

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: July 9, 2018 – 11 a.m.

## **Officials Await Decision by FEMA Following Fathers Day Floods**

(Houghton, MI) – The official request for a Houghton County Federal Disaster Declaration has left Michigan and is now in Washington, D.C. awaiting evaluation by FEMA. Information regarding damage and repair estimates were gathered by local, county and state officials and sent to the Governor's Office which, in turn, has passed them on to Washington. There is no word on when a final decision on federal assistance might be made. If approved, a Disaster Declaration opens the way for additional government funding to help local recovery.

Rain on Sunday night had little impact on local roadwork as crews continue to arrive in Houghton County from around the state. The Michigan Department of Transportation has three two-person teams arriving from Lansing today to evaluate and reassess areas where damage continues to "migrate" following the initial storm impact. Some streambeds such as Quincy Creek and others have filled with rock and other debris and, while capable of carrying water now, need work before winter snowmelt creates additional problems.

City of Houghton crews continue work on the Sharon Avenue intersection at M-26. Crews are now filling the roadbed with gravel and coordinating with MDOT on traffic signal operation there. The road should be opening in the very near future.

Illegal debris dumping continues to be a problem throughout the county as piles pop along roadsides, near culverts and in open areas. According to the DNR, as much as two truckloads of debris were recently dumped illegally in a trail area that had just had been cleaned out. It's debris like this that clogs culverts and streams, leading to flooding. The DNR is ticketing anyone found illegally dumping. Residents are reminded that all debris must be discarded at either an official transfer station or through normal residential pickup.

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.

Michigan Tech reports that they have reopened floors one through five of the Administration Building after being given the "all clear" from the appropriate departments. The ground floor remains closed as work continues there.

The Western U.P Health Department advises that water quality in the canal continues to improve and a number of local beaches are now open and safe for swimming. For further information on this and other health related issues, visit: <http://www.wuphd.org/>

(More)

HOUGHTON COUNTY MICHIGAN OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MEASURES

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Volunteers are still needed to assist those impacted by the flooding. Anyone wishing to help is advised to call (906) 233-6621. That's also the number to call for those who may need assistance. 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. Right now, the only donations being requested are dehumidifiers and box fans.

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MEDIA: For additional information, contact Public Information Officers Eric Forsberg at (708) 465-4838  
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