

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: 3

LEDGER CODE:

TIME/DATE OF SITUATION REPORT: 6:00 pm, May 8, 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 has been destroyed. DEC personnel from PERP and the Drinking Water program are on site and are assessing the situation. In addition, 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) have sent personnel to the location. Response actions taken thus far 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 has been determined to be contaminated. The Drinking Water program is sending Clorox to the location to assist in decontaminating drinking water wells.

DEC's Northern Area Response Team (NART) is in the process of deploying a contractor to the site to assist in: up righting fuel tanks; removing fuel to a central location to prevent additional spillage; constructing new fuel tank cribbing where needed; and reinforcing existing cribbing. In addition, NART has ordered new timbers for cribbing from a sawmill in Tok. The contractor and the lumber are scheduled to arrive in Eagle by Monday, May 11th. PERP is proactively working with the SPAR contracting group and the Drinking Water program to provide assistance to the communities impacted by this disaster. DEC staff have applied for and received a waiver from DOT for travel restrictions currently imposed on the Taylor Highway.

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 drinking water wells, 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. NART is deploying two responders to the village tomorrow to assess the situation, provide assistance and to educate the public in spill prevention.

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

Kobuk: Some flooding reported. NART has been providing assistance to the local village EPA employee in cleaning up a small hydraulic release.

Chalkyitsik: Flood waters are receding. A spill from the Yukon Flats School District 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: Staff from DMVA-DHS&EM, NART and the DEC Drinking Water program are currently in Eagle. Another DEC team will be driving to Circle tomorrow (May 9th) to provide technical assistance and advice.

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.

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>

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONTACT:

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