

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Localized Flooding Leads to Coordinated Response

The Regional District of East Kootenay and City of Cranbrook, with support from the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, are working cooperatively in response to localized flooding in the Hospital Creek and Jim Smith Creek drainages.

“We are currently experiencing ponding and localized flooding, particularly in the 3rd Street NW area and Leask,” says RDEK Emergency Services Director Travis Abbey. “The residents have been working together with the City and RDEK to create a dirt berm and have been actively sandbagging as water pools in Pop Price park.”

A dirt berm was constructed over the weekend and is being reinforced with additional dirt today. Sand and sandbags have also been dropped off to help residents in the affected area prepare should the water continue to rise. There are currently five homes being directly impacted by water on 3rd Street NW.

The City’s storm water system is at capacity and the water flow is backing up along both Hospital Creek in the King Street area and Jim Smith Creek as it exits Elizabeth Lake. “If you can imagine a bathtub with one drain and a number of hoses filling it, you can get a clear picture of the challenge we are faced with,” adds Abbey. “The City has deployed pumps and Public Works crews have been providing equipment and trucking fill to help keep water at bay; however, it is going to be sometime yet before the system will have the capacity to drain.”

A few homes and at least one business along Jim Smith Creek between Elizabeth Lake and where the creek channel goes under Van Horne Street are experiencing localized flooding. The RDEK is also urging residents along Caldwell Road to move equipment, vehicles and other property to higher ground.

“Elizabeth Lake is rising up to an inch per day right now and it’s important for people to take action now to help protect their property. Things like vehicles, recreational vehicles and other equipment should be moved to higher ground before the water levels rise to the point where access may be difficult or impossible,” says Abbey.

A self-fill sandbag station remains open at the City of Cranbrook Public Works yard on Cobham Avenue. A self-fill sandbag station has also been set up at Centennial Hall in Kimberley for residents wishing to prepare their properties or concerned about high water levels.

In March, the Province announced it had approved Disaster Financial Assistance for the entire East Kootenay. This week, Emergency Management BC announced it has extended the event’s date range to include the time period from **March 5 – April 10, 2017**. Both the City and RDEK have application forms available on their websites and at their main offices in Cranbrook.

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