

An incomplete sequence of events during the flood of August 2007 compiled by Robert Cole Sprague

Sunday and Monday night: Heavy rains miss Findlay but fall North of Findlay

Tuesday Morning- 8/21/2007

- Flash flooding:
 - Lakeview, Rt 236, Rt. 237 around 4 AM
 - Huntington Bank
 - East Melrose
 - Howard Street
- 8-10 AM Fire goes door to door along the river, trying to evacuate residents
- 11 AM Fire responds to Mt. Blanchard; two kids climbed trees in park during flash flooding. Kenton Firefighters who responded are now also stuck in trees. Station 1 responds with ladder; rope rescue begins
- Springlake calls around 11AM; they saw a wall of water. It rose 3 feet inside their houses in 20 minutes. Fire responds and sets up command post. Starts evacuation; takes residents to Red Cross shelter, which needs to be set up at St. Andrews Church Annex. BVHA provides buses to get evacuees to church.
- WPC and police set barricades around impassable streets. Citizens are intent on driving around barricades and into the water

Tuesday Afternoon- 8/21/2007

- Reports that the levy next to Brookside has failed. It has not, but the water just goes over the levy and starts to fill Westview and Eastview. These streets are quickly over-run. Fire responds to Eastview Westview and a command post is established at 6th and Blanchard. Fire fighters start evacuations by going door to door with their boats. Some residents refuse to leave. Evacuations continue until 2 AM Wednesday morning.
- I-75 becomes impassable at Bluffton due to dike breaches at the quarry. I-75 traffic starts to divert through Findlay as drivers desperately seek an alternate route around traffic jam. However, Rt 15 and 68 is flooded, and there is no way to travel East in Findlay to get around the river. The City EOC begins to get calls from interstate drivers wanting to know how to get around traffic jam. The State highway patrol tells them to call City of Findlay. The State Highway Patrol Closes I-75 from Bluffton to St. Rt. 12. Reroutes traffic going south on 224 W to Ottawa to SR 65 to St. Rt. 30 to I-75.
- Food and hydration begin to become an issue for emergency forces. Auditor creates blanket POs with Little Ceasars and Great Scot to provide food. Lisa Mansfield from Streets goes to Great Scot for food, Gatorade, bottled water. Discuss with Great Scot about ordering truckloads of bottled water if water supply should go down.
- The Sheriff declares a level 3 emergency. The Mayor considers whether or not to declare state of emergency. He decides to wait until work lets out at 5 PM in order not to create a state of panic for citizens, clogging the roadways even more. The State of Emergency is declared at 7 PM with legal counsel. The Mayor and Service Director are talking constantly to local news organizations keeping them updated on road closings, etc.
- WPC is constantly setting up barricades or moving barricades, keeping track of stream gauges, and trying to treat increasing amounts of sewage. Constant communication with EPA because there is now more water than can be treated, so sewage is being released untreated into the Blanchard.

Tuesday Night- 8/21/2007

- Brian Hurt and Matt Carpenter discover Dave Metzger's red pencil map of 1981 flood in frame on conference room wall. They surmise the city will be cut in half with only the I-75 bridge available to cross the river. We debate if we should put this on the radio, but decide against it because we are afraid the bridge will become impassable. We need the bridge for the ambulances coming from the North to be able to get to the hospital at

the South. The only way into town from I-75 is Lima Avenue. Matt and Brian call the Fire and Police Chiefs who start splitting their forces into North and South locations.

- Police establish St. Marks as South location, Family Center as North. Fire establishes High School as North, Station One as South command post.
- Jim Rhodes starts to move all his rolling stock from the Street building to park on Main Street. This operation takes several hours into the night and requires all his personnel. They are racing against time to save our rolling stock. A few pieces such as the road pavers, leaf machines are left because there is not time to save them.
- Police commandeer several dump trucks from the Street Department in order to rescue island of policemen or citizens who are stranded. Unfortunately, the police officers commandeer some trucks that should not be driven through the water because of their transmissions. Later, the transmissions of these trucks have to be replaced. Citizens complain about high wakes from the dump trucks to EOC, saying that the Police are driving fast through the water.
- The EOC has one phone line that goes down with lots of static. The phones ringing constantly with rescues, people who can't find a way home, people requesting assistance, people calling in with road closing information, and people offering to help. There are 4 people in the call center and it is very fast paced, making decisions quickly.
- Flood waters keep rising, however the National Weather Service keeps saying that the crest will be at 15ft. We start to have doubts that NWS is correct, because water is at 14 ft and rising 6 inches per hour and showing no signs of slowing. However, we have to accept their estimate because they have the computer models and rain gauges in Arlington, Mt. Blanchard, Findlay, etc.
- 11 PM meeting with department heads. Police, Fire, Streets all getting equipment out of flood prone locations. Matt Carpenter makes comment about water supply may be compromised if something not done and river rises above 18.5 ft. Doug Peters sends out email to businesses that water supply may be compromised, and rumors are widely circulated. There is much time spent quelling this rumor, and calls flood the EOC call center.
- WPC pulls UV system as water rises so that it does not short. They are now beginning to have trouble getting in a out of their facility as water is rising. They start to move their rolling stock out the High School to higher ground to save it.
- Lisa Mansfield continues to make runs to Great Scot to feed fire rescue and others.
- All of Hancock county people with wells are put on a boil advisory.
- SR 224 Closed at Red Hawk. SR 12 open E & W. SR 15 closed at Airport. SR 37 closed. All of Hancock Co. level 3 emergency per Sheriff. Arlington impassable.
- St. Andrews opens for the Red Cross shelter. Since the water is rising, it now becomes clear that the shelter needs to be moved. We offer the Cube to the Red Cross, and begin preparation at that facility. The Red Cross starts to mobilize moving the shelter and arranging transportation.

Wednesday morning- 8/22/2007

- 1 AM- The river rises 19 inches in one hour; it was rising 6 inches per hour before. We realize we are not dealing with the 1981 flood, we are dealing with the 1913 flood. Only a skeleton crew at the EOC at this point. The phones are quiet. Most people have left after the 11PM briefing to get some rest, not knowing that the river has risen 19 inches in one hour.
- City calls in CUBE employees to move the Red Cross shelter from St. Andrews to the CUBE. Findlay Schools superintendent sends buses to help move Red Cross evacuees out to CUBE during the night, and also a large box truck to move Red Cross equipment.
- City employees come back to EOC around 6 AM. Jim Rhodes gets a large dump of sand for sandbagging, which is deposited at Walnut and Railroad tracks.
- Matt Carpenter starts to rally resources to sandbag Water Treatment plant. He gets sand and bags from NW

masonry and National Lime and Stone at 8 AM. Volunteers from CUBE about 9 AM. He contacts Anderzack Pitzen, the contractor working on widening Route 236 to see if he can use their front loaders to take all this to Water Plant and start bagging. Dave Jordan is sent to Lowe's to buy shovels, visqueen plastic, other emergency supplies. Auditor calls Lowe's manager and opens blanket PO for Dave. By 10 AM the water treatment staff and volunteers have completed sandbagging clearwells. Water treatment calls the EPA to let them know about sandbags. Increased turbidity in water plant demands unusual measures to treat water, consuming water operator's time. The Water plant is taking on water through its foundation; large pumps are set up to keep the water at bay.

- Water rescues continue and a wait list starts to grow. Chief Lonyo requests 40 volunteer firefighters from Hancock county to help man equipment . He also requests 20 rescue teams from the Hancock County EMA at 4 AM. The Hancock County EMA is activated. A call goes out through the EMA and Sheriff dispatch to Hancock County for available fire fighters. The Ohio Fire Chiefs Response Plan is activated and a liason, Rick Helminsky, arrives at the Hancock County EMA center to start coordinating the call up of 42 organizations to help with the flood rescues and assist our fire department. Russ Rife, Fostoria Fire Chief, comes from Fostoria to County EMA and helps coordinate arriving fire departments.

Findlay Fire Department 2007 Flood emergency Aug. 21-24

| | <u>Department</u> | <u>Personnel</u> | <u>Contact #</u> |
|-----------------|----------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|
| Boat 5 | Fostoria FD | 2 ff | Brian Herbert |
| Boat 6 | Tiffin FD | 2ff | |
| Boat 7 | Jenera | 6ff | James Brown |
| Boat 8 | ODNR | 3 per. | Neil Brokamp |
| Boat 9 | ODNR | 2 per. | John Rinehart |
| Boat 10 | Arlington | 3ff | Nick Clevidence |
| Boat 11 | Liberty twp | 4ff | Brent Badertscher |
| Boat 12 | Rawson | 3ff | Mark Brumbaugh |
| Boat 13 | Washington twp | 3 per. | Troy Nethers ODNR |
| Boat 14 | ODNR | 2 per | Joe Yingling |
| Boat 15 | ODNR | 2per | |
| Boat 16 | Washington twp | 3ff | Bill Laveglia |
| Boat 17 | Montclova | 3ff | Lance Miller |
| Boat 18 | Blanchard twp | 2ff | Sam Clymer |
| Boat 19 | Oregon | 3ff | |
| Boat 20 | Oregon | 2ff | |
| Boat 21 | Clinton twp | 4ff | Tom Boyd |
| Boat 22 | ODNR | 2per | Eric Christen |
| Boat 23 | Norwalk | 3ff | |
| Boat 24 | Ballville | 3ff | |
| Boat 25 | Perrysburg | 3ff | |
| Boat 26 | Allen twp | 3ff | Jeremy Fern |
| Boat 27 | ODNR | 2ff | Dave Goodwin/ Cory Hartman |
| Boat 29 | Med. Corp. | 2per | |
| Boat 30 | Neaploen | 6ff | |
| Boat 31 | Rossford I | 3ff | |
| Boat 32 | Perrysburg | 2ff | |
| Boat 33 | Montclova | 2ff | Katie Wilka |
| Boat 34 | McComb | 3ff | Anthony Statler |
| Boat 35 | McComb | 3ff | Cody Schapson |
| Boat 36 | Rossford II | 3ff | |
| Boat 37 | Lake twp | 6ff | |
| Boat 38 | Ross County | 4per | |
| | ***** Coast Guard | 10 per staging FHS | |
| other personnel | Vanlue | 3ff | |

| | |
|---------------|--------------------------|
| Middleton twp | 2ff |
| Delaware | 3ff |
| Allen twp. | 11 ff |
| Total | 128 ff/ personnel |

EMS Responders 2007 Flood emergency Aug. 21-24

| | | |
|----------|-------------------|---------------|
| Squad 1 | North Baltimore | 4per |
| Squad 2 | McComb | 3per |
| Squad 3 | Shawnee | 2 per |
| Squad 4 | Bath | 2 per |
| Squad 5 | Jackson Forest | 2 per |
| Squad 6 | Dunkirk ems | 3 per |
| Squad 7 | Pemberville | 2 per |
| Squad 8 | Ada | 2 per |
| Squad 9 | Bloomville Seneca | 3 per |
| Squad 10 | Seneca | 3 per |
| | Total | 26 per |

Findlay Fire Department 2007 Flood emergency Aug. 21-24

8/23/2007

| | | | |
|---------------|------------------------|--------------|-------------|
| Station one | Ladder Wauseon | 4ff | Allen |
| | Engine 855 Wayne | 4ff | Bentley |
| | Engine 15 Republic | 2ff | Martin |
| | Grass unit | 2ff | Josh Kirian |
| Station two | Engine 646 Cygnet | 4ff | Crowghan |
| Station Three | Engine 12 Spencerville | 4ff | Lee |
| Station Four | Ladder 2 Tiffin | 2ff | Boehler |
| | Engine 4 Beaver Dam | 5ff | Swisher |
| | Total | 27 ff | |

- The arriving fire fighters and ambulances with rescue equipment are sent to the Findlay High School command post. Battalion Chief Matt Trevor is placed in charge of the High School incident command. They continue rescue operations; they now have a waiting list of 150 people. The Findlay Fire Department is having difficulty making arriving fire departments radios work with Findlay radios, so Matt Trevor's solution is to put one Findlay fire fighter in each boat for command and control. No one knows how to operate Sheriff's homeland security vehicle. They continue rescues until 4 PM on Wednesday afternoon.
- Jim Rhodes finishes removing all the rolling stock possible from the street department. He then goes over to the cemetery building with front loaders and puts the mowers from the cemetery into the front loader buckets. Front loaders are now the only way to ford the streets leading to the cemetery. The cemetery itself is under water and hundreds of headstones will be found fallen over when the water recedes.

- Police now have partnered up with street department equipment, with one police officer riding shotgun, while the street department employee drives the equipment. Working well together; dispatch receives calls and radios policemen, which enables the mayor and police to have command of some vehicles that can navigate the water. The only way to ford river is with front loaders or I-75 bridge.
- EOC now fielding lots of calls from citizens who want to be evacuated from their homes. Also lots of calls coming in from people who are concerned that water is not OK to drink.
- The news media is now constantly looking for someone to go on camera; the mayor, service director, governor, department heads, Red Cross, etc.
- Municipal building is now surrounded by 2 to 3 feet of water. The basement is taking on water through phone conduit which is spouting like a broken water main. It is too much pressure to block off the spouting water. Dave Rader and John Krynock begin to move everything they can from the basement. They frantically set up large water pumps to keep the water at bay. By 9 AM the water outside is within 4 inches of entering the Municipal building front door, which will mean phone operations will be compromised and our dispatch center may be inoperable. We attempt to get some sandbags from Parker Lumber, but the bags are rotted. Some garbage bags are filled with sand and taken to the Municipal Building doors.
- 10 AM call comes from Ameritech. They are taking on water in the basement of the Hardin Operations Center, and they claim that Hancock County phone communications will cease if their power equipment in basement is compromised. They need emergency sandbags. Robert and Todd work with dispatch to get on front loaders to go to water plant and get their excess sandbags, and Matt Carpenter also joins them. When they arrive at Ameritech, fire fighters are there to help takes dozens of sandbags into the basement to save the power supply. They return to municipal building with remainder of sandbags. Water now seems to be leveling off.
- There is now 4 feet of water at the intersection of Howard and Broad, making it impassable to the Sewer plant. They are using front loaders to get people in and out of Sewer plant.
- Lunch delivered to High School, St. Marks, and Municipal Building by dump truck from Great Scott; deli trays to feed the rescue squads.
- Coast Guard, and dozens of other fire departments and agencies respond to help with the water rescues. The wait list starts declining.
- EOC gets calls of water line breaks. Hot water heaters float in basements and cause pipes to break.

Wednesday afternoon- 8/22/2007

- The Fire Chief sends request for relief for his crew which has been on for 36 hours straight. They call up other fire departments through Rick Helminsky and the Ohio Fire Chiefs Response Plan. Fire Chiefs from neighboring communities arrive at 4 PM and take over manning the firehouses with their crews and equipment so our men can get some rest. Rescues continue house to house.
- Brian Hurt goes up in an airplane to get aerial photos of water levels. These are the only aerial photos we will have of the flood coverage.
- The Governor arrives at CUBE shelter. The next day he declares a state disaster.
- The Weather Channel wants an interview. Press is constantly calling for access and interviews. Good Morning America calls. CNN schedules interview for tomorrow morning. Fox News in Washington, D.C. Washington Post. Glenn Springer.
- Relatives of people call EOC: "Is my aunt Edna at the shelter or evacuated from her house? I can't get her on the phone..."

Thursday Morning- 8/23/2007

- Water has receded from Municipal Building
- People are calling the EOC to offer to volunteer to help flood victims. However, we are not sure if all the people are legitimate. Also, vendors start calling the EOC to offer their services, at a price.

Thursday Afternoon- 8/23/2007

- Emergency city council convened at 3 PM to appropriate money and waive the bidding process for any contractors hired to help with flood.
- Governor returns to CUBE. Chertoff, FEMA come to CUBE. Police provide security.
- Governor declares disaster
- Clarifiers stop working at Sewer Plant.
- We put out a press release to tell citizens we will pick up trash at curb starting tomorrow morning.
- Civil emergency lifted by Mayor at 4:45 PM.
- Rescue operations cease at 7 PM at the High School.

Friday Morning- 8/24/2007

- We sit down with H&O and hammer out a contract to help the City with debris removal.
- City Auditor's office takes pictures of all city facilities and rolling stock that was damaged.
- City departments start to clean up their facilities.
- City Engineering office hires architect and contractor to create estimates of damages to facilities
- Robert is appointed city liaison to the Hancock County EMA office and attends the 11 AM briefing.
- OBOA officials are requested to do damage assessments through the Hancock County EMA office.
- Begin to disseminate information out to citizens about all the agencies who can provide services
- Concerns about Tetnus. Motor oil spill at LaRiche.
- Greg Craven starts working on GIS map of the flood boundaries, using the aerial photos.
- President declares a federal disaster for individuals, but not public assistance.
- Scrubbing down fairgrounds in preparation for the Fair next Wednesday.
- Gridlock at the landfill dump trucks are taking 3 hours to make a round trip to the landfill. The City opens Emory Adams park as a temporary dump staging area, with assistance from the Ohio EPA.
- Mayor considers calling in National Guard for security. After discussion with police chief, decides to not call in National Guard for security, but submits mission statement to County EMA for debris pick-up help.
- Contractors start to call the EOC to offer their services. 50 to 100 calls that day.

Friday Afternoon- 8/24/2007

- Mayor declares 12 hour holiday for employees to cover time they were sent home during the flood event.
- Sky Insurance contacted about city property damaged in flood

Saturday Morning- 8/25/2007

- The County holds a Public officials meeting about FEMA and the possibility of a federal disaster declaration.
- Ron Kear offers ODOT's help during the 11AM briefing. According to Gary Valentine: "ODOT's checkbook is open." Ron has 2 crews on Eastview/Westview by noon and two more from another ODOT district by 5 PM Saturday. By Monday, ODOT has over 50 pieces of equipment in the city, working 12 hour shifts.
- Stone berm created around Emory Adams to prevent leaching into park ground from any waste at temporary debris site. The Alvada large dump trucks are brought in to haul from Emory Adams to landfill to speed up the process. Small dump trucks from H&O, City, and ODOT take to Emory Adams, while large dump trucks take it from Emory Adams to landfill.
- We can't find enough containers to place at Cooper's field and Swale park, so we submit a mission for more containers. Ohio EMA gives us a state contract number for Allied waste. Citizens are dumping their trash at the parking lot at Swale Park, so we put some containers there as well.
- Concern that maggots will form in one week on food placed at curb. People are throwing out entire meat freezers. Debris with refrigerants, electronics, tires, household liquids are to be separated out during debris pick-up. We try to facilitate this by creating several hazardous waste specific containers at Cooper's Field.
- City workers inoculated for tetnus, also any volunteers. United Way volunteers and Church of Latter Day

Saints volunteers arrive to help citizens clean up homes.

- Job and Family services is swamped with people who are applying for state assistance dollars available to flood victims. JFS has no way to determine who actually has flood damage and who does not. People are upset.
- FEMA advance crew arrives to do a windshield survey. SBA also arrives here.
- The Chamber creates an approved contractor list.
- If people get ripped off by flood contractors, they are advised to call police.
- GIS map of flood boundaries finished and given to FEMA to use for assessment.
- State legislator contacted to try to push state legislature to kick in 12.5% of the local match for federal dollars.

Sunday- 8/26/2007

- Tetanus shots given by health department.
- We find out that 4 guys on ground, 1 bobcat, 1 loader, and 4 dumps make the best crew for debris removal. Bobcats with grappler attachments or front loaders with grappler attachments work great and reduce the number of men needed on the ground.
- Cooper field is also birmed with stone and open to public for hazardous waste. Containers labeled for paint and other hazardous liquids, electronics, tires, white goods.
- ODOT finished with the Spring Lake cleanup.
- Landfill hours extended 7 to 7 until further notice
- 30-40 people are still at the shelter at CUBE.
- Red Cross is completing their drive by damage assessment: Windshield surveys. They will not share that information with any other agency. Multiple agencies are all doing their own damage assessment for each property.
- Start preparing for the initial FEMA meeting. They want photos, map of flood damaged areas, payroll records, overtime estimate, copy of budget, fuel, miles of roads affected, and map of city locations.

Monday- 8/27/2007

- Created estimate of damages for Courier
- Red Cross will pull out today or tomorrow
- Trying to find out how to dispose of electronics, paint, tires, appliances. Put visquene in roll-off containers for paint at Cooper's field. No one will take them. Cannot take to landfill. We start to call environmental cleanup companies.
- Food is ordered for Street Department. They are working 12 hour shifts for debris removal.

Tuesday- 8/28/2007

- We meet with Jim Jordan, and underline that we need the President's declaration to help us out. He promises to help any way he can.
- Health department needs long-term space. Facility is completely devastated, and the contractor's estimates indicate it will be very expensive to repair.
- Mosquito spraying begins. The health department is worried that with standing water the population will boom.
- Red Cross 85% complete with damage survey.
- The County Engineer closes East Main Cross Bridge indefinitely.

Wednesday- 8/29/2007

- FEMA is set to open a Disaster Recovery Center on Friday at 8 AM at CUBE
- Public assistance declaration given from the President. Next Wednesday is kickoff meeting for public officials.
- FEMA will open headquarters at 1200 Commerce Parkway. They are using their own security. Not open to public.

- Still 36 people in Red Cross shelter at CUBE
- Health department concerned about Hep A & B Need to contact family physician for shots.
- Agency on Aging is helping people clean their houses.
- ODOT has 62 people in the city.
- Fair is open. Jordan and Hite are at the fair.
- United Way volunteers clean city park equipment for children. Firetrucks help with hose-down.
- Family Center housing office can help people find housing.
- Landfill having trouble with 2500 ton weight limit; needs EPA approval to waive the weight limit.

Thursday- 8/30/2007

- OBOA starts inspecting flood damaged houses
- Street sweeper needed by street department. Submitted request to County EMA.

Ideas:

- Need a person to monitor river gauges and start predictive model: Todd?
- Reverse 911 would let people know river is coming or that they need to evacuate
- We can go back through dispatch to tell when each road was closed

Other:

- National Weather Service (NWS) predicted peaks a number of times

Tuesday: 8/21/07

NOTE: 11 IS FLOOD STAGE

| | | |
|----------------------|--|-------|
| 8 AM | 769 | |
| 9 | 769.5 | |
| 10 AM | 769.8 | |
| 11 AM | Projected Crest 13.2 = 772.8 | |
| 12 PM | 770.3 | 12.42 |
| 1 PM | 770.5 | |
| 3 PM | 771.1 | 13.02 |
| 4 PM | 771.4 | 13.36 |
| 5 PM | 771.9 | 13.79 |
| 6 PM | 772.1 | |
| 7 PM | 772.4 PROJECTED CREST 773.3 OR 15 FT | |
| 9 PM | 773.1 | |
| | PROJECTED CREST 774.9 | |
| 10 PM | 773.4 | |
| 11 PM | 773.5 | |
| 12 PM | 773.8 | |
| WEDNESDAY MORNING | | |
| 1 AM | 775.4 INCREASED 19" IN ONE HOUR!! | 16.9 |

| | | |
|-------|--|-------|
| 2 AM | 775.7 PROJECTED CREST 776.5 OR 17.8 EARLY WED MORN | 17.2 |
| 3 AM | 775.8 | 17.3 |
| 4 AM | 776 | 17.5 |
| 5 AM | 776.1 | 17.6 |
| 6 AM | 776.3 | 17.8 |
| 7 AM | 776.3 | 17.8 |
| 8 AM | 776.4 | 17.67 |
| 9 AM | 776.4 | 17.75 |
| 10 AM | 776.5 PROJECTED CREST 18 FT AT 2 PM | 17.75 |
| 11 AM | 776.5 | |
| 12 PM | 776.6 | |
| 1 PM | 776.6 | |
| 2 PM | 776.6 | |
| 3 PM | 776.6 | |
| 4 PM | 776.5 CRESTED | |
| 5 PM | 776.4 | |
| 6 PM | 776.3 | |
| 7 PM | 776.2 | |
| 8 PM | 776.1 | |
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