



Media Release

Date: May 19, 2023

For immediate release

RDCK residents encouraged to be flood prepared

Nelson, BC: With the southern interior of BC experiencing unseasonably hot weather, the risk of flooding in the Regional District of Central Kootenay (RDCK) continues to increase. The Slocan River is currently under a Flood Watch warning by the BC River Forecast Centre and all other areas of the RDCK remain under a High Streamflow Advisory. It is imperative all RDCK residents take the necessary steps to be flood prepared.

In the past several days the snowmelt rates have increased the flow levels in the rivers and creeks across the RDCK and water levels are expected to continue to rise throughout the weekend. Although the mid-elevation snowpack has reduced, there is still a significant amount of snow remaining at higher elevation. Freezing levels are hovering at around 4,000 metres. Environment Canada is forecasting temperatures rising into the 30's °C over the next few days, as well as the potential for widespread showers Sunday and Monday (May 21-22). The abnormal heat, rising water levels and the forecasted rain could lead to flooding.

This same conditions are also impacting Kootenay lake levels. FortisBC issued a notification earlier this week that lake levels could increase by as much as five feet within the next two weeks. Lake levels are predominately driven by natural inflows as a result of melting snow pack and precipitation, and are subject to sudden, large increases. For the most current information and to sign up for lake level notices, visit www.fortisbc.com/lakelevel. You can also subscribe to receive [BC Hydro email updates](#) on reservoir level forecasts for either the Lower Columbia River or the Upper Columbia River.

The key to emergency preparedness is knowing the risks and having a plan. Know the hazards in your area and take the time **NOW** to assemble your family [Emergency Kit and Grab and Go Bag](#). Your plan should also include where you will meet if you need to evacuate, including how you would move pets and livestock to a safe area, in the event the situation worsens and an Evacuation Order is enforced. The RDCK strongly encourages residents to remain in the know and to obey all Evacuation Orders when they are published. Sandbags and sand are also available for residents to protect their homes. Visit the RDCK website to find a sandbagging location near your home: www.rdck.ca/befloodprepared. It is also important to review your insurance policy. Standard home, tenant and condo insurance policies provide coverage for some of your expenses when you leave your home due to mandatory evacuation order.

[Sign up for emergency notifications](#), through Voyent Alert! The RDCK uses the mass-notification system to send out critical information to residents and visitors in the event of an emergency. Residents should also be aware that the province has expanded use of its broadcast intrusive alerting system to include flooding and wildfire messaging. This allows local government and First Nations to use the service to alert residents if there is an

imminent threat to life and public safety. This system will be used when necessary to amplify Evacuation Orders in the RDCK.

The RDCK warns everyone to stay clear of fast-flowing rivers and potentially unstable riverbanks, avoid recreational activities such as fishing, swimming and boating near high streamflow rivers or streams and remember, high streamflow can easily trap strong swimmers, so take the necessary precautions.

During a High Streamflow Advisory and a Flood Watch, conditions can change quickly. Understand the risks and get prepared by visiting [Prepared BCs = Get prepared for floods](#). The [BC River Forecast Centre](#) continues to monitor the conditions and will provide updates as conditions warrant. Report any landslides or flooding to the [Provincial Emergency Coordinator Centre](#) at 1.800.663.3456.

For details about evacuations and emergency preparedness, along with other resources, please visit www.rdck.ca/eocinfo. Follow the [RDCK website](#), [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) for the most up to date information.

For more emergency preparedness resources:

- [Current RDCK Evacuation Alerts, Orders and Rescinds](#) or call 250.352.7701
- Report flooding or any new hazards to the 24-hour toll-free provincial emergency number at 1.800.663.3456.
- [Sign up for RDCK Emergency Notification System to receive notifications](#)
- Follow the [BC River Forecast Centre](#) for flood warning and advisories
- [FortisBC Kootenay Lake Level Monitoring](#)
- [Prepared BC](#)
- [Public weather alerts for BC from Environment Canada](#)
- [Fortis BC Outage Map](#) or call 1.866.436.7847
- [BC Hydro outage map](#) or call 1.800.224.9376
- [Nelson Hydro](#) 1.877.324.9376
- [Drive BC](#) for highway closures and road conditions
- [Yellowhead Road and Bridge \(YRB\)](#) 1.888.630.1420

Incorporated in 1965, the Regional District of Central Kootenay (RDCK) is a local government that serves 60,000 residents in 11 electoral areas and nine member municipalities. The RDCK provides more than 160 services, including community facilities, fire protection and emergency services, grants, planning and land use, regional parks, resource recovery and handling, transit, water services and much more. For more information about the RDCK, visit www.rdck.ca.

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