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NOTE: Do not use forecast or other time sensitive details after 2:00 PM on Wednesday, Sept. 1st

Montgomery County Prepares for Significant Flooding

Eagleville, PA (September 1, 2021) – The Montgomery County Department of Public Safety is preparing for a potentially significant flooding event today and tonight, brought on by the remnants of Hurricane Ida. Ida is now a tropical depression, moving slowly towards the mid-Atlantic after making landfall as a Category 4 hurricane on Sunday in Louisiana.

“While the rain has been relatively light in Montgomery County so far, conditions will rapidly deteriorate throughout the day today as this life-threatening storm approaches our area,” said **Michael O. Vest, Director of the Department of Public Safety**. “I urge our residents never to drive or walk into floodwaters. You’re putting not only your life at risk, but also the lives of the emergency responders who will have to come rescue you.”

Latest Forecast

The latest forecast from the National Weather Service (issued 7:00 AM Wednesday) calls for 3 to 6 inches of rain in Montgomery County, with the heaviest rainfall and primary flash flooding threat expected late Wednesday afternoon through the overnight hours. Many small streams and creeks will also likely overtop their banks during this time.

Even after the rain stops falling early Thursday morning, the river flood threat will continue. The Schuylkill River at Norristown is projected to crest at 17.4 feet (moderate flood stage) at 2:00 PM on Thursday. Waters are not expected to recede below flood stage until midday Friday. The Perkiomen Creek at Graterford is projected to crest at 13.9 feet (moderate flood stage) at 8:00 AM on Thursday, and the water level should fall below flood stage by Thursday afternoon.

Strong to severe thunderstorms are also now anticipated. While the greatest chance exists in communities south of the Pennsylvania Turnpike, the threat is countywide. These storms may bring damaging wind gusts and tornadoes.

Safety Information for Residents and Businesses

NEVER walk or drive into floodwaters. It only takes 6 inches of moving water to knock a person off their feet. 12 inches of water can float a car or small SUV, while 18 inches of water can carry away large vehicles. Floodwaters also contain hidden hazards such as downed electrical lines, sharp objects,

sudden drops where the ground has been washed away, and hazardous chemicals. Stay away and stay safe.

If you lose power during or after the storm, do not call 9-1-1 *simply to report the outage*. The County's Emergency Communications Center will already be extremely busy with storm-related incidents. Call your local utility provider to report the outage, or utilize their website or mobile application:

- PECO: 1-800-841-4141 or <https://www.peco.com/Outages/ReportAnOutage/Pages/default.aspx>
- PPL: 1-800-342-5775 or <https://www.pplelectric.com/site/Outages-and-Issues>
- Met-Ed: 1-888-544-4877 or https://www.firstenergycorp.com/outages_help.html

Always assume that all power lines are live, even if you lose power in your home or business. Never go near or touch a fallen power line.

If you have a portable generator, never use it inside your home or even in a partially enclosed area. Generators, as well as gas and charcoal grills, produce Carbon Monoxide, which is an odorless, colorless gas that can kill you. Keep the generator far away from doors, windows, and air intakes. Never overload the generator or attempt to power your house by plugging it into a wall outlet. Both practices can cause electric shock or fire.

If you use candles for light, exercise extreme caution and never place them near combustible materials such as curtains or furniture. Battery powered candles or flashlights are much safer, especially if you have children or pets.

Department of Public Safety Preparations

The Department of Public Safety's Emergency Operations Center activated at 8:00 AM on Wednesday, September 1st to monitor storm conditions and coordinate the incident. A 10:00 AM virtual briefing will be held with municipalities to provide the latest update on the forecast and to discuss response and recovery considerations.

The County's Emergency Communications (9-1-1) Center will have additional staffing starting on Wednesday morning to handle an expected increased call load. If you experience an emergency during or after the storm, call or text 9-1-1.

The Montgomery County Urban Search & Rescue Team will have swiftwater rescue and high-water evacuation personnel and assets pre-staged starting at 12:00 PM on Wednesday. In addition, the County's Hazardous Materials Response Team is prepared to respond to any leaks, spills, or other chemical releases caused by the storm. These resources can be deployed anywhere in Montgomery County as needed.

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