

## Flood Warning Pembroke District

NEWS

Tuesday, May 14, 2019  
3:00pm

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) – Pembroke District is advising area residents that a Flood Warning for the Ottawa, Bonnechere and Madawaska Rivers and a Watershed Conditions Statement – Water Safety for the remainder of Renfrew County is in effect until Tuesday, May 21, 2019.

The County of Renfrew, City of Pembroke and several municipalities have declared states of emergency due to flooding and water levels and flows on the Ottawa, Bonnechere and Madawaska River systems remain high.

Going into the long weekend and summer season, all residents and visitors should be aware that **there is an increased risk to public safety because of high water**. After weeks of flooding there is a lot of debris remaining which could be dangerous. High water is causing strong currents and there are hidden dangers under the water especially for people not familiar with the area. In many locations hazard markers cannot be replaced into lakes until the water levels decline causing an increased risk to boaters. Additionally, bacteria and contamination in the water in flooded areas could cause an increased health risk to swimmers. Residents and visitors are being asked to avoid recreational boating on flooded lakes as the increased wave action could affect sandbag walls and contribute to shoreline erosion.

Any residents with flooded property should take appropriate action as flood waters start to subside. **Sandbags need to be disposed of properly as they could be contaminated**. Anyone requiring information about the disposal of sandbags, recovery and clean-up or requiring assistance should contact their local municipality.

MNRF advises extreme caution when using forest access roads for outdoor activities. Many are seasonally inundated with water, prone to washouts, and may be impassable due to current water levels. The public should avoid crossing any submerged roads as there may be a risk to traveler safety.

MNRF is closely monitoring the weather and developing watershed conditions. Further updates will be issued as appropriate.

## TECHNICAL INFORMATION

### Description of Weather System

This message is being sent based on information received from MNR - Surface Water Monitoring Centre, MNR - Aviation Forest Fire and Emergency Management Services and Environment Canada.

The weather over the next week is looking favourable with no significant rain events forecast.

### Description of Current Conditions

The Ottawa, Bonnechere and Madawaska systems in Renfrew County have now stabilized and are starting to decline, however water levels and flows remain high and flooding continues to occur in some low-lying areas. Water levels in these river systems are expected to remain high for the foreseeable future.

In other areas around the County water levels have returned to seasonal spring levels.

Some areas along the Ottawa, Bonnechere and Madawaska Rivers continue to experience flooding and some roads and structures remain closed due to flooding and wash-outs.

Extreme caution around lakes, rivers and submerged roads in addition to keeping a close watch on local forecasts and conditions is recommended for the safety of all residents.

## DEFINITIONS

- **WATERSHED CONDITIONS STATEMENT – FLOOD OUTLOOK:** gives early notice of the potential for flooding based on weather forecasts calling for heavy rain, snow melt, high winds or other conditions
- **WATERSHED CONDITIONS STATEMENT – WATER SAFETY:** indicates that high flows, melting ice or other factors could be dangerous for such users as boaters, anglers and swimmers but flooding is not expected.
- **FLOOD WATCH:** potential for flooding exists within specific watercourses and municipalities
- **FLOOD WARNING:** flooding is imminent or occurring within specific watercourses and municipalities.

## LEARN MORE

- Surface Water Monitoring Centre public webpage [www.ontario.ca/flooding](http://www.ontario.ca/flooding)
- Environment Canada bulletins: [www. weather.gc.ca](http://www.weather.gc.ca)
- A close watch on local conditions and weather forecasts from Environment Canada is recommended.

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