

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: 12

LEDGER CODE:

TIME/DATE OF SITUATION REPORT: 11:00 am, July 24, 2009

TYPE OF DISASTER: Flooding

LOCATION: Multiple locations within the Alaska Gateway Regional Educational Attendance Area (REAA), Yukon Flats REAA, Yukon-Koyukuk REAA, Kuspuq REAA, Yupiit REAA, Lower Kuskokwim REAA, Lower Yukon REAA, and Matanuska-Susitna Borough.

TYPE/EXTENT OF DAMAGE: Heavy snowmelt and ice dams caused rivers and streams to rise and caused flooding in the Yukon and Kuskokwim river systems. The flooding impacted several communities, damaging many homes, businesses, and public infrastructure. Several areas had to be evacuated. Many public and private drinking water systems were impacted by the flooding, as well as wastewater disposal systems, and landfills. The flood waters damaged or displaced numerous fuel tanks, drums, and other containers in the communities and other locations along the rivers. There were also several petroleum spills in many of the flooded communities.

CURRENT CONDITIONS: The emergency response phase of this disaster incident has passed. We are now in the recovery phase of the disaster.

Drinking Water: All Boil Water Notices have been lifted for all public drinking water systems that were impacted by the flooding. Except for Eagle, all flood impacted private drinking water wells have been sampled and verified to be free of coliform bacteria and volatile organic compounds (VOC), and that nitrate levels are below the Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL).

In the City of Eagle, there are 12 private wells, clustered in one specific area, that continue to show positive for total coliform bacteria. These wells have been disinfected at least one time. DW Program hydrologists are evaluating the potential for the aquifer to be contaminated. Shannon & Wilson was in Eagle on July 21-23 to disinfect the affected wells and resample for coliform bacteria. It is hoped that their efforts with a consistent disinfection procedure will result in water samples free of coliform bacteria. There are other private wells that were affected by flooding that are still not in operating condition and available for sampling. DMVA is supporting the cost of continued assistance to private property owners with contaminated wells. DW staff will continue evaluating the situation and develop options for solutions.

Solid Waste: Eagle: DNR is in the process of conveying land to the City of Eagle to be used as a landfill for the flood debris. As this is a lengthy process, DNR is preparing a letter to the City that will allow them to use the property for landfilling prior to the actual conveyance. The Solid Waste Program will be issuing a Letter of Authorization for the one-time disposal of Construction and Demolition (C&D) waste upon receipt of an application being prepared by Rockwell Engineering. An actual solid waste disposal permit will not be needed for this operation. FEMA provided a contract for the City of Eagle to use for the collection and disposal of inert flood debris. A contract was awarded to Rockwell Engineering that will last for approximately 30 days. The contractor will be separating household hazardous waste from inert debris and placing it into the existing lined temporary secondary containment area that was set up for hazmat debris during the response phase of the disaster.

PERP:

Eagle: The response and recovery work in Eagle and Eagle Village has been completed. PERP will remobilize to the site as needed to address additional drums or tanks that may be located, and for the disposal of household hazardous waste discovered during the inert debris collection and disposal operation.

Stevens Village: During the emergency response phase of the flood disaster, 85 drums containing liquids were recovered and placed in a temporary secondary containment site adjacent to the barge landing. A NART responder and a DEC contractor mobilized to Stevens Village on July 22nd. They will consolidate the liquids from the drums into shipping totes and prepare them for loading onto the barge. The barge is expected to pass through that area within 3 to 4 days. The liquids will be barged to Nenana and then trucked to Palmer for recycling of the useable petroleum products and treatment of the contaminated water.

Tanana: During the emergency response phase of the flood disaster, 90 drums containing liquids were recovered and placed in a temporary secondary containment site. Following the recovery operation in Stevens Village, the NART responder and contractor will move to Tanana and follow the same course of action for consolidation and shipping of the liquids. The exception is that Tanana has a used oil burner, so all usable oils that can be separated on-site will be given to the city for recycling through their burner.

All Other Flood Impacted Communities: All DEC related issues have been resolved.

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 oil tanks and bulk fuel facilities.

TYPE OF ASSISTANCE REQUESTED: Provide DEC related support to the 2009 Spring Flooding events, to include spill response, technical assistance on drinking water, wastewater, solid waste, and other public health and environmental impacts.

ASSISTANCE PROVIDED: DEC staff from SPAR, DW, SW, and WW have conducted numerous onsite evaluations of health and environmental threats, and provided technical assistance and regulatory guidance to communities, agencies, and the general public.

Information was distributed advising property owners in flooded areas to boil water used for drinking, cooking, hand washing, or dish washing for at least two minutes, as well as informational handouts on floods, how to disinfect drinking water, and how to disinfect a well. Technical assistance has also been 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.

Information was provided on monitoring of on-site sewer systems and how to disinfect sewage on the ground.

SPAR advised property owners in flooded areas on how to secure fuel containers, tanks and barrels to keep them from floating away. SPAR also provided information on reporting spills, and assessing damage to bulk fuel facilities.

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:

Tom DeRuyter, DEC NART Fairbanks, 451-2145
Tom.deruyter@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

http://www.dec.state.ak.us/spar/perp/gallery/eagleflood2009_03/index.htm

Photos from Stevens Village:

http://www.dec.state.ak.us/spar/perp/gallery/stevensflood2009_01/index.htm

Photos from Circle:

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

Photos from Tanana:

http://www.dec.state.ak.us/spar/perp/gallery/tananaflood2009_01/index.htm