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WEATHER

Long recovery expected from storm that destroyed parts of Sand Lake

BY SARA RIVEST | RENSSELAER COUNTY

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At the intersection of routes 66 and 43 in Sand Lake, it's difficult to find a home or business that wasn't impacted by Wednesday's storm.

Water surged down Taborton Mountain and quickly filled parking lots and roadways, seeped into buildings and caused significant damage.

"It was like a river coming through here," says Kyle Zeh. "Totally destroyed my mother-in-law's house, our rental home here, and it's just devastation."

The storm water took road debris along with it, leaving asphalt from Route 43 in Zeh's backyard.

Manager Anthony Potter says the fast-flowing water carried the outdoor equipment and merchandise with it.

“When we came out here, there was a river,” says Potter. “(The water was) three or four feet high, pushing everything we had in our yard into a ditch. Now, we have stacks of lumber, a dumpster, propane, chlorine, everything in the woods back here.”

Inside the store, four to six inches of water covered the floor.

“We are going part by part, really seeing what we can save, what we need to throw away,” says Potter. “We don’t really know what was in that water, so you can’t sell stuff that’s been soaked in it.”

They expect repairs to take a few weeks.

“It is sad,” says Tremont. “We’ve actually had a few disasters that have happened here before, but this is definitely one of the worst.”

Across the street from Tremont’s is Homeroom Loft Apartments, the building that used to serve as Sand Lake Elementary School.

Thursday afternoon, a dozen cars were still stuck in the back parking lot, which looked more like a lake. Apartment managers declined to discuss the damage, and said their main concern was the well-being of their tenants.

Poestenkill summer camp had to close for the day, effecting 186 kids. Town Supervisor Keith Hammond says they’ll be back open Friday.

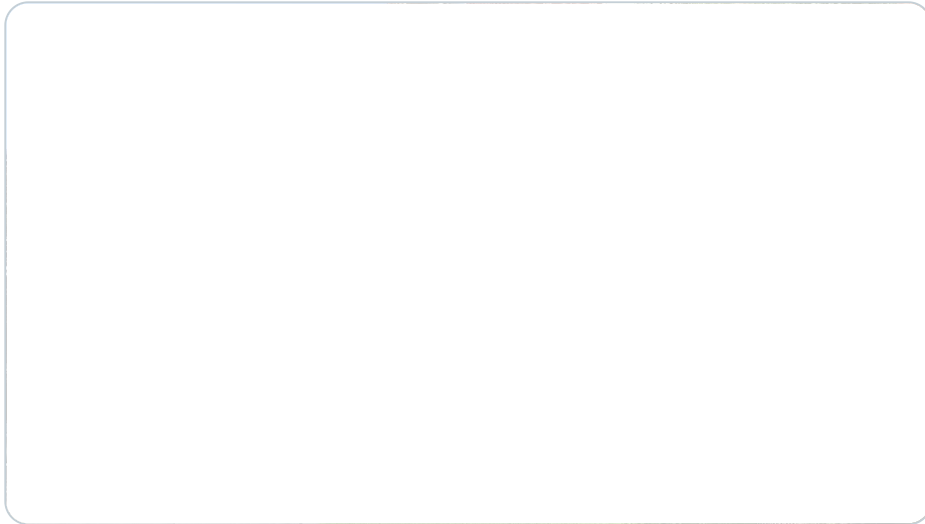
“We’ll be fine,” says Hammond. “We survived Irene, we will survive this. You can see everybody is all hands on deck, everybody is working.”

At the Sand Lake town offices, storm debris clogged the drains outside of the upstairs library, water spilled into the lot and flowed right through the front door.

“Chaotic,” says Sand Lake Town Library Director Mindy Fowler. “Luckily, we didn’t have a lot of patrons in.”

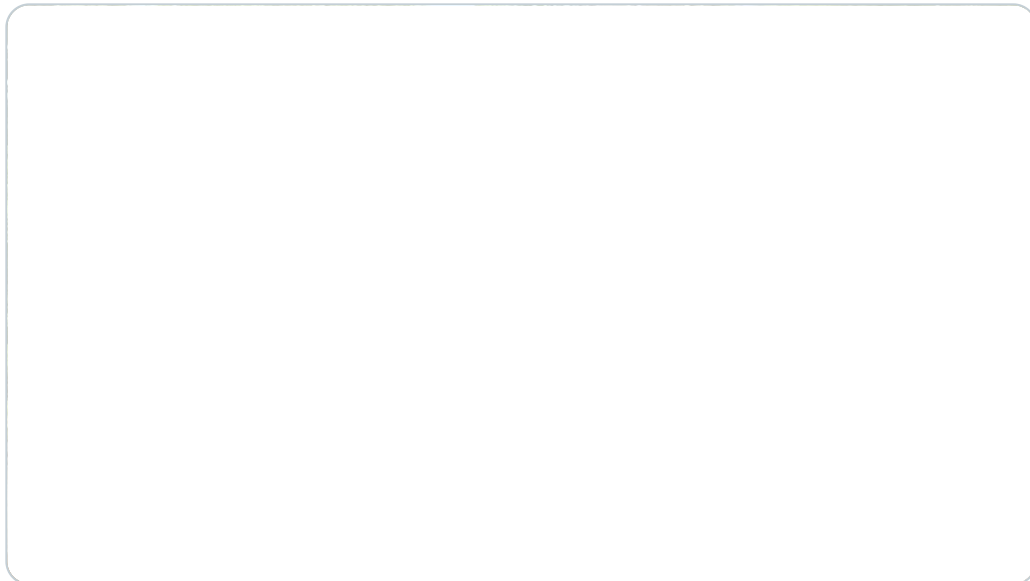
Some books were damaged and backup paperwork destroyed, but nothing irreplaceable.

Here's the storm damage at Sand Lake Elementary, now Homeroom Lofts Apartments. I can see at least 10 cars in the flooded parking lot.
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Here's what it looks like behind Tremont Lumber. They estimate at least \$1 million in damage.



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