

HOUGHTON COUNTY MICHIGAN OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MEASURES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: July 6, 2018 – 2 p.m.

(Houghton, MI) – Debris removal, roads, streams and a possible homeowner security issue were the topics of discussion during today's morning briefing of State and local officials working on the Houghton County Fathers Day flooding.

It was noted that volunteers are going door-to-door in some impacted areas to make sure residents are aware of the help and supplies they can ask for. All these individuals carry identification indicating they are officially recognized recovery workers. Residents should be sure to ask for proper identification from anyone who comes to their door and call authorities if they become suspicious of anyone asking to enter their home or apartment. Volunteers are not doing inspections of any kind and are only there to explain available options for food, supplies, manpower and other assistance.

A call still goes out for volunteers to assist with a wide variety of flood-related projects. Anyone with a desire to help their neighbors can call (906) 233-6621. That's the same number to call for anyone who may be in need assistance. It's now a centralized number that will route either call to the appropriate agency. As always, both volunteers and those requesting help or supplies can visit the Volunteer Resource Center located in the former JC Penny store at the Copper Country Mall. Hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekends and 1 p.m. to 8 p.m. weekdays.

Speaking of supplies, there is an abundance of both food and cleaning supplies available for impacted residents and no more of those type of donations are needed. The ONLY items that are being requested at this time are box fans and dehumidifiers. Those items may be brought to the Copper Country Mall location for distribution.

As far as restoration of waterways, the Department of Environmental Quality continues to work restoring streams and drainages to their original beds but notes that this is still essentially being done on an emergency basis. "It's not going to be pretty and we want everyone to keep in mind that this is a temporary fix to mitigate future problems with storm water runoff," said DEQ Incident Management Specialist Scott Schaefer. "There's still a lot of work to do down the road."

The City of Houghton continues to work on the Sharon Avenue washout at M-26 and all four culverts are now in place and utility work underway. Officials hope to have the intersection open by early next week. The patching of road shoulders continues there are reports that some roads continue to degrade as the result of roadbed washouts beneath the pavement.

The Department of Natural Resources announces that the recreational trail between Hancock and Copper Harbor is now open. Work continues on various other trails and the public is warned not to access any trails marked closed due to dangerous hazards that still exist.

(MORE)

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The Western U.P Health Department advises that a volunteer is still in the area to assist residents who have contaminated wells. Health officials say that about 30 percent of the 210 wells tested have shown some form of contamination. For further information on this and other health related issues, visit:

<http://www.wupdhd.org/>

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MEDIA: For additional information, contact Public Information Officers Eric Forsberg at (708) 465-4838 / Eric@HoughtonCounty.net or Michael H. Babcock at (612) 747-9686 / michael.babcock@finlandia.edu.