



Whatcom County Sheriff's Office News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, December 1, 2021

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Community's flood Response transitioning to Recovery process **Life safety focus transition to long term needs**

WHATCOM COUNTY, WA - Following three "atmospheric rivers" in less than three weeks that caused historic flooding county-wide, the focus is shifting from immediate life safety emergency "response" to coordinated, long-term "recovery."

Response includes rescue, road closures, sandbagging, meals and shelter for displaced residents. Whatcom County Sheriff's Office Division of Emergency Management (DEM) reported hundreds of rescues, ranging from help to exit flood-threatened residences to assistance for drivers who went around "road closed" barricades.

More than 700 households reported some damage, many homes are currently uninhabitable. As of Dec. 1, approximately 40 are still in temporary emergency shelter.

The **Recovery** phase shifts from immediate, emergency needs to long-term recovery, including repairs, debris management, transitional housing, damage recovery process and funding.

Residents and businesses that experienced flood damage and are unable to pull out the damaged materials for disposal may phone (360) 788-5303 for assistance. All flood-damaged debris left in the public right-of-way will be disposed of, although those with flood damages should take their debris to 3010 Halverstick Road. A second debris site is being set up; details will be released soon.

A Recovery Task Force, including mayors of small cities and representatives of business and human service agencies, will begin work on Friday, Dec. 3.

HOW TO HELP:

The Whatcom Community Foundation has established a Resiliency Fund to support those harmed by the flooding. [To contribute, go online.](#) To volunteer for clean-up work or request help, contact Samaritan's Purse at 360-305-2175 at least 24 hours in advance.

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