

Friday, June 20
4:00 PM

The Family and Business Assistance Centers in Union Park and unincorporated Polk County will close at 6:00 pm today. Residents should call "211" for assistance.

The Polk County Health Department Call Center, for questions regarding health and medical needs (875-5791), will also close down at 6:00 pm today. People can call the regular number at the Polk County Health Department, 286-3798, Monday-Friday, 8am-5pm with questions.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has opened a Disaster Recovery Center at Harding Middle School, 203 E. Euclid Avenue. The Center will be open from 8:00 am-7:00 pm seven days a week until July 18, 2008. Representatives from FEMA and the Small Business Administration (SBA) will be available to assist people in applying for assistance and answer questions regarding eligibility. Representatives from the American Red Cross and Polk County Health Department (starting Monday, June 23rd) will also be available at the Disaster Recovery Center.

Anyone with storm-related damage is encouraged to register with FEMA prior to visiting a disaster recovery center, but phones are available at the center if residents have not pre-registered. Register by calling FEMA's toll-free registration line at 1-800-621-FEMA (3362), TTY 1-800-462-7585 for those with speech or hearing impairments, 24 hours, seven days a week or register online anytime at www.fema.gov

Volunteer Opportunities

There currently are volunteer opportunities for much-needed cleanup efforts at various public locations in Des Moines – primarily city parks. Volunteers will be deployed for these projects on the following four dates: Saturday, June 21; Wednesday, June 25; Saturday, June 28; and Wednesday, July 2.

To sign up for your preferred volunteer date(s), go to www.unitedwaydm.org. Volunteers are asked to work the full shift selected, and must first report to the Volunteer Reception Center at 1111 9th St. to receive identification, additional health and safety training and the volunteer location assignment.

Clean-Up Efforts

City of Des Moines and Polk County Public Works will be in the Birdland neighborhood pumping basements today and Saturday.

Home Restoration Program for Flood Damaged Properties

The City of Des Moines, Polk County, Polk County Housing Trust Fund, and local nonprofit housing providers are coordinating efforts to help low income homeowners repair homes damaged by recently flooding. This home repair assistance is available to low-income homeowners who may not qualify for funding assistance through their individual homeowner's insurance or through FEMA.

Applications for assistance will be available at the Harding Hills Middle School, 203 E. Euclid Avenue, this weekend, June 21st and 22nd. Beginning Monday, June 23rd, applications can be completed over the phone by calling 282-3233 Extension 4 between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Applications can also be obtained at the Polk County Housing Trust Fund, 409 SW 8th Street, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, beginning June 23rd. Applications must be completed by July 10th, 2008 for timely assistance. The application asks questions such as family income, family size, and needed repairs.

The initial inspections of affected properties in evacuated areas have been completed:

Number Evacuated (estimates)

Birdland: 271

Inspections Completed

55 - Commercial

70 - Residential

Red Tags

10 - Commercial

34 - Residential

Yellow Tags

8 - Commercial

8 - Residential

Green Tags

37 - Commercial

28 - Residential

Red - means a property has been extensively damaged and is unsafe.

Yellow - means a property cannot yet be re-occupied. Authorized personnel can enter the property to do repairs. Owners or residents can only enter to remove belongings.

Green - means the property has been inspected and can be re-occupied.

To prevent the growth of mold it is important that homes be dried out as much as possible. Using a dehumidifier can be very helpful.

Polk County Health Department officials strongly discourage children under the age of five being in any of these homes, even if they have been cleared (or "green-ticketed") for occupancy, until all the cleaning and repair work has been completed.

Friday, June 20

9:00 AM

From the National Weather Service (as of June 20, 2008, 9:00 AM)

Friday and Friday night 30% chance of rain. Saturday through Sunday there is a 20 percent chance of thunderstorms. Des Moines River is flooding; however, it has crested and is going down in level. The Raccoon River is below flood stage.

Des Moines River Elevation at 2nd Ave: 23.25, Flood Stage 22.40.

Des Moines River Elevation at SE 6th Ave 26.31, Flood Stage 24.0.

Saylorville Elevation: 885.45.

PLEASE STAY SAFE

The Des Moines Parks and Recreation Department reminds residents that Gray's Lake Park remains closed until further notice. Kruidenier Trail, John R. Grubb Lane, all parking lots, and the beach area remain closed due to safety and public health concerns. We appreciate the cooperation and patience of the public in honoring this closure. As portions of the park become available for recreational use, an announcement will be made.

Also, a reminder to the public that they should stay out of area flood waters, tributaries and flood waters for recreational purposes at this time. Individuals will put themselves at risk due to the heavy debris in the waterways as well as the very swift currents which can create dangerous situations and quickly sweep even motor boats downstream through miles of swift currents. Soon our waterways will again be available for recreational purposes, however at this point their use should be limited to conveying water out of the city.

VOLUNTEERS

The United Way is coordinating volunteers for flood clean-up. Those would like to volunteer should call 2-1-1- or register online at www.unitedwaydm.org

CITY OFFICES

Des Moines City Hall offices have moved.

The Info Center, City Manager's Office, City Clerk, City Council, Finance (Purchasing) and Engineering (Bids) have moved to the Central Library.

Engineering Administration, Finance (all other divisions), and Human Resources have moved to the Des Moines International Airport.

The City of Des Moines Community Development Department has relocated to the Des Moines Central Library located at 1000 Grand Avenue and is fully operational.

The Permit and Development Center is operating and residents can access those services at the Library.

If you have questions about your permits, please call 283-4200.

If you have questions about how to access city services or where an office has been moved, please call 283-4500.

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