

Press Release

High water table conditions, above normal rainfall over the past year, and heavy snowfall this winter may result in significant spring flooding in Otter Tail County.

Otter Tail County: The Otter Tail County Emergency Operations Team is urging all residents to prepare for the possibility of significant spring flooding. **Areas that have not typically experienced flooding in the past may be vulnerable this spring.** During a flood, the Federal Emergency Management Agency recommends that you:

- Install and maintain a sump pump
- Have your furnace, water heater, and electrical panels elevated (if susceptible to flooding)
- Install “check valves” in sewer traps to prevent flood water from backing up into the drains of your home
- Construct barriers (levees, beams, floodwalls) to stop floodwater from entering buildings - call Otter Tail County Land & Resource (218-998-8095) for information on proper construction
- Seal walls in basement with waterproofing compounds to avoid seepage
- Anchor fuel tanks (indoors and outdoors) to prevent contamination and damage to property
- Familiarize yourself with the process of turning off the electricity and gas to your home (this may be necessary in the case of a flood)
- Move important documents, valuables, and irreplaceable items to a second story (if possible)
- Store household chemicals (from your home, garage, and out buildings) above flood levels
- Consider purchasing flood insurance – keep in mind that many policies require a waiting period before flood insurance goes into effect, so do not postpone your purchase

Always have emergency supply kits on hand, including:

1. A three day supply of water (one gallon per person per day) and non-perishable food (with a manual can opener), and infant formula (if applicable)
2. A first aid kit (which includes prescription medications) and personal hygiene products
3. A battery powered radio, flashlight, and extra batteries
4. A waterproof container filled with dry clothing and dry matches