
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General

FLOOD PROTECTION WORK STARTING IN HOUSTON

HOUSTON – Snow removal has begun on the Bulkley River dike as part of the first phase of urgent flood mitigation work, Minister of Public Safety John Les and Houston Mayor Sharon Smith announced today.

More than \$29,000 has already been approved to raise the dike by half a metre between Tweedie and Nadina Avenue. An additional \$36,493 has recently been approved to fund design, engineering and material costs. Planning for projects at Buck Creek and the Westland Helicopters site has also started.

The projects are part of a \$33-million package of flood prevention funding for local governments, regional districts and diking authorities announced by Premier Gordon Campbell last Saturday. The money will be applied to projects across B.C. All projects must be completed before the 2007 spring runoff.

“We know that the snowpack this year is at almost record highs and could result in heavy flooding this spring,” said Les. “That means we need to do everything we can, as soon as we can, to ensure that communities are safe.”

“We are very pleased the Province has made funding available to Houston to undertake these works and allow us to be proactive in responding to potential flooding,” said Smith. “By starting now, there is every expectation work will be completed before the major runoff event begins.”

“No one wants a repeat of the flooding Houston saw in 1997 and 2002,” said Bulkley Valley-Stikine MLA Dennis MacKAY. “By starting work now, we’ll be in a much better position to deal with potential flooding in May and June.”

Fifty-one projects across the province, valued at nearly \$15.5 million, have already been approved for funding. Applications for local projects are still being accepted. All projects must focus on areas where there is a real threat of flooding and where the overall protection of public safety and infrastructure depends on completion of mitigation works. Local governments have already started work on many of the approved projects.

Snowpack levels throughout B.C. are high and in many cases at record levels for this time of year. Earlier this month, the Province asked local governments and diking authorities to identify critical flood protection measures as a way to mitigate the risk.

The Provincial Emergency Program works year-round with local governments to prepare for emergencies. For more information on how you and your family can prepare for an emergency, visit www.pep.bc.ca.

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