
NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2006AE0018-000632
May 22, 2006

Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

PROVINCE SUPPORTING LOCAL GOVERNMENT FLOOD WATCH

VICTORIA – The Province is taking a proactive approach by supporting local governments in B.C.’s South Okanagan and South Kootenay areas that are experiencing flood risks, Solicitor General John Les announced today.

Les, Minister of Public Safety, is visiting the Emergency Operations Centre in Nelson and Passmore today to be briefed by emergency officials. He is also scheduled to fly over flooded areas near Grand Forks including the Kettle and Granby rivers.

Flooding resulted from unseasonably warm temperatures leading into the long weekend, causing run-off from melted snow at higher elevations that quickly raised river water levels. The Slocan River near Passmore, the Kettle and Granby rivers near Grand Forks, and small creeks and rivers north of Castlegar, were impacted causing flooding in several area communities. There are 469 homes being closely monitored for flood risk potential, 53 homes have been evacuated and 130 residences are under alert.

“The Province has deployed provincial staff and is actively supporting hundreds of personnel and volunteers trained to respond to emergency situations,” added Les. “Provincial support includes emergency responders on the ground helping with a quarter-million sandbags sent to 21 communities, emergency social services to help people in need and search and rescue volunteers to assist door-to-door in some communities.”

The Central Provincial Regional Emergency Operations Centre (PREOC) in Kamloops, the Southeast PREOC in Nelson and the Provincial Emergency Coordination Centre in Victoria, are activated with temporary emergency management members and Provincial Emergency Program staff to provide technical, logistical and operational support to local governments and First Nations.

“I want to thank local emergency staff and the hundreds of volunteers who have worked around the clock over this long weekend to ensure the safety of residents,” said Les. “This response shows that the recommendations of the Filmon report with respect to the importance of local emergency planning are already having a positive effect.”

If your area is affected by a flood watch, the two most important concerns are safety and sanitation. For more information on preparedness, check the Provincial Emergency Program website at www.pep.bc.ca. or call the toll free line at 1 800-663-3456.

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