



CITY OF ITHACA

310 West Green Street Ithaca, New York 14850-5497

OFFICE OF THE FIRE CHIEF

Telephone: 607/272-1234 Fax: 607/272-2793

Safety Message For Press Release

Agency: Ithaca Fire Department
Date: Friday , January 10, 2014
Time: 1:30pm
Location: City of Ithaca **EMERGENCY OPERATION CENTER**
310 West Green Street, Ithaca
Message: **Ice Jam / Flooding Update**

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Ice Jam and Flooding Update for the City of Ithaca

A State of Emergency in the City of Ithaca continues until Sunday and the City's Emergency Operations Center will remain open throughout the weekend.

Weather Update-

Today's snow, although inconvenient, has not added to the flooding and icing problems in the City. The snow had a very low water content and should not be a contributing factor in the flooding. However, temperatures should rise above freezing this afternoon and get into the 40's tonight with winds of 15 mph.

Most of the snow on the ground should melt over the next day and that will add to the flooding concern. Saturday's weather is expected to reach 50 degrees and we are expecting 1/2 - 3/4 of an inch of rain. The ice jams that have been a problem all week have backed further up creeks and a 1 foot rise in the area waterways is expected. It is unclear at this point if the warmer temperatures will help in the ice jam melting and clear out the creeks, or if they won't melt in time and more flooding will occur.

Long term, no major cold snaps or heavy snow or rain events are expected for the next week, although the melting / flooding may come in waves over the next 3-4 days.

Ice Jam / Flooding Progress-

The warm water pumping has been very effective in clearing the ice. That success has prompted workers to move up stream with similar tactics and more pumps and hoses are being deployed to continue with the ice melting effort. The sediment-filled streams, sharp bends and low bridges tend to cause the major ice jam problems and crews will start to focus in those areas if access allows. New flooding concerns are possibly in the Meadow St. / Rt 13 corridor and areas around the City's creeks that have yet to flood.

Tompkins County Dept. of Emergency Response and Department of Transportation officials are working with Ithaca Police and D.P.W. to have barricades and road signs staged in key areas for road closures and detours if needed in the City. NY State Police and the Tompkins County Sheriff are standing by to reroute traffic outside the City as needed. Cornell University and the State Office of Emergency Management are working with the City to fill any other needs as they arise and the Red Cross is standing by.

PREPARE NOW- Three major steps to take

SUMP PUMPS. City crews have been working a week straight to stay ahead of these problems, however all city residents in low lying areas should be diligent and check their basements for flooding and that their sump pumps are working. If you don't have a sump pump, get one. Local stores have stocked up in anticipation of any flooding.



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SAND BAGS. A sand bag station has been set up at the DPW on Willow Ave. If you are unable to transport your own sand bags, volunteers are available to help. Contact volunteer workers on-site for assistance or go to: tinyurl.com/sandbag-help and select the “Needs Sand Bags” tab.

REMOVE VEHICLES. If you need to move your vehicle out of flooded or potential flooding area, the Family Pride Grocery Store parking lot on Hancock St is a staging area to park cars.

Everyone is asked to prepare, be patient and assist each other as needed. As always, for all true emergencies call 911. For non emergency assistance in the flood area, call (607) 272-1716. For any non emergency questions, Tompkins 211 is also handling calls.

If you have water in your home and do not have an operating sump-pump, the Ithaca Fire Department may be available to assist and check your utilities such as gas and electric. You can contact them through the Emergency Operations Center at 607-272-1716

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