

Role of the Lakehead Region Conservation Authority in Flood Management and Forecasting

- The Lakehead Region Conservation Authority (LRCA) is responsible for predicting flows and water levels within local watersheds, operating flood control structures and disseminating flood warnings to local municipalities and agencies.
- The LRCA works with the OMNR to provide advice to municipalities for the preparation of flood contingency plans and during the emergency response process.
- The LRCA and the OMNR use stream gauges, weather stations, surveys of snow conditions, meteorological forecasts and computer models to forecast potential floods.

Please contact the Lakehead Region Conservation Authority for information on flooding within the Authority's Area of Jurisdiction.



Lakehead Region
Conservation Authority
130 Conservation Rd,
P.O. Box 10427
Thunder Bay, ON
P7B 6T8
Tel. 807-344-5857
Fax. 807-345-9156
Email. info@lakeheadca.com
www.lakeheadca.com

FLOOD Forecasting and Warning

Conservation Authorities, in cooperation with local municipalities and the province, play a significant role in the protection of life and property from natural hazards such as flooding. In Ontario, Conservation Authorities (CAs), the Ministry of Natural Resources (OMNR) and Environment Canada are responsible for forecasting where and when flooding is likely to occur and issuing flood messages.



Photo by Bill Boucher



Printed - April 2009

History

Since the creation of what is now known as the Lakehead Region Conservation Authority there have been five major rainstorms: in 1968, 1971, 1977, 1997 and 2008.

In the first three storms, the Intercity area suffered major damage. Flooding in this area did not occur in 1997 or 2008 thanks to the construction of the Neebing-McIntyre Floodway.

Completed in 1984 at a cost of \$15-million, the Floodway has prevented millions of dollars in damage due to flooding and has cleared the way for major development in the Intercity area.

The Floodway consists of a Diversion Structure, widened and deepened Floodway and a dry Diversion Channel which can accommodate water 2.5 metres deep. That's approximately how deep the water in the channel would be if the City received a Regional Storm; a storm that would result in 193 mm of rainfall in 12 hours.

Regulations have been put in place to limit and control future development and inappropriate land use activities in flood hazard areas. Conservation Authorities continue to work with partners to prevent damages by floods.

Flood Management

Prevention - Informing planners and the general public about the risks of flooding, promotes proper land use planning and regulation of development on flood plains thus preventing people from living and/or working in flood prone areas.

Protection - In order to protect against flooding, the LRCA has constructed and maintains protective infrastructure such as the Neebing-McIntyre Floodway or purchased lands located in hazardous areas.

Emergency Preparedness and Response - It is imperative that floods are forecasted to the extent possible. It is critical that municipalities prepare and implement plans which allow quick response to emergency situations created by flooding.

What If A Flood Message Is Issued?

- Take heed of the message issued.
- Be prepared to follow the advice and instructions of emergency response officials.

Flood Warnings

- Depending on the area affected, the LRCA or OMNR are responsible for forecasting where and when flooding is likely to occur and issuing appropriate messages.
- Advance warning of an impending flood allows the public, municipalities and other government agencies to take precautions, put emergency response plans into operation, and if necessary, evacuate communities.

The Flood Warning System operates most effectively with significant rainfall events with at least 12 hours forecast time. It is not designed to predict flood warnings as a result of high intensity, short duration thunderstorms.

There are three types of flood messages:

Flood Safety or Watershed Bulletins - Informs the public and municipalities that unsafe lake, river and channel conditions exist and the LRCA is assessing the flood potential.

Flood Advisory - Indicates the potential for flooding within specific watercourses or municipalities.

Flood Warning - Warns that flooding is imminent or is occurring in specific watercourses or municipalities.

