

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **HSEMD Administrator Urges Residents Along Missouri River to Remain Vigilant, Be Prepared**

(DES MOINES)– Fortunately, none of the Iowa counties along the Missouri River have seen major impacts from flooding over the past few days. However, residents should stay aware and be ready to take action if needed.

The Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division (HSEMD), local and state agencies and private-sector partners have worked to ensure communities along the Missouri River are as prepared as they can be for forecasted flooding. Still, residents need to be ready to evacuate or take other actions if they become necessary.

“The ongoing threat will be to the levees, which were designed to hold back water for a short period of time,” said HSEMD Administrator Derek Hill. “We don’t know how they will perform if the water level remains high for several months.”

Hill points out that while communities have worked hard to be prepared for the possibility of flooding, residents of those communities have to make sure they are prepared, too.

Flooding from a break in a levee could occur quickly and citizens may have only a matter of minutes to evacuate. Residents should have an evacuation plan and an emergency supply kit ready to go. Some special things to consider:

“The time to think about moving your precious possessions is now, not when you have only a few minutes to get out of your home,” said Hill. “Consider storing items at a friend’s or relative’s home or finding storage far away from the flooded area.”

Hill reminds people to make plans for their pets too. Most shelters do not accept pets, so pet owners should locate kennels or make plans with friends or relatives to keep their pet should they be forced to evacuate. If your pet has a special medical need, make sure you have the proper medications and supplies ready to go. If you have an exotic animal, make sure shelters or other facilities are equipped to handle them. Like people, pets may feel anxious in stressful situations, so don’t forget to include a special toy or a blanket in your pet “go kit.”

Hill urged residents in potential flood areas to look out for their neighbors with special needs.

“Look out for your neighbor. Help them to get in touch with local officials who can provide them the help they need,” said Hill.

***Continued: HSEMD Administrator Urges Residents Along Missouri River to Remain Vigilant, Be Prepared – June 16, 2011***

Hill also urged residents with special needs to make sure they are able to take with them any medical equipment or medicines they may need.

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“Citizens along the Missouri River should be thinking ahead about what actions they can take now.”

Hill urged residents to stay aware of their situation:

- Listen or watch local television and radio reports for information and instruction from local officials.
- Several counties have websites and facebook pages with up-to-date information
- Residents along the river can all 211 or the Iowa Concern Hotline at 1-800-447-1985 for information and referrals.

For more information on individual and family flood preparedness, visit [www.bereadyiowa.org](http://www.bereadyiowa.org).

Podcasts featuring Derek Hill and a public health perspective on flood issues, can be found at: [www.iowahomelandsecurity.org/resource\\_room/podcasts.html](http://www.iowahomelandsecurity.org/resource_room/podcasts.html).

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