

Quick Flood Effort Update -

Over the last week, volunteer building inspectors (all trade type municipal inspector's actually) worked Tuesday 8/21 through Saturday 8/25 to assist in the inspection of some 400-600 single family dwellings and between 100-250 commercial/industrial buildings (final numbers are not in yet).

Cities inspected were Rushford, Stockton, Goodview, Minnesota City, Elba, and other parts of Winona County in SE MN. Stockton, Rushford, Goodview and Minnesota City were especially hit hard. The flood came unexpected - without warning around 4:00 AM. Although there were some related deaths, from my perspective, I'm very surprised there were not more. Stories from those affected were unbelievable - to say the least.

On any given day, we had between 8 to 28 volunteer inspectors helping out. Door to door, building to building, doing initial damage assessment and placarding of every affected building. The work was not easy. It was wet, muddy, contaminated, and sometimes disorganized. For most, it was also very emotional. Residents hit by the flood were usually left out in the cold with not much of a home to go back to.

As of today, I believe we have no volunteers out doing disaster assessment work. Currently, we believe we made it out to all those jurisdictions that specifically requested help. The day is not over yet though. We may still get a call for assistance as final damages are assessed throughout remaining counties/areas in the SE.

To all those who gave time, both personal and/or on the clock by your jurisdiction, I'd like to personally thank you.

As unorganized as it sometimes felt, I personally think we did an outstanding job. I know I received many positive comments and many words of praise from community council members, their respective mayors, and many of the other staff and community volunteers. As unhappy as the residents were (rightfully so), I even heard words of praise and thanks from them (as I'm sure you did).

This task was completed using the Disaster Preparedness Manual and a volunteer committee member team. Some things went very well and others appeared to be somewhat dysfunctional. For those directly involved, I'm sure your thoughts and comments for recommended changes would be appreciated. There is always room for improvement. For those interested in being on the volunteer inspector list, contact one of the Disaster Committee members to get your contact information added to the list. Or see http://www.doli.state.mn.us/bc_disaster_preparedness.html for more information.

Again,.... Thanks to all who volunteered/participated in this effort (those who worked in the field and through office organization/coordination efforts).

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