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Amaranth declares emergency due to flooding of municipal building

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The Township of Amaranth declared an emergency on the evening of March 8, due to rising flood concerns.

At 6:19 p.m., Amaranth issued a Declaration of an Emergency, signed by Mayor Chris Gerrits, notifying the community that flooding had occurred at the Township Municipal Office.

?The township has taken this step, most importantly, to ensure the safety and well-being of our staff and residents,? reads the declaration. ?During this emergency, council and staff are working to ensure that the municipality operates effectively and continues to provide essential services.?

Township staff can be reached by telephone at 519-941-1007 or by email at info@amaranth.ca.

?Staff will endeavour to respond to phone messages and emails during regular working hours, but an immediate response may not be possible,? reads the declaration. ?Please consider using the drop box at the office for correspondence as it will be checked on a regular basis.?

The Township of Amaranth website will post updates and notices regarding the emergency.

The Grand River Conservation Authority (GRCA), which covers the southern and central parts of Amaranth, issued a flood statement on March 10. The GRCA noted that warm weather and rain from March 5 to 9 have melted the snowpack, leading to ice jams and flooding.

?While the risk of ice jams is believed to be past, river flows remain extremely high,? reads the GRCA's statement.

As of press time, Environment Canada issued a Special Weather Statement covering all of southern Ontario, including the Grand River watershed, with rainfall amounts of 20 to 40 mm beginning March 10 and continuing into March 11. This is likely to have raised river levels, and additional rainfall will further increase river flows.

?High flows and unstable ice conditions will increase the safety risk around rivers and streams throughout the watershed,? reads the GRCA's statement. ?The public is encouraged to exercise extreme caution around local waterways. Parents are reminded to keep their children and pets away from watercourses. The public is reminded to stay off ice-covered waterbodies, due to unsafe conditions.?

In addition to Amaranth, Grand Valley has been heavily impacted by flooding.

?River flows have exceeded flood thresholds in Grand Valley and will continue to affect this area. The flood risk remains high due to the forecast rainfall. Municipal flood coordinators in Grand Valley have been advised to monitor conditions and take necessary actions,? reads the GRCA's statement.