE office in Fort Simpson reopened on May 20, 2021 and services will resume in the Regional and Community ECE Service Centres as follows:
 - Residents of Fort Simpson, Jean Marie River, Nahanni Butte, Sambaa K'e and Wrigley are encouraged to contact the Dehcho ECE Regional Service Centre in Fort Simpson by calling 867-695-7338 or toll free at 1-833-995-7338
 - Residents of Fort Providence can call their local Client Services Officer at 867-699-4431.
 - Residents of Fort Liard can call their local Client Services Officer at 867-770-4104 extension 121
- ECE has given blanket approval for Emergency Allowance for all Income Assistance clients affected by flooding in Fort Simpson. ECE continues to monitor the flooding situation in all NWT communities to ensure any Income Assistance clients affected by flooding have access to emergency assistance. The rate of emergency allowance for single applicants is \$500 and those with families is \$1,000.

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:

- Dehcho Regional Office resumes normal office hours as of today May 20, 2021.
- Dehcho Regional Office will begin planning inspections of GNWT properties to document damage due to flood waters.
- Sahtu Regional Superintendent has been involved in EOC planning and meetings and offered to be on standby to offer support. No support has been requested as of May 19.
- Beaufort Delta Regional Superintendent has not had any requests for support as of May 19.

From the NWT Housing Corporation:

- In Jean Marie River an assessment report will be provided to determine the needs for repairs and replacements.
- In Fort Simpson an assessment team has been mobilized and will provide an assessment report on needed repairs and replacements. Sewage back-up is reportedly a concern throughout the community.
- In Tulita, all units are at low risk. The situation continues to be monitored.
- In Norman Wells all units are at low risk. The situation continues to be monitored.
- In Fort Good Hope the Local Housing Organization has been asked to identify flood prone units, and to secure fuel and sewer tanks. People living in Zone 1 have been evacuated and residents in Zone 2 have self-evacuated.
- In Inuvik, the risk appears small. No unit flooding anticipated.
- In Aklavik the Local Housing Organization is tying down vulnerable fuel tanks. Contingency shelter planning is in progress by the community.
- In Fort McPherson, all units currently at low risk.

From the Northwest Territories Power Corporation (NTPC):

- An NTPC mechanic arrived in Jean Marie River on Thursday to begin repairs in the power plant – he will be joined by an electrician on Friday.
- If any issues emerge with the temporary generator powering Jean Marie River, there is a backup generator available that could be transported by ferry from Fort Simpson.
- The plant in Fort Simpson has been providing 100% of the power to the community since Wednesday afternoon.
- Unit by unit inspection of buildings in Fort Simpson is ongoing by the electrical inspectors and NTPC staff.
- New poles and wires were installed in an area of Fort Simpson that experienced heavy flooding.
- NTPC met with leadership in Aklavik on Wednesday to discuss plant shutdown plans in the event of flooding -- a temporary dam to protect the variable speed generator arrived in the community earlier this week and will be set up over the next several days.
- NTPC continues to monitor water levels in other communities.