



**MONTGOMERY COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE  
SPECIAL OPERATIONS SECTION - SWIFT WATER GROUP**



## **Flooding Pre-Deployment Guidelines**

This document should be utilized in determining the criteria, staffing and resources required in deploying water rescue assets to address flooding conditions as a result of any weather incident. This guide should be utilized in conjunction with communications with the Special Operations Battalion or Assistant Chief and the On-Duty SWT's Duty Officer.

The items below can be considered a bench mark or trigger points for determining the probability of flooding and resource pre-deployment for incident response.

### **Trigger points for consideration of resource enhancement and pre-deployment:**

1. National Weather Service issues a **FLOOD WARNING**
2. Predicted rainfall of **OVER 1" per hour**
3. Predicted rainfall of **OVER ¾" – 1" per hour** for more than 1 hour
4. Any other point at which after an evaluation of the current conditions in combination with the current forecast and experience leads the above people to conclude there is a significant potential for flooding within Montgomery County.

**\*\*Please Note: on average streams crest, approximately 1 hour after rainfall ceases\*\***

### **Considerations for team pre-deployment:**

1. Any Storm Advisories, Watches, or Warnings
2. Size of Storm
3. Path and speed of Storm
4. Area of County to be impacted
5. Duration of storm
6. Potential rainfall of Storm (Total Accumulation and Rate of Accumulation)
7. River/Stream Levels (pre-Storm)
8. Ground Saturation (pre-Storm)
9. Pre-deployment timeframe of SWT & callback (if necessary)
10. Pre-deployment location of SWT's

### **Staffing Requirements**

- 1) Swift Water Team (SWT) = (2) Swiftwater Boats.
- 2) Swiftwater Boat (minimum staffing); (1) SWBC and (1) SWBO
- 3) Swiftwater Boat (desired staffing); (1) SWBC and (2) SWBO.



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**Deployment Options: Operational period lasting approximately 2-10 hours:**

**Level 1:**

- 1) Assign SW730 & SW730B as dedicated assets & place as appropriate.
- 2) Assign SW710 & SW710B as dedicated assets & keep at FS10.
- 3) Assign a dedicated SW D/O

**Level 2:**

- 1) 1 Staff Additional SW Boats with on duty personnel (SW725, SW740, SW729, SW734, SW731, SW714, SW712) Location will depend on storm path.

**Level 3:**

- 1) Staff Additional SW Boats with overtime personnel (SW725, SW740, SW729, SW734, SW731, SW714, SW712) Location will depend on storm path, providing even geographic coverage and ability to cover areas which may be isolated by closed roads.

**Additional Considerations for Operational Periods lasting > 10 hours:**

- 1) Monitor weather forecasts (hurricane forecast, substantial rain over a length of time)
- 2) Request SWT member availability and signups
- 3) Determine where SWT assets may be deployed/ needed
- 4) Determine number of SWT members initially needed
- 5) Staffing of independent SWT D/O(s)
- 6) Determine possible operational period(s) of deployed assets
- 7) Determine any FD operational backfill needs (if applicable)

**Fire Stations Commonly used for Swift Water Deployments:**

Batt 1: FS2 & FS12

Batt 2: FS10, FS26 & FS30

Batt 3: FS31 & FS32

Batt 4: FS4, FS18 & FS25

Batt 5: FS14, FS22 & FS34

**\*\*Fire stations 14, 25, 29, 31, 40 all have boats that can be staffed and deployed if needed\*\***



# MONTGOMERY COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE SPECIAL OPERATIONS SECTION - SWIFT WATER GROUP



## Definitions:

[NWS Glossary](#) – Link to NWS Glossary of Terms

- Advisory:** Highlights special weather conditions that are less serious than a warning. They are for events that may cause significant inconvenience, and if caution is not exercised, it could lead to situations that may threaten life and/or property.
- Watch:** A watch is used when the risk of a hazardous weather or hydrologic event has increased significantly, but its occurrence, location, and/or timing is still uncertain. It is intended to provide enough lead time so that those who need to set their plans in motion can do so.
- Warning:** A warning is issued when a hazardous weather or hydrologic event is occurring, is imminent, or has a very high probability of occurring. A warning is used for conditions posing a threat to life or property.
- Flood Warning:** In hydrologic terms, a release by the NWS to inform the public of flooding along larger streams in which there is a serious threat to life or property. A flood warning will usually contain river stage (level) forecasts.
- Flood Watch:** Issued to inform the public and cooperating agencies that current and developing hydrometeorological conditions are such that there is a threat of flooding, but the occurrence is neither certain nor imminent.

## Resources:

[National Weather Service - Baltimore/Washington](#) – Local Weather

[Potomac River Level @ Little Falls](#) – Obtain current Potomac River Level

[Weather Bug](#): - Mobile App has robust Lightning Tracking and Warning

[NWS - COUNTY FLASH FLOOD GUIDANCE FOR MARYLAND AND DC](#)