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IEMA, IDOT, IDNR Urge Residents to Stay Safe Around Flood Waters

More Heavy Rain Expected this Week Raises Flood Concerns

SPRINGFIELD – With more heavy rains expected to fall later this week on already saturated ground, the Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA), the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) today urged Illinois residents to stay safe around flood waters.

In addition, IEMA today conducted a conference call with local emergency managers throughout Illinois to coordinate preparedness efforts for potential river flooding.

IDOT is monitoring weather conditions and will continue to respond as necessary to any flooding situations that may occur. IDOT urges motorists to be alert for the possibility of standing water on roads.

“It only takes a few moments for your vehicle to be swept away by flooding,” said Transportation Secretary Randy Blankenhorn. “If you come across a flooded section of road, turn around. Do not attempt to drive through flooded roads; it’s not worth the risk.”

Driving tips during flooding situations include:

- Never attempt to drive through flooded roads.
- Even if a road covered by water seems shallow enough to cross, do not attempt to cross it.
- Seek higher ground if your vehicle stalls in a flooded area; do not attempt to push your vehicle out of the water.

IEMA Director James K. Joseph urges people to keep their children and themselves away from flood waters.

“Too often, we hear about children playing in flood waters being swept away by fast-moving currents, sometimes with tragic results” said Joseph. “Flood waters also may contain sewer overflows or harmful chemicals, so it’s particularly important to stay out of flood waters.”

Additional flood safety tips include:

- Avoid skin contact with sewer water, especially cuts and sores. Keep them clean and covered.
- Do not eat or drink anything exposed to sewer water.
- Keep contaminated objects, water and hands away from mucous membranes (mouth, eyes and nose).
- Wash hands frequently, especially after bathroom use, before eating and immediately following contact with sewer water or contaminated objects or surfaces.

Joseph also noted that anyone who experiences flooding in their home should notify their insurance company.

The Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) encourages boaters to stay off the water when river levels rise.

“When rivers rise, conditions can be extremely hazardous to recreational boaters, and we strongly urge boaters to stay off the water,” said IDNR Director Wayne Rosenthal. “Submerged debris, strong currents and other dangerous conditions may exist. Even the most experienced boaters can get into trouble in conditions like these. Please play it safe and observe all river closures.”

For more safety information and updates on the current situation, visit the Ready Illinois website at www.Ready.Illinois.gov or check out Ready Illinois on Facebook and Twitter.