

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION
Division of Spill Prevention and Response
Prevention and Emergency Response Program

NATURAL DISASTER SITUATION REPORT

INCIDENT NAME: 2009 Spring Flooding

SITREP: 2

LEDGER CODE:

TIME/DATE OF SITUATION REPORT: 4:00 pm, May 7, 2009

TYPE OF DISASTER: Flooding

LOCATION: Multiple Locations (see below)

TYPE/EXTENT OF DAMAGE: Heavy snow melt and ice dams have caused rivers and streams to rise and caused flooding in the Fairbanks area and the communities of Eagle, Buckland, Chalkyitsik, Circle, Fort Yukon, and Kobuk. Many homes and businesses have been flooded or in the process of being flooded. Several specific areas have been evacuated. The communities of Stevens Village and Beaver have potential for flooding. There have been several reported spills from the flooded communities as noted below.

Eagle: A good portion of both Eagle and Eagle Village have been destroyed. DEC staff from PERP and the Drinking Water program are en route, along with the Department of Military and Veterans Affairs Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DMVA-DHS&EM) and Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) personnel. Actions taken include closure of valves on home heating oil tanks and identifying underground fuel tanks and private drinking water wells. One of the two public water sources will be sampled today. The old village of Eagle may be accessible today and the team plans to deploy there and do an initial assessment. We anticipate that DHS&EM staff will be asking DEC to provide contractors for one or more activities such as cleanup of lost or abandoned tanks and containers, disinfection of wells, testing of underground storage tanks, and possibly disposal of contaminated fuel. PERP is proactively working with the contracting group and the Drinking Water program on this issue.

The following communities have been contacted or are in the process of being contacted with regard to securing of their various bulk fuel facilities. The Drinking Water program staff has also contacted the same communities with advice concerning protection and disinfection of drinking water sources.

Buckland: No change in status, with limited available information. Some flooding reported, but no reports of spills.

Fairbanks Area: The Fairbanks North Star Borough Emergency Management office is distributing flyers from DEC programs addressing well, septic systems and fuel storage (an action normally taken with every flood event.) Several complaints and spill reports have been received.

Circle: The ice dam has moved past Circle but there is on-going flooding, with reportedly 20 inches of water in the local store. No spills have been reported, but it is likely that private wells have been affected.

Stevens Village: No change in status. Potential flooding only at this time.

Kobuk: Some flooding reported. NART received a spill report involving several containers of hydraulic oil. The spill volume is unknown, but likely not very significant.

Chalkyitsik: Flood waters are receding. A spill from the YFSD tank farm was reported. The spill volume has yet to be determined. NART is working with the school district at this time. This spill is not related to the flood.

Hughes: Potential flooding only at this time.

PUBLIC HEALTH THREAT: Bacteria, viruses, protozoa, and/or petroleum products in flood waters pose a threat to drinking water wells. Flooded on-site sewer systems can backup into homes or onto the ground surface. Home heating fuel tanks, propane tanks, barrels, and small fuel containers can shift, fall, or float away and cause spills. Flood debris can also contain hazardous materials.

ENVIRONMENTAL THREAT: Spills from home heating tanks and bulk fuel facilities.

TYPE OF ASSISTANCE REQUESTED: DMVA-DHS&EM has requested staff from NART and Drinking Water programs to accompany them to Eagle. The team is currently en route to Eagle. Another DEC team is on standby to assist affected villages down river of Eagle.

ASSISTANCE PROVIDED:

The Drinking Water Program will be distributing information advising property owners in flooded areas to boil water used for drinking, cooking, hand washing, or dish washing for at least two minutes, and providing advice on monitoring of on-site sewer systems and how to disinfect sewage on the ground. They are also distributing informational handouts on floods, how to disinfect drinking water, and how to disinfect a well.

NART is advising property owners in flooded areas to secure fuel containers, tanks and barrels to keep them from floating away. They are also providing information on reporting spills, and assessing damage to bulk fuel facilities.

Technical assistance is being provided to impacted communities and local governments on how to set up a water sampling program for impacted private wells. Expenses (including water sample collection, delivery, and lab analysis) are reimbursable under the State Disaster Relief Fund.

There are three State teams currently responding to the flooding and assessing the situation. The Lower Kuskokwim Team flew over the Kuskokwim River between Kalskag and Kwethluk. The Upper Yukon Team is currently at Ft Yukon. The Inter-agency team (including DEC staff) is en route to Eagle to provide assistance to the local community.

FUTURE PLANS AND RECOMMENDATIONS: Monitor the situation and continue to provide technical assistance on drinking water, wastewater, debris disposal, and fuel spills as needed. Provide contractual support to DHS&EM as requested.

CURRENT RIVER CONDITIONS: For current flood warnings and flood watches, visit the National Weather Service website at: <http://aprfc.arh.noaa.gov/products/fcst.php?product=FLOOD>

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONTACT:

Ed Meggert, DEC NART Fairbanks, 451-2124
Ed.meggert@alaska.gov

Cindy Christian, DEC Drinking Water Program Fairbanks, 451-2138
Cindy.christian@alaska.gov

Larry Iwamoto, DEC PERP Anchorage, 269-7683
Larry.iwamoto@alaska.gov