

PUEBLO COUNTY EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN

ANNEX A - FLOOD

I. PURPOSE

To provide for a flood warning and emergency response system in order to protect the lives and property of citizens and visitors to Pueblo County.

II. SITUATIONS AND ASSUMPTIONS

A. Situation

1. Historically, flooding of most or all of the community has been relatively infrequent, but when it occurs, populated and economically valuable areas throughout the community can be adversely affected.
2. Localized flooding may occur during rainfall in any area of the community.

B. Assumptions

1. With adequate warning and timely reaction by county/municipal emergency response agencies, loss of life, injury and property damage can be reduced. Where gradients are steep, as in southwestern Pueblo County, the time of flood onset may be very short; careful planning and coordination is required to protect effected populations.
2. Through a variety of means; e.g. National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) all-hazards weather radio, standard radio bulletins, TV bulletins, citizens and authorities will be advised of flood conditions.

III. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

A **flash flood watch** means it is possible that rain will cause flash flooding in specified areas. A **flash flood warning** means flash flooding is either imminent or is occurring. A **flood watch** means long term flooding is possible in specified areas. A **flood warning** means long term flooding is either imminent or is occurring.

Initial notification is often very limited in detail; consequently, a follow-up call to the notifying party or agency will be made to obtain further detail. For example, a flash flood warning may be issued by the National Weather Service (NWS) for an area in which little danger to the public would result, some emergency actions would be called for, but perhaps not enough to call for an EOC activation. If that follow-up information is not available in a timely fashion, then a flood warning may result in a precautionary EOC activation.

Emergency response to potential and/or actual flood conditions will be accomplished in three phases:

A. Readiness

1. When a flood threat is identified, emergency response organizations are alerted for possible activation. Increased observation and surveillance procedures will be implemented. Normally, the initial threat notification will originate with the NWS in the form of watches and warnings; however, notification may also come from dam owners and/or spotters/stream watchers.
2. Based on initial and any follow-up information gathered, an evaluation of the threat to life/property will be made, including:
 - a) Potential inundation areas;
 - b) Warning and evacuation requirements;
 - c) Safe areas - temporary shelters;
 - d) Resources required; and
 - e) Potential need for activation of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC).

B. Emergency

1. When a flash flood warning or flood warning is issued and the risk is substantiated by the NWS, or actual flooding occurs and life/property is threatened, the EOC will be activated (if not already activated during the Readiness Phase). Warning and evacuation will be completed, and shelter provided to those people requiring temporary housing. Resources not already pre-positioned to mitigate the threat

will be moved into position. Search and rescue operations will be affected as deemed necessary.

2. A Forward Command Post may be established in the vicinity of the affected areas(s) to coordinate on-scene actions, and/or to provide a link between on-scene agencies and the EOC.
3. Information will be gathered from NWS, Flood Monitoring System, USGS, media, spotters and others regarding current flooding conditions and relayed through the NWS to the EOC.
4. Damage Assessment will begin, information/data will be collected and reported to the EOC.
5. Based on the damage assessment, a disaster declaration may be issued.

C. Recovery

1. All departments/agencies represented in the EOC will coordinate necessary actions to sustain life and property.
2. All efforts will be taken to restore public facilities as quickly as possible.
3. Damage assessment and evaluation will proceed as needed.

IV. ORGANIZATION AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Pueblo Communications Centers:

1. Collect and distribute current data on warning and evacuation;
2. Maintain contact with emergency response agencies including fire, law enforcement, public works, and emergency management for emergency flood fighting needs; and
3. Coordinate with each other for efficient multi-agency and multi-jurisdictional response.

B. Colorado Division of Water Resources, Pueblo office:

1. Maintain an ongoing dialogue with dam owners on condition of dams and water levels. Increase this communication and establish procedures for increased surveillance when dam and/or water level conditions create potential or real threats to life and property;
2. Notify the Pueblo Communications Centers (call 9-1-1) of dam conditions that create potential or real threats to life and property in Pueblo County; and
3. Take actions to control flooding.

C. Dam/Reservoir owners:

1. Prepare and maintain a current dam/reservoir Emergency Preparedness Plan. This plan will be coordinated with, and copies provided to, the Department of Emergency Management. The Division of Water Resources has procedures for all dams; and
2. Ensure timely notification to the Pueblo Office of the Colorado Division of Water Resources, and the Pueblo Communications Centers of potential or imminent dam failures. This notification, in accordance with the Emergency Preparedness Plan, will include at a minimum:
 - a) Current condition of dam;
 - b) Potential or existing threat; actions being taken to eliminate or mitigate the threat, and by whom. Assistance, if any, required beyond owner's capability; and
 - c) Name of individual making the notification, his/her location, and type of communications link (telephone number, fax number, pager number, and/or radio frequency) to be utilized for follow-up situation reports.

D. Pueblo County Department of Emergency Management (DEM):

1. Coordinate disaster planning and operations with the community's emergency response organizations, area industrial installations, public utilities, welfare agencies, adjacent jurisdiction emergency

management coordinators, and Colorado Division of Emergency Management (CDEM); ensure integrated emergency response and recovery;

2. Support operations with resources; and
3. Provide assistance with search/rescue/recovery.

E. City/County Health Department:

1. Coordinate support for inoculations, water purification, and insect and rodent control;
2. Evaluate and recommend methods for the disposal of contaminated food and animal carcasses; and
3. Identify sites for debris disposal and oversee their use.

F. Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Center:

1. Prepare copies of maps reflecting potential inundation areas, evacuation routes and safe areas/shelters; and
2. Support the EOC operation with automated products developed before, during and after an incident.

G. Public Information Officers:

1. Establish a Joint Information Center to gather information and respond to queries and rumors from the media and public;
2. Prepare and distribute emergency public information; and
3. Brief media, public officials and other interested groups on flood status and response/recovery activities.

H. Law Enforcement:

1. Assist in warning and alerting public;
2. Establish and maintain traffic control;
3. Coordinate evacuation;

4. Provide security control and limit access into and within the disaster area;
 5. Coordinate law enforcement activities; and
 6. Provide security for evacuated areas.
- I. Fire Protection Districts:
1. Coordinate fire, rescue and emergency medical response; and
 2. Assist in warning the public of impending danger, and, as necessary, evacuating potential danger areas and providing fire security in evacuated areas as needed.
- J. National Weather Service (NWS):
1. Monitor the situation;
 2. Issue watch and warning messages of the affected area(s); and
 3. Issue special precautionary information to the public.
- K. Amateur Radio Emergency Services (ARES):
1. Amateur Radio operator will establish communications at the NWS during a NWS call up for severe weather situations.
 2. Respond to the EOC upon activation; and
 3. Assist with and provide backup for overall communications, as well as health and well being messages.
- L. American Red Cross (ARC) and/or Salvation Army:
1. Coordinate and operate mass care operations to include sheltering of persons made homeless due to disaster;
 2. Establish and operate mass feeding for victims and disaster workers;
 3. Provide basic health and mental health services for the victims within the shelters;
 4. If necessary, participate in damage assessment of residential areas;

5. Receive and process in-bound disaster inquires; and
 6. Assist in locating missing persons.
- M. Public Works Departments, Metropolitan Districts, Transportation Department and utility companies will collectively:
1. Assist in facilities protection and coordinate emergency repairs to public buildings, roads, utilities, and other essential facilities; recommend priorities for repair of damage;
 2. Assist in damage assessment;
 3. Ensure clearance of critical thoroughfares;
 4. Provide available emergency traffic control equipment such as barricades and street flares;
 5. Conduct or oversee emergency shutdown of utilities to prevent damage; monitor condition of sewage, electrical, gas, water, and telecommunications distribution systems;
 6. Determine emergency sources of electricity, gas, potable water, and telecommunications; and
 7. Conduct or oversee debris removal and disposal.

V. ADMINISTRATION AND LOGISTICS

All actions will be documented and compiled for financial and historical data.

VI. ANNEX DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE

The primary responsibility for development and maintenance of this annex is that of DEM with support from responding agencies. The annex will be reviewed annually and updated accordingly, unless significant change warrants an earlier revision.