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Gov. Nixon Declares State of Emergency in Missouri

JUNE 19TH 2015 BY DEE LOFLIN

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Jefferson City, Missouri - Gov. Jay Nixon declared a state of emergency in Missouri as heavy rain, flooding and flash flooding continue to impact large portions of the state.

The heavy rain associated with the severe weather already has led to flooding along many streams and rivers; at least one drowning has been reported in connection with the flooding in Missouri. More heavy rain is expected across the state in the next few days in connection with the remnants of tropical depression Bill.

“As significant flooding continues to impact large portions of the state, I have directed state emergency management personnel and the Missouri State Highway Patrol to take action to assist local communities and protect the public,” Gov. Nixon said. “With more heavy rain in the forecast, we will continue to remain in direct contact with law enforcement and local officials as we work to protect lives and property.”

In addition to the Mississippi River, a number of smaller rivers and streams are expected to hit major flood stage including the Meramec River, the Bourbeuse River, the Cuivre River and Dardenne Creek.

Thousands of acres used for agriculture, especially along the Missouri and Mississippi rivers, are among the areas that have been impacted or are under threat from flooding. The Governor said it includes some of the most productive farmland in the country.

The State Emergency Operations Center has been actively monitoring the storm

system, and Gov. Nixon has been receiving updates from his emergency management team to assess the current weather situation and address local needs. The team includes senior officials from the Missouri Department of Public Safety, Missouri National Guard, Missouri State Highway Patrol and the State Emergency Management Agency. The Missouri State Emergency Operations Plan also has been activated, allowing state agencies to coordinate directly with local jurisdictions to provide emergency services.

The Governor urged residents of flood-affected areas of Missouri to pay close attention to weather warnings and follow the safety instructions of local officials as the potential for additional dangerous flooding continues. Missourians, especially motorists, are encouraged to remember these important safety tips on flooding and high water:

Do not walk through moving water. Six inches of moving water can make you fall. If you have to walk in water, walk where the water is not moving. Use a stick to check the firmness of the ground in front of you.

Do not drive into flooded areas. If floodwaters rise around your car, abandon the car and move to higher ground if you can do so safely. You and the vehicle can be quickly swept away. Six inches of water will reach the bottom of most passenger cars, causing loss of control and possible stalling.

A foot of water will float many vehicles. Two feet of rushing water can carry away most vehicles, including sport utility vehicles and pick-ups. Even if the water appears shallow enough to cross, don't try it. Water hides dips in the road. Worse yet, there may be no road at all under the water. Flooding can scour away the entire road surface and a significant amount of ground beneath.

Missourians who need disaster information, shelter information, and referrals are urged to call 211. The 211 service is now available throughout Missouri.

Photo by Debbie Wray of Ava, Missouri.

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