

## **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) 2019 Flood Awareness & Preparation**

### **Q. How do I find the most recent, up-to-date information?**

A. Visit the flood page of the County's website at [www.pottcounty.org/flood](http://www.pottcounty.org/flood), the County's Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/PottCountyKS](http://www.facebook.com/PottCountyKS), or the Manhattan Flood Updates page at [www.facebook.com/manhattanfloodupdates](http://www.facebook.com/manhattanfloodupdates).

### **Q. What should I do now?**

A. Plan and prepare. Visit the County's website for information on preparing for a potential evacuation, creating a survival kit, and knowing what you will do if an advisory is issued. Know where you will go and communicating that information to friends and family is highly encouraged.

### **Q. Where can I get sandbags?**

A. Depending on where you live, you should first start with your local municipality (ie: if you live in St. Mary's, contact the City of St. Mary's). Pottawatomie County does not typically stockpile sand. Sandbags are utilized by the County to protect critical infrastructure in flood prone areas. Homeowners and businesses in the unincorporated flood prone areas in Pottawatomie County may obtain up to 15 empty sandbags at the County yard, 405 E. Campbell in Westmoreland, between 8a-4p M-F. Hardware stores also sell sandbags, but may have a limited supply of bags. Sand is still available at local outlets: Midwest Concrete Materials (for sale) and Hartford Sand (we have been told they will provide sand for free). We recommend these sandbags be used to temporarily blockade doors, garage doors and windows wells. Building sandbag walls is NOT recommend. Sandbags are intended to detour small amounts of water around doorways and window wells while people are getting their belongings out. It is proven that sandbags do not keep standing or rising water out for an extended time. Even short-term use may require some kind of water pump.

### **Q. How will I know which roads are closed? How do I get to Manhattan if Highway 24 is closed?**

A. The County will post road closings on its website, and send out Facebook notifications when roads in the County are closed. Identified detours will also be available on the map section of the County's web page.

### **Q. How will I know if I need to evacuate? What if it's in the middle of the night?**

A. Sign-up for alerts at [www.pottcounty.org/ealerts](http://www.pottcounty.org/ealerts) for the Everbridge system. You will be notified by text, e-mail, or phone call in case of emergency. Information will be broadcast through local news agencies, emergency services, and where necessary and appropriate, door-to-door by official personnel. Types of alerts:

A. High Water Advisory- An advisory that notifies residents or property owners that their property may receive high water or their access to the property may be impacted.

B. Evacuation Advisory- An advisory that notifies residents or property owners that their property may be flooded or their access to the property may be impacted, evacuation is recommended, and that they may be ordered to evacuate in the near future.

C. Evacuation Order- A notification of "Imminent Danger" that notifies residents or property owners that their property may be flooded or their access to the property may be

severely impacted. This order to evacuate is considered as mandatory for non-residents as a curfew is eminent for security of the affected areas.

**Q. How do I know the evacuation order is legitimate?**

A. Any true evacuation order will come through the channels listed in question 4 above. If someone knocks on your door with an evacuation notice, he/she will be in an identifiable uniform, and/or have government issued identification that includes a picture, employing agency, and name. If you have concerns, contact the Public Information Officer at 785-457-1432 or 785-617-0149 to verify the information.

**Q. How do we mark our house if we evacuate early to let the emergency personnel know that we have left?**

A. For security reasons, residents or property owners that evacuate early should not identify their property as being evacuated. Evacuation teams will still go door to door and post an evacuation order on vacant structures.

**Q. Will there be a shelter available if homes become uninhabitable? What do I do with my pets?**

A. Shelter locations in both Pottawatomie County and Riley County have been identified. The American Red Cross is prepared to set-up shelters at a moment's notice. Pottawatomie County has identified a location for pets that need temporary homes during inundations, and Riley County is currently working on identifying an information. If an evacuation order is issued, the Wamego Middle School, located on Kaw Valley Rd just north of Highway 24, will be opened as both a shelter location (south entrance) and volunteer check-in (north entrance). The American Red Cross has what they need to successfully open and operate the necessary shelters, and while the thought is appreciated, donations are not requested or necessary at this time.

**Q. Who do I contact if I want to volunteer?**

A. Please visit the County's website at [www.pottcounty.org/flood](http://www.pottcounty.org/flood) and select the Health & Safety tab to complete a volunteer interest form. If volunteers become necessary, these people will be notified first. Please note that volunteers should provide proof of a Tetanus booster within the last 10 years, or be prepared to receive an inoculation at the volunteer sign-in location. Those vaccinations are currently available free of charge at the Pottawatomie County Health Department, 320 Main St., Westmoreland, KS 66549, 785-457-3719.

**Q. What areas were affected by the 1993 flood?**

A. Please look at the Big Blue Inundation model and associated maps and information on the following websites:

<https://gis.rileycountyks.gov/>

<https://water.weather.gov/ahps2/inundation/index.php?gage=mntk1>

<https://cityofmhk.com/2629/Blue-River-Flood-Risk>

<https://cityofmhk.com/2953/Flood-Information>

<http://www.rileycountyks.gov/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=929>

**Q. If releases are made from the tubes, will it affect my property?**

A. We do not expect any Tuttle Creek Outlet Works (commonly referred to as “the tubes”) releases to adversely impact occupied structures along the Big Blue River. See answer for mapping.

**Q. What is the difference between a 100-year and 500-year flood?**

A. A 1% flood is commonly referred to as a 100-year and a .2% flood is commonly referred to as the 500-year flood. The 1993 is pretty well represented in the .2% chance flood modeling on the FEMA flood plan maps (see Answer RC-1). The .2% chance identifies that area that has a .2% chance of flooding each year. The 1% chance identifies that area that has a 1% chance of flooding each year.

**Q. Is FEMA updating the 2015 flood maps?**

A. There are no plans to change the flood mapping zones at the time by FEMA.

**Q. How much time will the Corps give us before releasing water?**

A. Both Riley and Pottawatomie Counties, the City of Manhattan, and areas downstream will receive official notice from the Corps of Engineers of any significant release of water through the Outlet Works (tubes). Properties downstream could be affected within hours or days depending on the release.

**Q. Who should I talk to learn more about flood insurance?**

A. Questions about flood insurance should be directed to an insurance agent or FEMA.

**Q. Do releases at Tuttle Creek Lake affect Wildcat Creek?**

A. Flooding effects on people or property along Wildcat Creek are dependent on the elevations of the Kansas River and Wildcat Creek.