



SAINT JOHN

Subject: Spring Freshet Emergency Response	Category: Policy
Policy No.:	M&C Report No.:
Effective Date:	Next Review Date: (3 years)
Area(s) this policy applies to: City of Saint John employees; excludes elected officials, as well as members of agencies, boards, and commissions that manage their own devices.	Office Responsible for review of this Policy: Saint John Emergency Management Organization
Related Instruments:	Policy Sponsor: Director of Saint John Emergency Management Organization
	Document Pages: This document consists of 6 pages.
Revision History:	
<div style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"><p>Common Clerk's Annotation for Official Record</p><p>I certify that the Spring Freshet Emergency Response Policy was adopted by resolution of Common Council on Month-Day-Year.</p><p>I certify that the Spring Freshet Emergency Response Policy was approved by the City Manager on Month-day-Year</p><div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; margin-top: 20px;"><div style="text-align: center;"><hr style="width: 200px; border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin: 0;"/><p>Common Clerk</p></div><div style="text-align: center;"><hr style="width: 200px; border: 0; border-top: 1px solid black; margin: 0;"/><p>Date</p></div></div></div>	
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1. POLICY STATEMENT

The purpose of the Spring Freshet Emergency Response Policy (the “Policy”) for the City of Saint John (the “City”) is to define the parameters that would initiate an emergency response to flood water conditions during the annual Saint John River spring freshet and the resources and services the city would provide.

2. SCOPE

The Policy applies to an emergency response to the annual Saint John River spring freshet. The Policy does not apply to localized flooding within the City during severe weather events.

The 2018 flood in Saint John during the spring freshet mobilized an unprecedented distribution and use of City resources. The Policy sets out conditions that would trigger an emergency response and the deployment of City resources.

Emergency management responsibilities in Canada are shared by Federal, Provincial, and Territorial (FPT) governments and their partners, including Indigenous peoples, municipalities/communities and individual citizens who have a responsibility to be prepared for disasters and contribute to community resiliency.

There is no statutory requirement for the City to provide resources, nor prevent a property from flooding. However, the City will assist with the prevention of property flooding by making available sandbags to individual property owners within the City when the spring freshet flood emergency response level is met.

3. LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

The following legislation and plans apply to the Policy:

- a) Emergency Management Framework of Canada: Third Edition
- b) Emergency Measures Act of the Province of New Brunswick
- c) Municipalities Act of the Province of New Brunswick
- d) Saint John Emergency Measures By-law
- e) Saint John Municipal Emergency Response Plan

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Flood levels along the Saint John River during the spring freshet vary annually based on many environmental factors. Most years the impact is minimal, and an emergency response is not required as those living in flood-prone areas experience regular flooding annually, and therefore mitigation becomes a routine or habitual operation. However, during severe floods, such as the floods of 1973 (5.31 m); 2008 (5.2 m); and 2018 (5.76 m), emergency response was warranted requiring the Saint John Emergency Management Organization (SJEMO) to activate and allocate resources as necessary. Of these three relatively recent severe flood events in Saint John, 2008 was the lowest flood level to trigger

an emergency response. Therefore, the 2008 flood level will be used as the trigger for flood emergency response moving forward. Enhanced response for this flood level or higher will help mitigate the potential impacts on critical infrastructure and residential property.

To ensure the City has sufficient lead time for preparations, flood levels in the City of Fredericton region will be monitored for projected 2008 flood conditions in Saint John. Furthermore, at any time when it is projected by New Brunswick Emergency Measures Organization (NBEMO) that flood levels will reach emergency flood status; SJEMO will activate to Level 3 (Full Activation), and flood emergency response actions will begin.

Usually, two to three days' notice is available for potential flood waters. SJEMO will use the following table as a guideline for responding to specific flood levels that occur during the annual spring freshet.

Table 1

Flood Activation Levels and the Resulting Actions Based on Saint John River Flood Levels in Metres

Projected Flood Levels (metres)*	Actions	Lead Agency
Pre-flood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flood preparedness messaging • Resource inventory and preparation (staffing and equipment) • Confirm reception centre availability • Stakeholder engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications • TES • ESS • SJEMO
4.2 m Regular flood level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SJEMO – Level 1 Activation – Enhanced Monitoring • Implement flood communication messaging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SJEMO • Communications
4.7 m	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SJEMO – Level 2 Activation – Partial Activation • Provide assistance on a case by case basis if an emergency exists. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SJEMO
>5.2 m Flood Emergency Response Level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SJEMO – Level 3 – Full Activation • Implement a flood emergency response including the establishment of sandbag distribution centres. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SJEMO • TES
Post-Flood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Damage assessment • Implement the Flood Recovery Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SJEMO

**Flood response levels are based on 2008 flood levels in Saint John, which include critical infrastructure impacts and effects on residential properties.*

5. MONITOR AND REVIEW

The Policy shall be reviewed every three (3) years by the Saint John Emergency Management Organization, or should changes or circumstances warrant.

6. IMPLEMENTATION

City resources committed to this type of emergency response will be determined through our normal emergency management processes.

During Spring Freshet Emergency Response

- Filled sandbags will be made available at distribution centres for pick up free of charge.
- City resources will not be used for delivery to specific locations.
- The number and location of distribution centres will depend on the situation.
- The City will maintain the capacity to establish up to three centres.

During Spring Freshet Emergency Recovery

- The City will assist in the removal of flood debris including sandbags.
- Separate instructions would be provided with clear direction on requirements for property owners to separate debris by type and place roadside.
- City resources will not operate on private property.

7. AUTHORIZATION

The Spring Freshet Emergency Response Policy Document is authorized under the authority of the City Manager, on the recommendation by the Director of the Saint John Emergency Management Organization.

8. RESOURCES

Resources reviewed for the development of the Policy included:

- Province of New Brunswick Historic Water Levels
- City of Fredericton Flood Playbook 2018

9. PROCEDURES

SJEMO will activate to the appropriate level of flood response according to projected flood levels.

Standard operating procedures for sandbag distribution centres shall be developed as appropriate by Transportation and Environment Services.

Flood-related messaging will be disseminated according to current standard operating procedures by the Communications Department.

10. GLOSSARY

- a) **Emergency Response:** To act immediately before, during, or after an emergency to manage its consequences and to minimize suffering and losses associated with the event.

- b) **Flood Emergency Response**: To act immediately before, during, or after a flood to manage its consequences and to minimize suffering and losses associated with flooding.
- c) **Flood Recovery Plan**: A plan intended to repair, restore and improve on conditions to an acceptable level through measures taken after a flood.
- d) **Federal, Provincial and Territorial (FPT)**: Government bodies that are responsible for the Emergency Management Framework in Canada
- e) **Level 1 Activation (Enhanced Monitoring)**: Continuous monitoring by all SJEMO members of an emergency situation that may require immediate municipal assistance.
- f) **Level 2 Activation (Partial Activation)**: Once notified, selected SJEMO members may be called in to assist in supporting ongoing efforts towards an emergency.
- g) **Level 3 Activation (Full Activation)**: All SJEMO members are to report to the EOC to provide direction, coordination, communication, and support during emergency operations.
- h) **Localized Flooding**: Describes situations where intense rainfall is expected to cause high run-off volumes in small catchments or in localized areas with minimal impact.
- i) **Saint John Emergency Management Organization (SJEMO)**: An Emergency Management Organization specific to Saint John, New Brunswick that has been instituted to create and implement a municipal all-hazard emergency management plan to mitigate hazards, prepare the community, and govern response and recovery activities within the boundaries of the City of Saint John as well as when providing mutual aid to neighbouring communities.
- j) **Spring Freshet**: A spring thaw resulting from snow and ice melt in rivers located in the northern latitudes of North America.
- k) **The City**: The City used in reference to represent the City of Saint John in New Brunswick, Canada.

11. INQUIRIES

Inquiries about the Spring Freshet Emergency Response Policy may be directed to the Director of Saint John Emergency Management Organization.

12. APPENDIX

Non-applicable