



# Jackson County Emergency Management

Kristina Page, Emergency Management Coordinator

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\*\*\*\*\*For Immediate Release\*\*\*\*\*

On September 22, Jackson County has declared a State of Emergency due to flooding in the County. The Black River in Jackson County is under a Flood Warning and already swollen streams, creeks and rivers are continuing to take the rainwater from the recent storms. The Black River is expected to crest at 58 feet in Black River Falls on September 22, in the afternoon. This level is below the levy level and flooding in the City of Black River Falls is not expected.

Jackson County Sheriff's Office is urging people not to travel through flooded areas if possible. If you must travel, make sure that you do not go around barricades or travel on roads that have water flowing over it. "You cannot see any damage that may be under the water", stated Sergeant Evan Mazur. "It is better to be late than not make it there at all".

People are also being warned not to walk in flooded areas. Flood waters are moving swiftly and can easily make people fall. The ground also may not be firm in flooded areas and large holes could be hidden by the flood water. Flood waters are commonly polluted with waste and chemical runoff. People are also being urged to stay away from flooded areas. "We have had some issues with curious people driving and walking near flood waters", stated Sgt. Mazur. "While we understand that people would like to survey the damage, the conditions could be very unsafe."

Kristina Page, Jackson County Emergency Management Coordinator states that officials are keeping a very close eye on the river levels. "We do not anticipate evacuating the Grove area of Black River Falls. We are working closely with the National Weather Service to anticipate any rises in the river.

Page wanted to emphasize that the two hydroelectric dams in Jackson County are structural sound and there is no concern about dam failure. A gate at the Black River Falls Hydroelectric Dam was damaged by debris and released from the main supports. At the time of the loss of the gate, dam officials state that no extra release of water was seen downstream because all gates were open at the time. It is requested that if the gate is observed further down river that the Sheriff's Office be contacted. "We have been working with the operators of the dams and there are no public safety concerns at this time," Page said.

If you have concerns about well water, well water testing kits are available at the Jackson County Public Health at 420 Highway 54, Black River Falls and free Red Cross Flood Cleanup Kits are available at the Sheriff's Office at 30 N 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, Black River Falls.

#### Current Road Closures:

- County Road Z in the Town of City Point
- County Road VV in the Town of North Bend
- County Road F and Sand Road in the Town of Alma
- Hawk Island Road in the Town of Manchester
- East Fork Road in the Town of Komensky
- Perry Creek Road in the Town of Brockway
- E Staffon Road in the Town of Komensky

#### Other Closures:

- All Jackson County Off-Road Vehicle Trails are closed
- East and West Arbutus County Parks are closed.