

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: June 21, 2018 – 11:30 a.m.

Houghton County Disaster Recovery Update

(Houghton, MI) – Following are the latest updates regarding the flood recovery efforts in Houghton County.

Any county resident whose homes or businesses have been impacted by the flooding and needs help with clean up can call (906) 233 6621. Hubbell residents requiring assistance can call Township Supervisor Brian Cadwell at 370-5097 or Hubbell Fire Chief Jeremy Dessellier at 231-2709. The Hubbell Fire Hall also has cleaning supplies for residents who need them.

The Red Cross has established a distribution center at the Calumet Coliseum which is open 24/7. They have clean-up kits, comfort kits, water, etc. They are also assisting with distributing meals to volunteers and with the damage assessment process.

The City of Houghton is also accepting donations of goods and distributing them throughout the County. Call the City at (906) 482-1700 if you would like to donate any items. Any County residents needing any supplies can stop by Dee Stadium to pick them up. Lt. Nick Roberts of the Houghton Police Department says they are looking for donations of not only water but small, self-contained foods like Lunchables, chips and other non-perishable items that can be placed in bags for individual distribution to volunteers and local residents.

The Portage Health Foundation and Keweenaw Community Foundation are currently working on a plan to assist homeowners to repair or replace furnaces, water heaters, etc. damaged by the flood. More information will be coming from those organizations. Both organizations along with River Valley are accepting cash donations to help with flood relief. Their contact information is as follows: The Portage Health Foundation - (906) 523-5920, the Keweenaw Community Foundation - (906) 482-9673 and River Valley Bank - (906) 483-2601.

Damage assessment teams should wrap up their work today. After concentrating their efforts in the Lake Linden and Hubbell areas, the five teams have now moved on to Dollar Bay, Houghton and Hancock. The information being gathered by the teams is essential in the County's attempt to receive Federal designation as a disaster area which could lead to Federal financial assistance.

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources will begin work today to assess damage and block off the recreational trails between Hancock and Calumet as well as between Ripley and Lake Linden. Washouts, missing culverts and damaged bridges are making travel on these trails extremely dangerous and they will be closed to all use until further notice.

The Western U.P. Health Department is continuing testing at all recreational bathing beaches in the area. Those beaches continue to be closed due to contamination from storm water runoff. Also, residents that rely on private well water are advised to contact the Health Department for steps to follow in testing and treating their wells if they were affected by flood waters. Additional information is available at: <http://www.wupdhd.org/>

HOUGHTON COUNTY MICHIGAN OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MEASURES

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Two sites in the county have been designated as drop-off points for storm debris and will be ready to begin accepting debris Friday morning. The sites are located at the former Copper Country Dairy on First Street in Dollar Bay and on Paradise Road just off Superior Road in Dodgeville. Look for signs at both locations. These locations are only for items such as limbs, brush, bricks, blocks and gravel. Other debris including household waste, furniture, carpeting, etc. must either be disposed of by regular means of collection or by taking them to the two county transfer station locations. Normal fees will apply, however residents are advised to obtain and keep receipts as funds may be available for possible reimbursement at a later date.

A location for disposal of hazardous materials such as oil, paint cans and contaminated items is still being planned.

The Michigan National Guard has 59 members currently deployed with heavy equipment and that number is expected to increase to 69 at the end of the week. They are currently working in Hubbell and at Old Mill Hill.

For those who need help or would like to offer their time, they can call the Volunteer Hotline at (906) 233-6621. They may also visit the Facebook site at Houghton County Flood Volunteer.

<https://www.facebook.com/CopperCountryStrong2018/> Additional information may also be available from the Citizen's Information Line at 2-1-1. Volunteers are needed!

Concerns about the structural damage of buildings in the area are being addressed by the office of Houghton County Building Inspector. Questions about inspections or other concerns may be directed to that office at (906) 482-2260 or by Email at Building@Houghtoncounty.net.

The Houghton County Road Commission is continuing to work on local roads with both their own and contracted crews. Discussions have been taking place with State of Michigan officials regarding immediate funding as local funds are close to being depleted and the use of contract crews may have to be discontinued.

The Michigan Department of Transportation continues to work on M-203 but, at this time, is unable to give an estimate as to when it may be reopened. They do report that M-26 is now open from Ripley to all points north.

Team Rubicon, a national disaster relief agency has deployed a team to Houghton County and is expected to have 30 volunteers here to help out for an initial period of 14 days.

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MEDIA: For additional information, contact Public Information Officer Eric Forsberg at (708) 465-4838 or Eric@HoughtonCounty.net