



May 21, 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:

- All evacuees who were staying at the Fort Smith and Hay River evacuation centres have returned home.
- 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 sent 51 fans 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.

Fort Good Hope:

- The local EMO has recommended all 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.

Aklavik:

- Residents should be aware of flood risk and are advised to consider personal and household flood preparation activities.
- The Regional EMO is reaching out to the community and prepared to support should an evacuation be required and assistance 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:

- Fort McPherson

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:
 - 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 Health and Social Services (HSS) and Northwest Territories Health and Social Services Authority (NTHSSA):

- In the Beaufort Delta, NTHSSA staff continue to work with local representatives to ensure plans are in place should vulnerable populations be required to evacuate. Staff in Inuvik continue preparations should they be required to take on additional duties as receiving location.

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. A regulator for the Jean Marie Airport field electric centre has been ordered, but is expected to take ten weeks to arrive. When that arrives, the airport electrician will arrange for it to be installed. In the meantime we are getting flare pots back operational to provide 24 hour service.
- 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

- Airport staff continue to help with offloading supply planes when they come in or escorting crews picking up the supplies airside.
- 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 Good Hope:

- Fuel Services is in the process of conducting an assessment of potential flood damage in Fort Good Hope.

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, Samba 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.
- ProtectNWT is informing individuals self-isolating of what they need to do if there is an evacuation in their community.
- 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 Industry, Tourism and Investment:

- Fort Simpson Territorial Park remains closed due to severe flooding.
- Fort Providence has opened to campers, save for the group camping area still reserved for evacuees of Fort Simpson and Jean Marie River.

From the Department of Lands:

- Dehcho Regional Office has resumed normal office hours as of 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.
- Beaufort Delta Regional Superintendent has not had any requests for support as of May 19

From the NWT Housing Corporation:

- In Jean Marie River, fuel spill samples have been sent to lab for analysis.
- In Fort Simpson, one of the main issues is water making wet crawlspaces in homes. A small number of NWT HC houses will require electrical inspection prior to reconnection, which will be coordinated by the District Office.
- 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 fuel tanks have been emptied, sewer tanks have been pumped. The RCMP, with help from the Rangers, have secured and sealed the houses. The community remains on high risk.
- In Inuvik, a risk assessment was completed regarding contaminated soil stored on MTS yard. No further action is required. No unit flooding anticipated.
- In Aklavik a contingency shelter plan is underway, led by the community.
- In Fort McPherson, all units currently at low risk.

From the Northwest Territories Power Corporation (NTPC):

- All eligible customers in Jean Marie River have been re-energized
- Maintenance crew is onsite in JMR working on repairs to the power plant – estimate is seven to 10 days to complete the repairs and return the plant to service
- Approximately 90 percent of buildings approved by an electrical inspector have been re-energized in Fort Simpson – to receive power, customers returning to their homes/businesses must contact NTPC at (867) 874-5308 to have their meter re-activated

- The customer support line for Jean Marie River and Fort Simpson customers will be available between 8:30 am and 9 pm every day, including weekends, until Tuesday, May 25
- Equipment has been elevated in downstream communities to minimize risk in the event of flooding