

## **Media Advisory – Nov. 10, 2008**

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### **County readies for second round of river flooding**

Snohomish County's Department of Emergency Management is preparing for its second Flood Watch in less than a week. A Flood Watch, beginning Tuesday afternoon and ending late Wednesday evening, means weather conditions are favorable for flooding but flooding is not imminent or currently occurring.

Two separate storm fronts Tuesday and Wednesday are expected to contribute to potential flooding on all rivers throughout Snohomish County. With grounds already saturated from last week's heavy rains, moderate to major flooding is possible throughout the county.

According to current weather models, residents who experienced flooding and flood damage during the November 2006 floods that impacted Snohomish County should prepare for flooding again this week, officials say.

"We're advising people to take last week's storm and lessons and magnify those," said John Pennington, director of the county's Department of Emergency Management. "This event could potentially be significant, and citizens need to be prepared."

Last week, areas of Snohomish County received more than 10 inches of rain, leading to flash flooding along the Skykomish River near Index, Gold Bar and Sultan. River levels also rose quickly on the Stillaguamish and Snohomish river systems.

This Tuesday, the area could see as much as 4 inches of rain, followed by evening winds between 25 and 40 mph. On Wednesday, the remnants of a tropical storm could produce another 10 inches or more of rainfall.

The Department of Emergency Management expects to operate at a moderate level beginning early Wednesday morning.

The county has spent the past several months preparing for such a flood. Supplies such as sand and bags have been prepositioned throughout the county and are available for county and cities' use.

Last week, crews shored up vulnerable areas along the Skykomish River and sent sand and bags to Granite Falls for use along the Stillaguamish River.

The county's Public Works Department and municipal agencies have been checking storm drains, clearing clogs and sweeping streets to minimize potential flooding.

Residents again are urged to take similar precautions on their properties and in their neighborhoods.

Should flooding occur, citizens are urged to stay away from rising waters and not to drive through areas of flowing or standing water or around road closure barriers.

Road flooding should be reported to the municipality where it occurs. Flooding on county roads can be reported to the Public Works Department at 425-388-7500 or [contact.pwrm@snoco.org](mailto:contact.pwrm@snoco.org).

Road closure lists and flood updates can be found at [www.snoco.org](http://www.snoco.org). Additional flooding issues can be reported to Emergency Management at 425-388-5060.

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**Snohomish County  
Department of Emergency Management**

**Flood Tips**

**Before a flood**

- Find out if you live in a flood-prone area and identify where dams are in your area.
- Ask your local emergency manager about official flood warning signals.
- Know the terms Flood Watch, Flash Flood Watch, Flood Warning, Flash Flood Warning and Urban and Small Stream Warning.
- Plan for evacuation.
- Consider purchasing flood insurance.
- Take steps to flood proof your home. Call your local building department or emergency management office for information.
- Keep all insurance policies and your household inventory in a safe place.

**During**

- Listen to radio or television stations for local information.
- Be aware of streams, drainage channels and areas known to flood suddenly.
- Prepare to evacuate when local authorities issue a flood watch.
- Secure your home. If time permits, also secure items located outside the house.
- Turn off utilities at the main switches or valves if instructed.
- Fill your car with fuel.
- Fill the bathtub with water in case the water supply becomes contaminated or services are cut off. Sterilize the bathtub first.
- Permit the flood waters to flow freely into your basement to avoid structural damage to the foundation and the house when deep flooding is likely.

**After**

- Stay away from flood waters. Do not drive through standing water.
- Stay away from moving water. Six inches can easily sweep you off your feet.
- Be aware of where waters have receded and may have weakened road surfaces.
- Stay away from and report downed power lines.
- Stay away from disaster areas unless authorities ask for volunteers.
- Continue listening to the radio for information about where to get assistance.
- Consider health and safety needs. Wash your hands frequently with soap and clean water if you come in contact with flood waters.
- Throw away food that has come in contact with flood waters.
- Call your insurance agent.
- Keep records of all clean-up and repair costs.
- Take photos of or videotape your belongings and your home.
- Don't throw away damaged goods until an official inventory has been taken.

***For more information, call Snohomish County's Department of Emergency Management, 425-388-5060.***