



MEDIA RELEASE

Niagara-on-the-Lake's Response to Recent Flooding Events and Ongoing Efforts

For Immediate Release

July 16, 2024

The Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake and surrounding municipalities have recently experienced significant rainfall events, leading to extensive flooding that has impacted municipal infrastructure, private residences, and public properties.

The rainfall events on June 18 and July 10 were particularly severe. Each of these days saw approximately 80-90 mm of rain, equivalent to the average monthly rainfall for June and July, all within less than 12 hours.

These extraordinary rainfall amounts have caused rapid water level increases, resulting in sudden flooding. Residents may experience unexpected surges in water levels during such heavy rainfall events due to several factors, including:

- **Blocked Waterways:** Debris, obstructions, and changes to property grades can block culverts, catch basins, and ditches, preventing proper water flow.
- **Dry Land:** Dry, compacted ground may not effectively absorb water, increasing the likelihood of runoff and flooding.
- **Floodplain Areas:** Water levels can rise significantly in floodplain areas, leading to increased flood risks.
- **Modified Swales:** Changes to the natural drainage pathways, such as swales, can disrupt water flow and lead to flooding.
- **Overflowing Storm Drains:** Excessive rain can overwhelm storm drains, causing water to back up and overflow.
- **Sump Pump Connection:** If a sump pump discharges directly into a municipal ditch instead of being properly directed, it can contribute to localized flooding.

Recommendations for Residents

To help prepare for extreme rainfall events, residents are encouraged to:

- Regularly clear debris from catch basins, gutters, and downspouts.
- Ensure that sump pumps are functioning correctly and discharge water away from properties.
- Maintain proper grading around homes to direct water away from foundations.
- Stay informed about severe weather alerts and have an emergency plan in place.

"Thank you to residents for your proactive efforts before the extreme rainfall," said Lord Mayor Gary Zalepa. "Please continue these efforts and ensure proper drainage around your homes while staying informed about extreme weather events. I would like to commend our Roads Division and other supportive teams for their hard work. The Roads team of 10 employees manages over 260 kilometres of center-lane municipal roads and infrastructure. Despite the Roads Staff's small size in numbers, they are fully committed to ensuring the safety and maintenance of our roads and related systems during flooding events."

The Town's Roads and Water Divisions have been working diligently to manage the effects of flooding. This process is outlined below.



Pre-Rainfall Preparations

- Clear catch basins, inlets, and culverts.
- Inspect storm ponds to ensure they are operational and functioning properly.
- Conduct ditching operations to ensure effective water flow.

During Extreme Rainfall

- Check and clear problem areas to maintain free-flowing municipal infrastructure.
- Erect signage and close roads as necessary for public safety.
- Monitor and assess areas as time permits while waiting for water levels to recede.

Post-Storm Actions

- Repair roads, ditches, catch basins, and culverts as needed.
- Remove vegetation and debris to restore water flow.
- Fix eroded shoulders to minimize the likelihood of recurrence.
- Investigate impacted areas and implement changes to prevent future issues.
- Communicate with residents who have submitted service requests related to flooding.

“Despite challenges, Staff has worked to manage flooding and protect the community,” stated CAO Bruce Zvaniga. “Planning for significant rainfall events can be challenging due to the unpredictable nature of weather patterns, but our Staff is working diligently to prioritize and respond effectively, addressing critical issues and working towards long-term solutions.”

Over the next several weeks, Staff will be examining various watersheds and properties contributing to the flooding issues throughout the Town to identify the underlying causes and develop effective mitigation strategies. It is important for properties to maintain proper drainage paths and ensure there are no obstructions to these pathways in order to help minimize future flooding risks.

Submit a Service Request

The Town encourages residents who experience flooding-related issues to submit an online service request on the Town’s website at <https://www.notl.com/request-service-or-file-issue>. By reporting these issues, residents can help the Town identify problem areas and take appropriate action to address them.

For immediate alerts, follow the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).

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