

2010 Flooding FAQ
Public Works & Utilities Surface Water Management Division

Will the Howard Hanson Dam issue affect Pierce County?

Not directly. Flooding downstream of the Howard Hanson Dam will be on the Green River which is in King County. Should significant flooding occur in King County, it is possible that regional transportation corridors would be shut down, temporarily affecting Pierce County commute routes and the delivery of goods and services into Pierce County.

Is Pierce County as vulnerable to flooding as King County?

Not in the same way. Pierce County relies on Mud Mountain Dam to control flooding along the White River and the lower Puyallup River and that facility is fully operational. However, there are very real flood risks in Pierce County. Areas that have been flooded or threatened by flooding in past years remain at risk.

Has Pierce County made a pre-flood season Emergency Declaration like King County?

No. Although the risk of flooding in Pierce County remains real, our chances of seeing major flooding this year is the same as in past years. We're prepared, but any Emergency Declaration will have to wait for any actual flooding emergency.

Have we begun sand bagging along rivers like King County?

Yes. Along the White River within the City of Pacific, Pierce County has joined with King County and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to do pre-flood season sandbagging in areas affected by the January 2009 flood.

Is the levee system stronger or weaker than it was during the last flood?

Most levee damage from past floods has been repaired, restoring those areas to the same level of protection they previously had. Four smaller planned repairs were not completed due to legal appeals of the required permits.

What have we done to prepare for flooding this season?

In addition to the repairs and sandbagging, Pierce County has actively prepared for the upcoming flood season, putting communication and support networks in place between local, State and Federal agencies to respond to a major flood. Flood response materials have been stockpiled, including the large sand bags being used in King County.

What effort has been made to prepare the citizens of Pierce County?

Every year, Pierce County sends out flood preparedness information to property owners living in flood hazard areas. This year we made a greater effort to identify both owners and tenants who are at risk, almost doubling the size of our mailing list. For a copy of this year's flood bulletin, contact Surface Water Management at (253) 798-2725. On October 17th, Department of Emergency Management also hosted a Preparedness Fair at which flood preparedness information was handed out.