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**A Weekly Column for the  
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## **Flooding Impacts Missourians Across the State**

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It's rare these days to tune into your local news station without seeing dramatic video of flooding lakes and rivers devastating homes and businesses throughout the country. Many of these instances are occurring within our state. In early June, severe thunderstorms began to pummel the upper Midwest. Tornadoes, hail, severe lightning, and rain led to major damage to much of our region. Flash flooding resulted in the evacuation of thousands of homes in low-lying areas. This situation worsened as rain continued to saturate the Midwest. Seven states (Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, and Wisconsin) have been affected by this severe flooding.

Fortunately, the 28<sup>th</sup> Senate District has not witnessed the devastating effect from the flooding. However, other cities in our state have not been as fortunate. The deluge of storms led to a quick rise of water on the Mississippi River, which saw water crest 10 feet above flood stage in Hannibal (June 10). Floodwaters breached two levees in western Illinois (June 18) and threatened more Mississippi River towns in Missouri. Most of the towns near the river are protected by levees, but outlying areas are extremely vulnerable to flooding.

The [Missouri Department of Natural Resources](#) (DNR) is working with the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA), federal, state and local agencies as well as the public on environmental concerns due to the flooding issues across our state. In order to emphasize the need for federal assistance, the governor issued Executive Order 08-20 on June 11, declaring that a state of emergency existed in Missouri.

As these entities continue to monitor river levels, Missourians across the state should take necessary steps to minimize potential flood damage and ensure their safety. DNR has several publications and fact sheets available online to help citizens affected by the floods as well as other natural disasters in order to help clean up homes and communities. This information includes additional contact phone numbers, how to construct a sandbag emergency levee, help to restore drinking water, and what to do after a flood.

Flash floods and general flooding is an extremely powerful natural disaster. You should know if your area is considered a flood risk. If it has been raining hard for several hours or steadily raining for several days, be alert to the possibility of a flood, and listen to your local radio or television station for up-to-the-minute flood information. Remember, a flood watch means a flood is possible in your area and a flood warning means flooding is already occurring or will occur soon in your area. If you are unsure about the flood status of your area, call your [local Red Cross chapter](#) (eight chapters located throughout Missouri), emergency management office, or planning and zoning department.

You can also be prepared for potential flooding by having a family disaster plan and assembling a disaster supply kit. Check to see if you have insurance that covers flooding. If not, find out how to get flood insurance. Keep insurance policies, documents, and other valuables in a safe-deposit box. A disaster supply kit should include a first aid kit and essential medications; canned food and can opener; at least three gallons of water per person; protective clothing, rainwear and bedding or sleeping bags; and a battery-powered radio, flashlight, and extra batteries. For a complete list of what should be in your disaster supply kit, visit <http://www.redcross.org/services/prepare>.

Since flooding has not impacted our district as much as the rest of the state, we should extend our hand and help those who were not as fortunate. According to the American Red Cross, there are several different ways in which people can help and make a donation, including online through the [Red Cross](#) Web site, by telephone through 1-800-HELP-NOW, and by mailing a donation in the form of a check or credit card to a Red Cross Postal address.

For more information regarding flooding in Missouri, visit [www.dnr.mo.gov/disaster.htm](http://www.dnr.mo.gov/disaster.htm) for publications and fact sheets or call the Missouri Department of Natural Resources at 800-361-4827. If you have any other questions or comments, please feel free to contact me at 573-751-8793 or by e-mail at: [delbertscott@senate.mo.gov](mailto:delbertscott@senate.mo.gov).

*Senator Delbert Scott represents the people of Barton, Benton, Cedar, Dallas, Henry, Hickory, Pettis, Polk and St. Clair counties in the Missouri Senate.*

