

Conservator Hack for April 20, 2020

Jane Dalley, CSP Conservator

Update on 2020 Spring Flood Potential

Although the March flood forecast called for a moderate risk of flooding, that could change at any time according to the weather, not only here in Manitoba but also in Saskatchewan and North Dakota. So far, the below-seasonal temperatures we have been experiencing have resulted in a slow thaw of accumulated ice and snow, allowing it to evaporate or be absorbed by the ground. This is better than a fast melt that can result in spring run-off, augmenting water levels in the rivers and lakes and increasing the risk of flooding.

Ice jams on the Red River caused flooding south of Selkirk last week. The Red River Floodway gates have been opened.

The Red River has been flooding south of the border, and is expected to crest near Emerson around April 15-18. As the River flows north, it is expected to crest around the following dates:

- Morris: April 18-22.
- Ste. Agathe: April 19-23.
- Ste. Adolphe: April 19-23.
- South of Winnipeg at floodway intake: April 19-24.
- Winnipeg at James Avenue: April 21-23

The only fact that is certain in flood season is that the situation can change in an instant. I received an advisory alert from the Public Emergency Alerting Services Inc. (PEASI) that there could be an ice pile up on Lake Manitoba, Lake Winnipegosis and Dauphin Lake and that residents need to take immediate action to protect themselves and their property. If you are not already subscribed, I highly recommend you download the free **Alertable Public Emergency Alerts** aka **PEASI** phone app from Google Play and the Apple App Store. It gives you real-time weather and hazard alerts for your location.

As always, continue to look regularly for flood updates at the [Manitoba Hydrologic Forecast Centre](#). The Province has issued safe work guidelines for flood preparation that include safety measures for COVID-19. Social distancing is now part of sandbagging and dyke building! The guidelines can be found at <https://www.gov.mb.ca/emo/pdfs/adaptations-to-high-water-response-activity.pdf>.

If you would rather make your own sandbags at home, ULINE now has re-usable “sandless” sandbags that activate in contact with water: [Quick-Dam](#)

If any AMM member feels at risk of flooding this spring, feel free to contact me (Jane Dalley) at conservator@museumsmanitoba.com . If I can't come on site, I will advise by phone or online

chat. In the meantime, the following mitigation measures will help keep your Museum safe during spring flood season:

1. Check the drainage system (storm sewer) on your street and if it is blocked, report the condition to the authority or try to unblock the sewer. If you live in a rural area, check culverts and other waterways and remove any blockages if it is safe to do so.
2. If your museum is not yet open, or has buildings still closed up, check them for water infiltration.
3. Make sure that sump pumps are working properly. Consider installing a battery operated back-up pump in the event of a power failure, and make sure that the batteries are fully charged.
4. Keep eavestroughs clear of debris to help drain melting snow and prevent ice from backing up under the shingles. Ensure down spouts are draining water away from the foundation.
5. Check the basement for water on a regular basis, especially in times of heavy rain. Consider elevating artifacts off the basement floor to prevent possible water damage or move them to the upper floors of the museum.
6. Remove snow piled up in window wells or against the side of your museum. Make sure melting snow and ice has a clear path away from the foundation.

If you have any questions or comments, or need help in any way, please contact Jane Dalley at conservator@museumsManitoba.com