



Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security News Release

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### **March 12 – 16 is Flood Awareness Week**

Governor C.L. “Butch” Otter has proclaimed March 12 - 16 to be Flood Awareness Week, and the Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security (BHS) is encouraging Idahoans to be informed about our flooding hazard and to take steps to be prepared for them.

Floods are one of the most costly natural disasters we face in Idaho. In 2011 five counties sustained damage significant enough to warrant a Presidential Disaster Declaration, and four additional counties saw a Governor’s Disaster Declaration due to flooding issues.

Currently the threat of spring flooding is average in most of Idaho. The snow accumulation season is not over, however, and additional precipitation in the mountains can add to the current snowpack. The rate at which this snowpack melts will ultimately determine if and when flooding occurs this spring.

BHS encourages individuals, families and communities to take action this week to understand their risk from floods and learn what they can do to lessen their vulnerability. Being prepared for a flood can not only help keep Idahoans safe, it can also help minimize potential flood damage and reduce the costs of recovery. Before a flood, residents should consider learning more about their area’s flood risk, and take action to be prepared. Information on flood awareness and preparedness is available on the web at [www.floodsafety.noaa.gov](http://www.floodsafety.noaa.gov), [www.floodsmart.gov](http://www.floodsmart.gov), or [www.bhs.idaho.gov](http://www.bhs.idaho.gov).

“This year our snowpack levels are average in most of the state, but that doesn’t mean we should be complacent about flooding potential”, said Brigadier General Bill Shawver, BHS Director. “I would like to take this opportunity to encourage all Idahoans to take action and personal responsibility in preparing themselves before the next flood. Specifically I would like to encourage those who live in flood prone areas to purchase flood insurance and to develop preparedness plans. ”

Preparing for and responding to flood events is a team effort and the Bureau of Homeland Security works closely with the Idaho Department of Water Resources, National Weather Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency to make sure Idaho is prepared for floods and Idahoans have access to flood preparedness information.

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*Note to reporters: The Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security is the State of Idaho's emergency management agency. Please note that Idaho BHS is an Idaho-specific agency, and it is not the same thing as the federal Department of Homeland Security. Within the State of Idaho organizational structure, Idaho BHS is aligned under the State of Idaho Military Division.*