



Flooded fields

As heavy rains continued to drench northern Dutchess County Wednesday, scenes like this one on Rte. 199, Red Hook, east of the village, were not uncommon. (pm) (Register-Star photo by Patti Magee)

Floods force evacuations

RED HOOK - More than 370 people have been evacuated from trailer parks and homes in Eastern Dutchess County as flood waters continue to plague this area.

American Red Cross volunteers were pressed into service Wednesday to assist families

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living near the 10 Mile River in Dover Plains.

East of Dover Plains, more than 350 people were evacuated by firefighters.

Last night, more than 20 people living in seven trailers in the Shady Brook Trailer Park near the Wappinger Creek in the Town of Poughkeepsie were evacuated after their homes were declared unsafe.

Water from almost six inches
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of rain began to recede today.

American Red Cross Staff Member Kathy Meyerson said about 18 people were given emergency shelter at Dover Elementary School, while others sought refuge with friends and relatives.

She said more people were expected to seek shelter at the school throughout the night.

There also were scattered reports of people from Pleasant Valley, Wappinger and Glenham needing shelter because they were flooded out of their homes.

She said the southern part of the county seemed to be harder hit than northern areas.

She added donations to aid families are welcome and may be sent to American Red Cross, Dutchess County Chapter, 103 Hooker Ave., Poughkeepsie 12601.

Dutchess County Commissioner of Public Works James Spratt said his office was studying the flood damage to see if the county was eligible for federal and state disaster relief funding.

He said individual areas in the county might qualify for funds.

Mr. Spratt added that damage to county roads and bridges is about \$300,000 so far.

About 35 roads in the county

were closed Wednesday due to flooding.

Dutchess County Sheriff Frederick Scoralick said Rte. 9 in Hyde Park and Poughkeepsie was reopened, as were several secondary roads in Hyde Park. He also said Rte. 55 in LaGrange was open today.

As rains continued for the third day, firemen worked on numerous calls to pump out flooded basements.

The Red Hook Fire Department reported 21 calls for since Tuesday.

A spokesman for the Rhinebeck Fire Department said they did not have any record on basement flooding in the town because the department is not permitted, by village law, to pump out basements.

Homeowners experiencing flooding conditions must call a contractor.

Red Hook Town Highway Superintendent George Hildenbrand reported he was concerned about Aspinwall Rd. near the bridge over the creek. "I am concerned the headwall will wash out," he said.

He is watching Rokeby Rd., where a 24-inch culvert rotted Tuesday, Echo Valley Rd. and Moore Rd.

"All this water is causing more damage than snow. As far as damage is concerned, I'd rather have the snow," Mr. Hildenbrand said.

Rhinebeck Town Highway Superintendent Eugene Trombini said everything looked good in the town this morning. "We've had no problems at all. We had a couple of places where the culverts couldn't take the heavy rain Wednesday, but the water had receded by this morning, and we've had no washouts," he said.

Meanwhile, Fleetweather, a private forecasting service in Wicoppee, reported about 5.48 inches of rain had fallen at the Dutchess County Airport in the 48 hours ending at 2 p.m. Wednesday. The rains were predicted to taper off late Wednesday, with scattered showers expected today.

John Gruner, chief dispatcher at Fire Alarm Headquarters in Poughkeepsie, said they received 544 calls Wednesday and 220 calls Tuesday, most for flooding conditions. He said they have been 'pretty busy' this morning and had received about 50 calls by 10 a.m.

Some schools in the county closed or limited hours Wednesday because flooded roads made getting students to and from home impossible. Three schools in Millbrook and part of the Arlington High School were closed.

Pine Plains sent students home 20 minutes early and three school in Dover had half-day sessions.(es,pm)