



A News Release  
from the  
**Cataraqui Region  
Conservation Authority**

February 20, 2018

**CRCA ISSUES A WATERSHED CONDITIONS STATEMENT – FLOOD OUTLOOK**

**KINGSTON ON** – The Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority (CRCA) has upgraded its Watershed Conditions Statement to a Flood Outlook today.

Environment Canada has forecasted multi-day rainfall totals in the range of 30 to 50 mm by Wednesday for the region, and has issued rainfall warnings for Kingston – Prince Edward and Brockville – Leeds and Grenville. Temperatures will remain above 0°C through Wednesday, and snowmelt will also contribute to total runoff.

Water managers started preparing for these conditions last week by conducting operations on water control structures to pass more water through the system. These operations have helped to increase the capacity, but the total runoff from the snowmelt and forecasted rainfall could still be significant. Widespread flooding is NOT expected as a result of the coming rainfall. CRCA staff and watershed managers will continue to monitor conditions and forecasts, and will update statements as needed.

These conditions have created the potential for localized flooding in low-lying areas. The break-up of creek ice associated with the warmer temperatures and changing water levels could potentially block culverts or form ice jams at constrictions in the creeks, also contributing to localized flooding. Creeks in urban areas will rise more quickly due to increased runoff over paved surfaces, and ponding in some urban areas has started to occur. Snow and ice covering catchbasins should be cleared to help with drainage.

CRCA is urging residents to exercise caution outdoors around lakes and streams, and to stay off the thinning ice cover and away from the cold, deep, fast flowing watercourses, as well as any dams. The dangers of drowning and hypothermia are heightened at this time of year because of the unpredictability of water flows, ice thickness and near-freezing temperatures.

CRCA does not measure ice thickness for advising the public about ice conditions for recreational activities. Ice conditions can vary considerably from one waterbody to the next and within a single waterbody.

This Watershed Conditions Statement will remain in effect until Thursday, March 8, 2018.

**Newsrooms please note:** A watershed conditions statement is **NOT** a flood warning. Its purpose is to raise public awareness about a change or potential change in watershed conditions. See below for watershed conditions terminology:

**Watershed Conditions Statement:** general notice of weather conditions that could pose a risk to personal safety or which have the potential to lead to flooding. There are two variations of these:

- Watershed Conditions Statement – Water Safety: High flows, unsafe banks, melting ice or other factors could be dangerous for recreational users such as anglers, canoeists, hikers, children, pets, etc. Flooding is not expected.



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- Watershed Conditions Statement – Flood Outlook: Early notice of the potential for flooding based on weather forecasts calling for heavy rain, snow melt, high wind or other conditions that could lead to high runoff, cause ice jams, lakeshore flooding or erosion.

**Flood Watch:** Flooding is possible in specific watercourse or municipalities. Municipalities, emergency services and individual landowners in flood-prone areas should prepare.

**Flood Warning:** Flooding is imminent or already occurring in specific watercourses or municipalities. Municipalities and individuals should take action to deal with flood conditions. This may include road closures and evacuations.

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