

Upper Thames River Conservation Authority
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HIGH WATER SAFETY BULLETIN

Bulletin Number: 2011.2.S1
Issued at: February 16, 2011 at 12:00 pm
Issued by: Mark Helsten, Senior Water Resources Engineer

To: Municipal Flood Coordinators (via fax and email)

Message: High Water Conditions Expected

Current weather forecasts call for a warming trend and minor precipitation over the next few days, beginning later today, before a return to colder temperatures later on Friday. Daytime temperatures are forecast to reach 8C to 10C over Thursday and Friday. This combination of sustained above freezing overnight temperatures and rain will cause some of the snowpack in the watershed to melt, and run off into rivers and streams.

At this time we expect a level of flooding similar to that experienced in early January of this year. We expect creeks and rivers to fill their banks and low lying floodplain areas to be under water.

The UTRCA's flood control reservoirs at Wildwood (Trout Creek near St. Marys), Pittock (Thames River in Woodstock), and Fanshawe (North Thames River in London) all retain more than 95% of flood storage capacity.

Ice conditions on frozen water bodies will be changing rapidly over the next few days and will become unsafe. People are warned to stay away from ditches, streams, rivers and ponds as the combination of unstable ice, slippery banks and fast-flowing cold water is very dangerous. Parents in particular are urged to keep children away from floodplain areas.

Hazardous conditions are expected to persist through the weekend and into early next week including Family Day on Monday. The UTRCA will be closely monitoring flows and conditions over the next several days.

Information on river flows and reservoir levels can be found on the UTRCA's website at www.thamesriver.on.ca in the "Thames River Flows" section

Update: Update as conditions warrant.

Contact: Mark Helsten, Senior Water Resources Engineer, at 519-451-2800 ext. 241 (cell 519-719-3585)

Confirmation of receipt of this message: Confirmation is not required

Information copies provided to:
Fax & Email: UTRCA Chair and Vice-Chair; Joint Venture Conservation Authorities; Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority; Grand River Conservation Authority; Ministry of Natural Resources
Email only: County and Health Unit Flood Coordinators, Boards of Education
Fax only: Local Police, OPP, City of London Fire Department

END OF BULLETIN

Thames River water level information -- www.thamesriver.on.ca

Types of Flood Bulletins

High Water Safety Bulletin -- issued during periods of minor flooding to report on general watershed conditions to flood coordinators, and to remind the general public of general river safety issues

Flood Advisory -- issued when the potential for flooding exists in specific municipalities

Flood Warning -- issued after a forecast has been made, applies to specific flood damage centres where serious flooding appears inevitable