



SAN ANTONIO POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL MANUAL



Procedure 808 – Inclement Weather

Office with Primary Responsibility:	TSC	Effective Date:	July 31, 2010
Office(s) with Secondary Responsibilities:	PSC, PNC, FTC, IDC, SSO	Prior Revision Date:	October 01, 2009
Forms Referenced in Procedure:	None	Number of Pages:	3
		Related Procedures:	802, 806

.01 INTRODUCTION

- A. The primary goal of this procedure is to prevent injuries or casualties at low water crossings. A coordinated effort between responding agencies and departments who are responsible for barricading or redirecting traffic around high-risk areas is essential. All officers are reminded that low water crossings throughout the city can flood unexpectedly, causing potential life-threatening hazards for motorists who attempt to navigate across them.
- B. In view of the extreme hazards that exist when high water and flash floods cover “low water crossings,” it is important a proper response be implemented during inclement weather conditions.

.02 ALERT CONDITIONS:

- A. During inclement weather, the National Weather Service (NWS) utilizes the following:
 1. *Warning* - Means the actual weather event is currently taking place for the location (usually associated with a county or specific defined area).
 2. *Watch* - Means conditions are favorable for the development of the particular weather event.
- B. When either flash flooding or river flooding notices are given for Bexar County, “watch” means some kind of flooding is likely, and a “warning” means some kind of flooding is ON-GOING somewhere in the county.

.03 INITIAL RESPONSE

- A. Communications Unit
 1. The Communications Unit maintains a master list of all low water crossings in the city. The Communications Unit is responsible for monitoring the local weather conditions and communicating with the National Weather Service and the Public Works Department. Any “watches or warnings” are immediately disseminated to officers in the field. Although watches and warnings can provide general warnings to a large area, timely reports from patrol officers provide valuable information in formulating any type of response plan.
 2. The Communications Unit supervisor will monitor any reports of isolated or widespread flooding and coordinate this information with the Emergency Operations Center, Traffic Section Commander, Service Area Commanders, Shift Directors and Supervisors. If flooding rises to such a magnitude so as to compel the recall of personnel, it shall be classified as an Unusual Occurrence and handled in accordance with GM Procedure 802, *Unusual Occurrences and Critical Incidents*.
- B. Patrol Division
 1. As first responders, the Patrol Divisions have the primary responsibility of responding to high water situations. Service Area Commanders will maintain a list of low water crossings for their respective areas. Shift Directors and Supervisors will ensure Officers are familiar with these areas and monitor them during watch and warning conditions. When necessary and authorized by the Incident Commander, other units within the Patrol Divisions such as SAFFE, CRT and investigative units may be utilized in elevated levels of flooding.
 2. Officers’ Responsibilities when notified flood conditions exist:



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- a. Officers will monitor each of the known or reported low water crossings in their assigned area.
- b. Upon the officer's arrival at a low water crossing, the officer will determine if the crossing is safe. If water has begun to flow across a low water crossing, the officer will notify the Information Channel who will then notify the Public Works Department to barricade the location.
- c. If the officer deems the low water crossing unsafe and the location has not been barricaded, the officer will remain at the location and reroute traffic. (If barricades are stationed near the crossing, the officer will prominently position them on the roadway.)
- d. If the officer is unable to remain at the low water crossing and barricades have not arrived, the officer will deploy temporary preventive measures to warn motorists of the high water. Temporary measures that may be used consist of traffic cones, police line tape, and/or flares. (Barricades or temporary measures used should be prominently displayed to alert motorists of the possible danger.)
- e. Once the barricades have arrived and been prominently displayed, the officer will notify the Information Channel and his supervisor. Prior to leaving a low water crossing, the officer must receive supervisor approval. If approval is given, officers should continue to monitor the location as needed.
- f. Due to the possibility of downstream flooding or additional rain, officers should not remove any barricades already in place. Designated barricade crews will remove the barricades after Public Works Department has determined the area is safe to pass.

C. Tactical Support Division

The Traffic Section, if available, will have primary responsibility for monitoring flooding and road conditions on the expressways. These officers will also provide support to the Patrol Divisions, if necessary. The Special Operations Section will provide support to the Patrol and Traffic Sections as needed.

.04 RESPONSE LEVELS

- A. Station/Section Commanders, Shift Directors and Supervisors will ensure all personnel assigned to their command are familiar with the low water crossings in their Service Areas. A list of low water crossings will be provided by the Public Works Department and updated on an annual basis.
 1. Level I occurs when there is 0 – ½” of rain per hour.
 - a. District officers will patrol the identified low water crossings in their area on a regular basis and report any high water conditions to the Information Channel.
 - b. The Communications Unit will inform Station 1, of the Public Works Department of any high water conditions.
 2. Level II occurs when there is ½” to 1” of rain per hour.
 - a. Patrol and Traffic Supervisors ensure officers are checking low water crossings on a regular basis and report any high water conditions to the Information Channel. This information will then be forwarded to Station 1, of the Public Works Department.
 - b. The Traffic Section Commander will monitor call activity and if necessary provide an additional dispatcher for TransGuide Operations. The Traffic Section Commander may assign an officer to TransGuide to act as liaison between TxDOT and the Department.
 3. Level III occurs when there is 1” to 2” of rain per hour.



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- a. Level III integrates Levels I and II. All available on-duty officers assigned to SAFFE, CRT, Patrol Divisions, Special Operations Unit (SOU), and the Gang Detail may be assigned to assist in monitoring low water crossings.
 - b. Officers will be assigned to areas of the city receiving the most rainfall, reports of flooding and predicted downstream run-off. SAFFE, CRT, SOU, and Gang Detail Officers may be assigned to low water locations to prevent drivers from driving around posted barricades and will only be relieved by the dispatcher or a supervisor.
 - c. Officers assist in detouring traffic around the location and if necessary assist in evacuations.
4. Level IV occurs when there is over 2” of rain per hour.

Level IV integrates Levels I, II and III. The Traffic Section Commander will assign a Supervisor to the Emergency Operations Center to act as a liaison for the Department.

- B. If the City Emergency Operation Center (EOC) is activated, the Incident Commander will coordinate all activities as outlined in GM Procedure 802, and determine whether to implement any phase of the Mobilization Plan as outlined in GM Procedure 806, *Mobilization*.