



COUNTY OF KENOSHA

Administrative Services Emergency Management

Bennett J. Schliesman
Director

1000 - 55th Street
Kenosha, WI 53140
Telephone: (262) 605-7900
Fax: (262) 605-7905
E-mail: BSchliesman@co.kenosha.wi.us

PRESS RELEASE

March 12, 2009

For More Information Contact:

Ben Schliesman @
262-605-7900

FLOOD SAFETY AWARENESS WEEK

Kenosha County Executive Jim Kreuser has joined with Governor Jim Doyle in proclaiming March 16 – 20, 2009 as Flood Safety Awareness Week.

“Flooding continues to plague Kenosha County year after year, causing hundreds of thousands of dollars in property damage,” County Executive Kreuser said. “Flood Safety Awareness Week is a good time to remind people about the dangers associated with flooding. It’s also a good time for people to find out what precautions they can take in advance of flooding, what to do when flooding occurs and to purchase and/or review their flood insurance policies.”

In 2008 alone, Kenosha County residents and governments were reimbursed over \$698,000 for flood losses. FEMA and the State of WI reimbursed \$227,643 in grants and \$83,200 in Small Business Administration loans to Individuals and County/Municipal governments received \$387,603.

Flood insurance from the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) can be purchased from most Insurance agents if you live in a WI community that participates in the National Flood Insurance Program. All Kenosha County municipalities participate in the NFIP except for the Village of Paddock Lake, which is working on the participation criteria. For more information contact your Insurance Agent or NFIP at 1-800-427-2419.

“Residents can do many things in advance to help protect their homes and contents from flooding,” said Ben Schliesman, Director of Kenosha County Emergency Management. Residents should consider taking the following precautions:

- Avoid building in a flood-prone area unless you elevate and reinforce your home.
- Landscape around your home making sure that the ground angles away from your home; that your gutters are in good shape and that your drainpipes carry water runoff away from your home.
- Elevate your furnace, water heater, and electric panel if susceptible to flooding.
- Install "check valves" in sewer traps to prevent floodwater from backing up into the drains of your home.
- Seal the walls in your basement with waterproofing compounds to avoid seepage.

- Raise appliances and utilities like the hot water heater and the furnace.

If you must evacuate your home during a flood and have the time, you should do the following:

- Secure your home; bring in outdoor furniture and items if you can safely do and move essential items to an upper floor.
- Turn off utilities at the main switch or valve if instructed to do so and disconnect electrical appliances. Do not touch electrical equipment if you are wet or standing in water.

If you have to leave your home, remember these evacuation tips:

- 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 and 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. A foot of water can float away many vehicles and two feet of rushing water will carry away most vehicles including sport utility vehicles (SUV's) and pick-ups.

Information provided by the American Red Cross, National Weather Service and WI Emergency Management