

Clinton County Office of Emergency Operations
Media Situational Update
May 9, 2011

The community continued to struggle with flooding on the shores of Lake Champlain and other major waterways over the weekend. The Office of Emergency Services has begun to activate additional county agencies in response and support of the event. The Clinton County Health Department, Highway and Mental Health Offices have begun to enhance their efforts as this slow growing natural disaster has started to effect larger numbers of Clinton County residents. Preliminary assessments to date indicate that approximately 500 or more homes, seasonal and summer residences are impacted.

Primary Sources for Situational Update

National Weather Service

The forecast for our area for the next 5-7 days shows only a slight chance of rain toward the end of the week. The lake should continue to drop approximately one inch each day during good weather. The Lake should reach below flood stage (100 foot) levels in about 2-3 weeks if the good weather holds. The current lake level is 102.82 feet as of 10am, Monday May 9, 2011.

North winds are expected to increase over the next days and will further impact those houses and roadways in affected areas. The Village of Rouses Point, Dickson Point, Stony Point and Algonquin Park areas will be affected.

Utility Companies

Homeowners need to be reminded again that if the power has been shut off to their home or business that an underwriter (UL Inspector) approval must be obtained and provided to the utility company before power will be restored. This is the responsibility of the homeowner and the service is paid for by the homeowner. Residents will need to contact either the City of Plattsburgh Municipal Lighting Department or NYSEG through regular channels for power restoration.

A minor natural gas leak has been detected on North Margaret Street. NYSEG officials along with the City of Plattsburgh Incident Command Post are monitoring the situation. The minor leak is from an underground gas line currently covered with four feet of lake water. Bubbles containing natural gas are rising to the waters surface and dissipating into the air. There is no immediate threat or danger. Once access to the pipe is available it will be repaired.

State Agencies

The State Emergency Management Office is working closely with local officials to determine the next steps in assisting the local business and home owners through the future process of remediation of their property. It is anticipated that FEMA Centers will be established that will allow the residents affected to complete the required forms, it is important to understand it may be several weeks before this occurs.

Some FEMA PDA (Preliminary Damage Assessment) Teams are on the ground in Essex, Franklin and Hamilton counties and are expected in Clinton County after waters recede. The Teams will be visiting some of the hardest hit areas of Clinton County. Not all homeowners or businesses will be visited by a PDA Team.

Important notice to property owners: Clinton County is in the process of collecting data for damage to private property as a result of the recent floods along county rivers and the shores of Lake Champlain. Residents and home owners impacted by high waters and flooding are asked to complete and submit the Data Collection Form (complete one form for each parcel/addressed property). Forms can be located at the County Office of Emergency Services or at your Town, Village or City Clerks Office. The forms can also be found at www.clintoncountygov.com, completed and submitted electronically directly to the Office of Emergency Services.

Health and Safety

Clinton County Health Department (Environmental)

The City of Plattsburgh Crete Civic Center continues to be open for residents who have been displaced from their homes due to the flood. Approximately 42 individuals are currently staying at the shelter, with an anticipated increase over the next few days.

The Clinton County Health Department continues to monitor the shelter for the safety of those county residents staying there temporarily. Some aspects include: ensuring adequate supplies of drinking water, bathroom and shower facilities. The Health Department is also responsible for overseeing the food brought in to the shelter.

Additional information has been placed on the county and health department web sites for homes that have had impact on their septic system, their homes and water source. They can be accessed by going to www.clintoncountygov.com or www.clintonhealth.org .

New information includes: What to Do After the Flood – EPA

Septic Systems – What to Do After the Flood – EPA

Residential Oil Spills and Flooding – NYSDOH

Flood Cleanup and the Air in Your Home – EPA

Repairing Your Flooded Home –FEMA/Red Cross

Numerous Link Regarding Stream/Shoreline Erosion and Mitigation

The Clinton County Medical Reserve Corps continues to provide assistance and support to the American Red Cross, the agency responsible for the establishment and the overall functioning of the shelter. This is in the form of providing medically trained staff at the shelter 24 hours a day.

Clinton County Mental Health

The Clinton County Office of Mental Health has responded to the flood situation by providing psychological first aid, reassurance and crisis intervention to those affected by the event. The Mental Health Clinicians have been on site at the Crete Civic Center shelter for a few hours each day and on-call as needed around the clock. Mental Health staff is also available as needed to first responders and agency staff who have been dealing with the flood situation for almost two weeks.

Clinton County Department of Social Services

Clinton County DSS has assigned a Senior Caseworker and staff to work with evacuated clients of Lakeside Apartments and other residents from the community. DSS clients have been encouraged to arrange to move in with family and friends. DSS staff continues to work closely with County OES and the American Red Cross to assist with the sheltering operation.

Assistance to income eligible individuals and families is being provided, including referrals to Salvation Army and OLVA as well as receiving vouchers for clothing and personal items. Assistance with food stamp replacement and moving individuals to a new a place of residence will also be supported.

American Red Cross

The American Red Cross continues to provide oversight to the Crete Civic Center shelter that has been in place since early last week. There are currently 42 people in the shelter along with 54 animals. Families with children are being housed in other locations throughout the community. This is the first time that pets and people have been sheltered together. This is a direct result of Hurricane Katrina when many people refused to leave their pets behind when evacuated from the storm. The pets are being housed in a separate area from the residents.

Municipal Infrastructure

All Clinton County Townships continue to monitor the integrity of their roads. Please check web pages for each town to determine which roads in your community are closed. The listing can also be found at www.clintoncountygov.com .

Continued updates will be provided through the Clinton County Office of Emergency Services on an as needed basis. For additional information contact Clinton County OES at 565-4791 or the Clinton County web page or www.clintoncountygov.com or the Clinton County Health Department web page at www.clintonhealth.org .

Endorsed by:

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