



**News release
For immediate release**

March 22, 2023

KCCA issues a Flood Outlook due to forecasted rain and urges caution around local watercourses.

St. Thomas –Kettle Creek Conservation Authority is issuing a Watershed Conditions Statement—Flood Outlook, reminding residents to take extra caution near creeks and streams due to the potential for flooding conditions as warmer, rainy weather moves into the area.

Environment Canada is tracking a strong low-pressure system that is expected to move into the area Wednesday evening, bringing the potential for prolonged rain and gusty winds similar to what was experienced last week. Total accumulation may be in the range of 15-20mm before the system moves out of the area late Thursday. At this time the track of the weather system is uncertain, and as such precipitation timing and amounts may change.

“Patchy snow cover throughout the watershed and frozen ground conditions could contribute to increased runoff, resulting in elevated water levels in local creeks and streams,” says Jennifer Dow, Water Resources Supervisor for Kettle Creek Conservation Authority. Local watercourses may reach or exceed their banks, leading to localized flooding in floodplains, ponding in low lying areas and agricultural fields, and locations with poor drainage. Watershed areas that receive prolonged heavy rain have a heightened risk for flash and minor localized flooding.

Dow warns that fast moving water can be an attraction to the public – but they should stay away. Banks are extremely slippery, and the water is very cold. Parents and guardians are urged to keep children away from ponds and reservoirs. Ice conditions on any remaining frozen water bodies are unpredictable and unsafe at this time of year.

“The long-term forecast indicates that much of southern Ontario will see an additional 15-25mm of mixed rain and snow from another low-pressure system expected to move across Lake Erie on Saturday. This means that water levels may remain elevated throughout the weekend,” says Dow.

Currently, water levels throughout the watershed are normal, however conditions can change quickly. Field observations taken along Kettle Creek down to Port Stanley indicate open water conditions out to a currently ice-free Lake Erie.

Residents along Kettle Creek are advised to monitor their local conditions. People are reminded to remove property from low-lying areas and to clear snow and ice from storm drains. “It’s important that the rain and snowmelt has somewhere to go,” says Dow.

At this time, forecasted wind speeds, and current Lake Erie water levels are not conducive to storm surge in Port Stanley. A close watch on local conditions is recommended should conditions change.

KCCA will closely monitor local conditions and will provide any updates if conditions warrant. This Watershed Conditions Statement—Flood Outlook will remain in effect until 4:30 PM on Sunday, March 26, 2023. For further updates log on to www.kettlecreekconservation.on.ca or connect with Kettle Creek Conservation Authority socially on Twitter @KettleCreekCA or on Facebook at www.facebook.com/KettleCreekCa .

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The Kettle Creek Conservation Authority issues three levels of messages:

- **Watershed Conditions Statement:** a 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.
 - **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 watercourses 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.

What can you do?



Move personal property away from areas in the floodplain



Clean out storm drains



Make sure docks are secure and watercraft are properly tied to moorings



Keep an eye on local conditions and take appropriate action when necessary.



Personal safety

- Debris in water
- Fast flowing water
- Unstable banks