

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: 6

LEDGER CODE:

TIME/DATE OF SITUATION REPORT: 4:00 pm, May 15, 2009

TYPE OF DISASTER: Flooding

LOCATION: Multiple Locations (see below)

TYPE/EXTENT OF DAMAGE: Heavy snowmelt and ice dams have caused rivers and streams to rise and caused flooding in the Yukon and Kuskokwim river systems. The resultant flooding has impacted several communities as noted below. Many homes and businesses have been flooded or are in the process of being flooded. Several areas have been evacuated. There have also been several reported spills from the flooded communities.

Eagle: A large volume of stranded ice remains and will remain in place until it thaws. The ice varies from a few feet to 20 or more feet in depth. The road from Eagle to Eagle Village remains impassable. ADOT is working on putting in a temporary road. The clearing of the roadway is complete and ADOT is estimating that the matting will be in place and the road opened by May 19. The road to the landfill is impassable due to debris and ice cover.

Solid Waste (SW): A temporary collection area has been established at the ADOT gravel pit for the storage of debris, drums, tanks and hazardous waste that were removed from the flooded areas.

Drinking Water (DW): Eagle residents are still on a boil water notice (BWN) because of E. coli contamination in the well. They will remain on the BWN for the foreseeable future. The Drinking Water Program (DW) is providing residents with cleanup information. Lee Johnson is working with the community on well disinfection procedures. The well at the new village community center was tested for total coliform bacteria and the results were satisfactory. The DW program is providing signs to the community to post on the community center well stating that it should not be used for mixing formula or juice for children under 6 months due to unknown nitrate concentration. Sample bottles have been sent out for them to collect a sample for nitrate.

PERP: The PERP contractor is demobilizing from Eagle today. Most of the funding for the contract was expended. The initial stabilization work on the tanks and drum collection are near completion. It is estimated that only 20 to 30 percent of the existing debris area is currently accessible. As the ice thaws, additional drums and tanks will need to be secured. A bermed and lined containment area was constructed in the storage area identified by SW to hold the recovered drums and tanks. Fish totes were provided by DHS&EM for the storage of batteries and hazardous waste. The following numbers of tanks and drums have been stabilized or moved to the containment area: 104 Drums; 4 propane tanks; 18 home heating oil tanks; and 7 tanks greater than 1,000 gallons.

Circle: Circle residents remain on a BWN. The total coliform bacteria sample is at the lab and results should be available this afternoon. If the results are satisfactory, DW staff will lift the BWN.

Ft Yukon: No change in Ft Yukon status for spill response issues.

DW: The Boil Water Notice for the community system has been lifted. Satisfactory sample results were received for the well and distribution system. Samples for Volatile Organic Chemicals (VOC's) will be collected next week by the water treatment plant operator.

Beaver: Minor flood damage has been reported; no site assessment by DEC is anticipated at this time.

DW: Beaver residents remain on a BWN. DW staff do not believe that the area is still impacted by floodwaters. DW Program staff contacted the village on May 14 and are currently waiting on the results of a total coliform test before the BWN can be lifted.

Stevens Village:

PERP: An initial assessment of the village was completed with DW on May 15. The following is part of the trip report: Bergs of ice were localized to Front Street which is a roadway adjacent to the Yukon River. The initial flood wash transported the buoyant household items away from the river into trees and brush, forming debris lines of 55-gallon drums, freezers and miscellaneous debris. Numerous electrical poles were splintered from ice impact along Front Street; wire was snarled into washed brush; and stranded bergs observed. The school, clinic and power building did not receive flood damage. Numerous houses in the village rely on solid fuel for heating; others use oil or a combination of solid and liquid fuels for heat. Proactive village leaders requested everyone to turn off fuel supplies to their stoves to prevent fuel loss. Four filled drums of heating fuel were discovered in a debris line, three were placed in an upright position. One waste oil drum was also discovered and a small amount of product lost with the effort to upright the drum. The Post Office's 500-gallon, double-walled aboveground storage tank shifted from its original location, tearing either the supply or return lines from the tank. The following action items were noted.

- Send absorbent resources to the community for fuel removal from the floating water in the tank farm secondary containment.
- Provide technical assistance and resources for separating fuel from water.
- Characterize and dispose of 55-gallon drum fluids. Initial estimates are over 200 55-gallon drums scattered in debris lines throughout the village.

DW: Residents remain on a BWN. Johnny Mendez and Leslie Shurtleff traveled out to Stevens Village on May 14. The village has no power and the water treatment plant is non-operational at this time. Treated water and raw water tanks are almost full, but are currently unable to be used because there is no power to run the pumps. The well was flooded and the system lost pressure. The entire system will have to be disinfected before it is put back into service.

Chalkyitsik: PERP had received reports of minor flooding and fuel spills from the EPA technician located in the village of Chalkyitsik. A responder flew out on a regularly scheduled flight to assess damage and the fuel spills. Although there was standing water in the low lying areas, no water damage was observed. PERP staff responded to a fuel release from the school tanks while on site, but the release was probably not caused by the flood conditions.

Tanana: An ADEC assessment team is on the ground in Tanana today.

DW: Residents are on a BWN. The pumps were turned off, but pressure was maintained in the system. The water treatment plant was not flooded. They have approximately 190,000 gallons of treated water in their storage tank. Johnny Mendez traveled out to Tanana today to assess the water treatment plant and distribution system.

Akiak: No change in reported status from the previous Sitrep.

Kwethluk: No change in reported status from the previous Sitrep.

Bethel: No change in reported status from the previous Sitrep.

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.

DW: Flood preparation information, including Boiling Water Notice (BWN's) literature provided to the following communities: Ruby, Nulato, Koyukuk, Kaltag, Galena, Buckland, Noorvik and Selawik.

ENVIRONMENTAL THREAT: Spills from home heating oil 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. Additional staff will be deployed to Ft Yukon tomorrow.

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. It is important to note that all wells, public and private, that have been affected by flooding should be tested for bacteriological contaminants.

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:

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

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

Alan Wien, DEC PERP Wasilla, 376-1865
Alan.wien@alaska.gov

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

For DEC staff photos of the flooding, please visit the following:

Photos from Eagle:
http://www.dec.state.ak.us/spar/perp/gallery/eagleflood2009_01/index.htm

http://www.dec.state.ak.us/spar/perp/gallery/eagleflood2009_02/index.htm

Photos from Circle:

http://www.dec.state.ak.us/spar/perp/gallery/circleflood2009_01/index.htm