

La Plata Police Department – Emergency Operation Plan

	Title: Severe Flooding		Annex: EOP-34	
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	<input checked="" type="radio"/> New <input type="radio"/> Amends <input type="radio"/> Rescinds			
Approved by: Chief Carl Schinner			CALEA 5 th Edition	
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01 PURPOSE: The purpose of this annex is to supplement the *Natural-and-Man-Made Disasters* portion of the Emergency Operations Plan. Used in conjunction with the La Plata Police Department’s emergency plans, this annex provides general guidelines for use by first-responders to areas experiencing severe flooding, where flooding is anticipated or expected or where a dam has failed. These guidelines are intended to be flexible since no two situations are the same, and to allow first-responders to adapt to rapidly changing conditions.

02 ASSUMPTIONS:

- A.** The transformation of a calm, slow-flowing river into a violent and destructive flood occurs hundreds of times each year in this country. Floods can be slow or fast rising. They are sometimes seasonal, as when winter or spring rains and melting snow fill river basins with too much water too quickly. Flash floods are usually the result of extremely heavy rain or snow and are sudden. As a result, normally calm rivers overflow their banks and their rapid currents sweep away everything in their path. Homes, bridges, and vehicles are swept away.
- B.** Floods and flash floods almost always occur during or after a period of heavy rain or sudden snowmelt. A flood may be building when there is a noticeable difference in the flow and height of streams and rivers.
- C.** The immediate danger from flash floods is from the strength of the water current as it surges through an area, carrying debris and causing injuries and drowning. Floods can interrupt power, disable fuel sources, and make roads impassable. People may be stranded in their homes, or be unable to reach their homes. Motorists may be stranded in their vehicles.
- D.** Long-term dangers of flooding include the outbreak of disease, broken sewage lines and widespread water supply pollution, broken gas lines, downed power lines, and fires.
- E.** Flood warnings are usually issued by the National Weather Service (NWS), however, in the interest of public safety, local governments and other authorities can also issue flood warnings.

Flash Flood Watch	Is issued when flash flooding is possible within the designated watch area. Personnel and residents should be alert to rapidly changing conditions and be prepared to seek higher ground.
Flash Flood Warning	Is issued when a flash flood has been reported or is imminent. Evacuations may be necessary as a precaution at this stage.
Flood Warning	Is issued as an advance notice that a flood is imminent or is in progress at a certain location or in a certain river basin. Evacuations should be strongly considered at this stage.

03 PLAN:

A. ON-DUTY SHIFT SUPERVISORS SHOULD:

1. Develop pre-plans at the squad or shift level to meet changing situations (i.e., food, rest periods for personnel; assignment of personnel to specific areas or to “fixed” positions unless dispatched to a call).
2. Evaluate staffing requirements to ensure an adequate level of staffing (i.e., minimum staffing). Consider the need for allied agency assistance (Maryland State Police, Charles County Sheriff’s Department, etc.).
3. Evaluate equipment needs to ensure all personnel on-duty are adequately equipped and prepared.
4. Monitor existing and anticipated weather conditions for possible activation of the Department’s Emergency Mobilization Plan.
5. Arrange for deployment of 4-wheel-drive vehicles and consider staffing them with two (2) officers, if possible.
6. Determine the current department policy on report writing for certain types of collisions (i.e., reporting for certain collisions may have been suspended).
7. Ensure coordination with Public Works, especially snow removal crews.
8. Ensure that any officer directing or controlling traffic wears high-visibility clothing and plan for relief for those officers

9. Determine availability of traffic cones, arrow/message boards, barricades, portable signs, etc., and determine if any can safely take the place of an officer directing or controlling traffic.
10. Notify the on-call Commander of any damage caused by any storm so that a report to the National Weather Service can be prepared.
11. Determine the need to evacuate persons from damaged homes or homes that are unsafe, unsanitary, or unnecessarily threaten the health of occupants.
12. Be cognizant of nursing and assisted-living facilities and other locations that house vulnerable populations. These facilities may lose power and the need to be evacuated.
13. If the Emergency Management Group (EMG) has been activated and the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) established, the on-call commander will contact the on-duty shift supervisor to ascertain cell phone numbers and to provide EOC phone numbers to ensure coordination, cooperation, and communication between patrol officers and the EOC. This allows information sharing between inside and outside EOC.
14. Tune the television in the station's Community Room to the Weather Channel or other appropriate channel so that up-to-the-minute information can be received and evaluated.
15. Ensure notifications of Command Staff.
16. Be cognizant of low-lying areas in the Town that are vulnerable or susceptible to flooding conditions, especially those areas that normally flood.
17. Be aware of any special-needs populations in the low-lying areas that may need to be evacuated.
18. Direct officers to close roads with high standing water making them impassable. Check with Public Works for barricades, traffic cones, etc.
19. Evacuate persons to designated areas (i.e., established shelters; staging areas, etc.).