

Missoula County Media Release

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Missoula County Urges Preparation as Area Water Levels Continue to Rise

With rain in the forecast following this week's warm temperatures, the Missoula County Office of Emergency Management urges residents in flood-prone areas to take precautions now to protect their property from rising water.

The Clark Fork River above Missoula has reached minor flood stage and is expected to crest at nearly 10 feet early Sunday. The Bitterroot River near Missoula is expected to reach minor flood stage Saturday morning and crest at 11.87 feet that evening.

Residents in the Tower Street area of Orchard Homes are most likely to experience minor flooding through the weekend. Other neighborhoods in the Orchard Homes area could see impacts from rising groundwater as well.

Missoula County will continue to monitor forecasts from the National Weather Service. Preparation and response are largely based on forecasting. OEM encourages all residents in flood-prone areas to sign up for Smart911 at www.smart911.com or by downloading the app. OEM will use these alerts to notify residents of immediate safety concerns in their neighborhood. This includes any evacuation notifications, should conditions change.

Sheriff's deputies continue to monitor water levels and report on changing conditions. The NWS Advanced Hydrologic Prediction Service provides updated forecasts for the Clark Fork and other rivers in Missoula County at <https://water.weather.gov/ahps2/index.php?wfo=mso>.

Free sand and unfilled sandbags are available on a self-serve basis on D Road at Fort Missoula. Sandbagging is labor intensive and hard physical work. People should be aware of their physical limitations when sandbagging and use sound body mechanics to avoid injury. Residents using sandbags to protect their homes and other structures should construct a circular (not square) perimeter around the foundation. A helpful video on filling techniques and placement methods from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is online at <https://youtu.be/-hQPAIFMvtM>.

Residents should avoid contact with floodwater. Floodwater contains potential contaminants, bacteria and viruses that can cause infection and illness. More public health information, including resources on well and septic systems, is online at <http://missoula.co/phfloods>.

For more information, call OEM Director Adriane Beck at 406-258-3632 or email abeck@missoulacounty.us.

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