

**MEDIA RELEASE - RAIN EVENT April 2017 #2**

Tuesday 4 April, 2017

**More wet weather on the way**

Horizons Regional Council hydrology and emergency management staff will continue to keep an eye on river levels over the next 24 hours with further heavy rain forecasted this evening.

Horizons controller Ged Shirley says following a teleconference with Metservice he is expecting rain to temporarily ease this afternoon and heavy rain to return from 10pm.

“Metservice has indicated tonight’s heavy rain will last until late tomorrow morning before easing off again,” he says.

“It’s expected to fall across a large area, including the headwaters of the Whanganui and Manawatu catchments. At this stage we are expecting 100-150 millimetres of rain in the high country over that 24 hour period.”

This rainfall is not expected to have a serious impact, however Horizons will be keeping a close eye on the situation in case things change.

“Whanganui River at Pipiriki is expected to reach a 9m peak at 3pm today. With the current river forecast levels, the flood barrier for Whanganui City will not be required but we will have operators on standby as a precaution,” says Mr Shirley.

“We understand there may be some nervousness in the Whanganui community following the June 2015 event and we want to assure the community we are taking the monitoring situation very seriously. We are also keeping in close contact with Whanganui District Council and ask people be prepared as we know things can change quickly, especially with localised rainfall.”

Mr Shirley says the Manawatu River at Teachers’ College is expected to reach a 5.2m peak at 6pm tomorrow.

“This peak is on the fringe of our trigger levels for operating the Moutoa floodgates. However, we have decided activating them will be necessary to take pressure off river works in lower part of the catchment.

“At this stage we are looking to operate the gates tomorrow afternoon and will have staff onsite from 3pm. Landowners who use the spillway will be notified today.”

Mr Shirley says other rivers across the Region are beginning to fill up but there are no areas of concern at this stage.

“The Whangaehu is expected to peak at 9.4m at 7.30-8pm tonight and the Turakina is expected to peak at 8m tomorrow afternoon. Both of these rivers are likely to cause some flooding issues for surrounding farmland so we will contact farmers to let them know.

“There are no areas of concern for the Rangitikei or Oroua which are expected to peak at 4.5m and 2.5m tomorrow. The Makino Stream is expected to peak at 1.6m at 9am tomorrow which will not require the gate to be operated. However, we will have a duty officer monitoring the situation to allow for the effect of localised rainfall.”

In addition to rain, high winds for the Manawatu and Horowhenua districts are causing power outages and bringing trees down. Horowhenua District Council has activated their Emergency Operations Centre at a low level and the New Zealand Defence Force have 100 personnel on standby if required.

The next update will be provided later today, following a 4pm meeting.

Members of the public are advised to take care while driving and check the AA’s website, <http://maps.aa.co.nz/traffic/roadwatch> for information on road conditions.

Up-to-date information on river heights and rainfall is available via Horizons 24 hour toll-free Waterline 0508 4 FLOOD or via our website [www.horizons.govt.nz](http://www.horizons.govt.nz)

For weather forecasting information please see [www.metservice.co.nz](http://www.metservice.co.nz)

**Ends**

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