



**St. Clair Region
Conservation
Authority**
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Flood Advisory

Bulletin Number: 2009 Flood Event 1, Bulletin 1
Issued at: February 9, 2009 at 15:00
Issued by: Brian McDougall, Director of Watershed Services

Highlights:

- Snow melt from warm temperatures causing river water levels to rise
- Forecast of warm temperatures and rain

Current:

Water levels on the Sydenham River and its tributaries are higher today resulting from the above normal temperatures and snow melt of the past 2 days. Water levels peaked early this morning on the Sydenham River in Strathroy and on Perch Creek in Sarnia as well as on many other small tributaries. Levels continue to climb on lower reaches of the Sydenham River as well as Bear and Black Creeks with the most significant change in levels being at Brigden, where water levels have risen 1.6 metres (5.25 feet) from Friday. Localized flooding is occurring along some watercourses while others have near bank full conditions.

Short Term:

Temperatures are forecast to remain well above normal through Thursday. Precipitation forecasts for the next 3 days are wide ranging with total accumulations varying from 15–35 mm (0.6–1.4 inches) over the period. The remaining snow will continue to melt with above freezing temperatures. Last week the existing snowpack was measured to be equivalent to near 50 mm (2 inches) of water. It is estimated that the melting over the last 2 days has reduced this by nearly 50%. A lack of frost in many areas will allow infiltration and should reduce runoff and may assist in controlling water levels.

This Week:

Water levels are expected to peak in upstream areas (Bear Creek at Petrolia and the Sydenham River at Alvinston) later today before moving downstream. Rain forecast for Monday night and Tuesday (5 mm or 0.2 inches) will slow the rate of decline in upstream areas and slow the occurrence of peaks in downstream areas. Rain forecast for Wednesday (10-30 mm or 0.4-1.2 inches) is expected once again push water levels higher. Ice conditions are deteriorating rapidly and are expected to continue to decay with rain and temperatures well above freezing. Ice conditions varied significantly from 18-30 cm (7-12 inches) and up to 60 cm (24 inches) within the ice jam in the north branch of the Sydenham River at Wallaceburg. Ice jamming is a possibility with increased flows as the ice breaks up. Municipal emergency response staff and road superintendents should review emergency response plans and monitor local conditions closely.

Residents are reminded to avoid watercourses and flooded areas due to slippery banks and cold and swift moving water. Parents in particular are urged to keep their children away from floodplain areas.

The St. Clair Region Conservation Authority will monitor the flood condition of the watersheds in the region and will provide warnings to municipal officials and media in the event conditions develop which could result in the potential of flooding.

Update: As required.
Contact: Brian McDougall at 519-617-1925
Confirmation: Confirmation of receipt of this message **is not** required

Types of Flood Bulletins

- *Flood Monitoring/Safety Bulletins* are dual purpose in nature, with Monitoring Bulletins used to report on general watershed conditions to flood coordinators, and Safety Bulletins to remind the general public of general river safety issues.
- *Flood Advisory Bulletins* are issued when the potential for flooding exists in specific municipalities.
- *Flood Warning Bulletins* are issued after a forecast has been made and apply to specific flood damage centres where serious flooding appears inevitable.