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# Whatcom County Sheriff's Office News Release

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 14, 2021

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## WHATCOM COUNTY FLOODING PROMPTS RESCUE EFFORTS

### Hundreds displaced, brought to shelters

WHATCOM COUNTY, WA - As of late Monday afternoon, Nov. 15, approximately 500 people have been displaced due to flooding in the north and northeast areas of Whatcom County. Of those, approximately 280 moved to one of three shelters that were quickly established today. The three shelter locations are Everson Elementary School, Nooksack Elementary School, and North County Christ the King Church in Lynden. These shelters are being organized through the Whatcom County Sheriff's Office Division of Emergency Management and run by community volunteers.

Extensive search and rescue efforts began early this morning and continued throughout the day. WCSO's rescue vehicle was able to reach many residents, and boats were used in places where the water was too deep. These efforts will continue throughout the night.

"I am extremely proud of our deputies, along with members from other agencies and search and rescue volunteers who continue to work long hours to rescue our community members," Sheriff Bill Elfo said.

As floods recede, more road impacts will be discovered. The public is urged to follow these instructions:

- Call 911 for flood-related emergencies. Do not call 911 for non-emergencies.
- To report non-emergency flood impacts please leave a message at (360) 788-5311.
- To report non-emergency road impacts, call (360) 778-6400.
- County roads closed due to storm flooding are being posted [at this link](#).
  - DO NOT ignore road closure signs. Drivers have continued to ignore road-closed signs, cars have been stranded/stuck in floodwaters, and drivers have required rescue. This stretches the capacity of our first responders at a critical time.

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The Whatcom County Sheriff's Office is located at 311 Grand Avenue in Bellingham, Washington.  
Office Hours are Monday – Friday, 8:30 am – 4:30 pm

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- Public Works crews will work through the night to respond to flooded roads and must prioritize life and safety issues, including road closures.
- State highway roads and impacts are posted [at this link](#).
- Additional roads will be closed throughout the night as rain and floodwater continue to impact the region.
- Anyone living in known flood areas or low-lying areas should be prepared to shelter in place unless there is a life safety issue. Be prepared to evacuate if necessary.
- Sand and sandbags are also available at local fire stations and from local hardware stores.
  - [View the list of fire station sandbag locations](#).
- A limited amount of sandbags and sand are available at the Whatcom County Public Works (WCPW) maintenance shop,
  - [View a map of how to get to the maintenance shop](#), call the WCPW maintenance shop at (360) 778-6400.
- Stay off roadways and stay home if you can.

### **How the Public Can Help**

The most effective way to support the community members affected by flooding is by donating through Whatcom Community Foundation's Resilience Fund. Currently, there is a matching fund made possible by local donors and Puget Sound Energy. As a result, anyone who donates to the Whatcom Community Foundation's Resilience Fund this week will have their gift matched dollar for dollar, up to a combined total of \$115,000. To contribute to the Resilience Fund, click [here](#).

### **Next Steps**

Citizens and first responders are still in the rescue and response phase of this extreme weather incident. Soon we will move into the damage assessment phase. Additional information on how to work with disaster recovery entities like FEMA will be published in the coming days.

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