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HIGH WATER SAFETY BULLETIN

Bulletin Number: 2011.6.S1

Issued at: March 16, 2011 at 3:30 pm

Issued by: Mark Helsten, Senior Water Resources Engineer

To: Municipal Flood Coordinators (via email and fax)

Message: High Water Conditions Expected The Upper Thames River Conservation Authority (UTRCA) expects water levels in ditches, streams, rivers and ponds to increase over the next few days, due primarily to melting snow.

Parents are urged to keep children away from waterways and floodplain areas. The combination of unstable ice, slippery banks and fast-flowing cold water is very dangerous. Flood control reservoirs are also very hazardous.

Weather forecasts predict above freezing temperatures and some rain over the next few days. The forecast is for 5-10 mm of rain between today and tomorrow night, with the temperature at +5o C tonight and possibly into double digits on Thursday. Temperatures are forecast to remain above freezing over the weekend and into next week.

The UTRCA expects that the mild temperatures will melt the remaining snowpack. A March 15th snow survey indicated the snowpack that feeds the North Thames River (i.e., Mitchell to London) contains the equivalent of 35 mm of water. Along the South Thames River (i.e., Woodstock to London), the snowpack has approximately 25 mm of water content.

Flood coordinators can expect rivers and streams to rise to similar levels as experienced over the past few weeks, beginning tomorrow and peaking on Friday and into the weekend. Water levels will remain high until early next week.

The UTRCA's flood control reservoirs at Pittock (Thames River in Woodstock) and Wildwood (Trout Creek near St. Marys) have begun their annual cycle of filling, and retain about 90% and 40% flood storage capacity, respectively. Fanshawe Reservoir (North Thames River in London) retains more than 90% of flood storage capacity.

UTRCA staff are monitoring the situation and will provide updates as necessary.

View current Thames River flow and meteorological information on-line at

www.thamesriver.on.ca - follow the link to Thames River Levels.

Update: Update as conditions warrant.

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