

Flood Campaign Message Map

A message map consists of usually three or four key messages (our most important messages to communicate) and three or four talking points supporting each of the key messages. These key messages and talking points can be used to inform all of our outreach and communications methods (interviews, news releases, social media posts, website pages, etc.) throughout the campaign.

Emergency managers, program managers, subject matter experts, and/or PIOs may revise or add to these key messages and talking points as needed.

Key Messages as of 6/22/23

Key Message 1: **We are shifting from a response phase to a recovery phase.**

- 1: We are scaling back but still maintaining operations until we know that a flood risk from snowmelt no longer exists.
- 2: We have begun to demobilize specific functions and agencies of the SERT.
- 3: We have downgraded the SEOC from Level 2 Partial Activation to Level 3 Enhanced Watch, and downgrading to Level 4 Monitoring June 30.
- 4: We have reduced the frequency of Command and General Staff Meetings to once a week and Flood Situation Reports to twice a week.

Key Message 2: **We are gathering information to support a Presidential Disaster Declaration application.**

- 1: We are providing information and support to help local level officials conduct preliminary damage assessments to identify flood damages and associated costs.
- 2: Flood damage costs will be totaled statewide to determine if we have reached our \$5.7 million threshold and are eligible for the declaration.
- 3: There is a 30 day deadline following the end of the flooding incident to submit our application, but we have applied for a 30 day extension to August 11.
- 4: Damage assessments are locally conducted, state reviewed, and FEMA verified.
- 5: If a declaration is received, only counties that have met their thresholds will be eligible to participate.

Key Message 3: **Where it rains it can flood.**

- 1: Flood and water safety are still a top concern. While rivers and streams may be below flood stage, they are still running high, fast and cold.
- 2: The danger of drowning still exists. Parents and pet owners should be vigilant in not just watching children and pets around water, they should keep them well away from those waters. Appoint a Water Watcher when recreating around water.
- 3: Reach or Throw, Don't Go. If someone is in the water, reach with a branch or throw a rope, don't enter the waters to attempt a rescue.
- 4: Turn Around, Don't Drown. Fast moving water can knock a person off their feet and float a car.

- 5: Be aware of your surroundings, your limitations, and your resources.
- 6: All home flood preparedness steps still apply (see below).

Key Message 4: We have been very fortunate this flood season.

1: We received a historic, record amount of snow and snow water equivalent, but we also experienced relatively mild temperatures this spring.

2: Unfortunately, we did see several incidents of localized and isolated flooding, landslides, sinkholes, and groundwater flooding, fortunately worst case scenarios never occurred.

3: State and local emergency managers and other government agencies were proactive in conducting mitigation efforts and other protective measures, and in providing funding and flood response resources like sandbags, diversion devices and equipment.

PREVIOUS MESSAGE MAP

Key Message 1: Understand your flood risk.

1: Floods can happen anywhere, at any time. Where it snows and rains, it can flood.

2: Flood after fire is a common occurrence. If you live below a burn scar where grass, brush, and trees were burned off the land, you may be at higher risk for flash floods or mudflows.

3: Consult your city or county flood manager. Review flood maps where you live.

Talking Point: It can flood even in a desert. Ten of Utah's 15 Presidentially declared disasters were for flooding.

4: Monitor weather reports before going outdoors, and sign up for local emergency alerts.

5: Learn more at floodhazards.utah.gov.

Key Message 2: Prepare for flooding now.

1: Learn where and when sandbags are available.

2: Know how and when to shut off utilities like water and electricity. Prevent contaminated water from entering the pipes in your house. Prevent electrical damage to appliances and electronics.

3: Be ready to move valuable items susceptible to water damage from lower floors of the home to upper floors.

4: Take photos & videos of major household items and valuables. Keep copies of important documents in a safe, dry place.

5: Learn more at ready.gov/floods and beready.utah.gov.

Key Message 3: Consider buying flood insurance.

1: Most Homeowners insurance does not cover flood damage.

2: Just 1 inch of water in a home can cause \$25,000 or more in damages.

3: Flood insurance is available at reasonable prices through the National Flood Insurance Program for communities that participate in the program.

4: 40% of flood insurance claims are outside mapped high flood risk areas.

5: Flood Insurance Policies have a 30 day waiting period

6: Learn more at floodsmart.gov.

Key Message 4: Know the protective action for floods: Turn Around, Don't Drown, Go to Higher Ground.

1: Prevent drowning by monitoring and limiting activity of children and pets around fast moving rivers and streams.

2: Don't let children play in or near flood waters, which often carry unknown hazards like sewage, chemicals, electrical wires, branches and boulders.

3: If trying to get from one place to another takes you across a swollen and fast moving river or stream, don't try to cross it. Find an alternate route. Try to move to higher elevations to escape rising waters.

4: Flood waters are often muddy and deep and it's hard to see what's happening below the surface. The road or bridge may be washed out. Damaging and dangerous logs, boulders, and other debris may be moving under the water.

5: Ten to 12 inches of fast moving water can knock a person off their feet. Eighteen inches of fast moving water can float a car. Don't take the chance.

6: Learn more at beready.utah.gov/utah-hazards/flood/.

Key Message 5: **Know what to do after flooding occurs**

- 1: Avoid Flood Waters as it hide power lines, debris and hazardous chemicals
- 2: Heed road closures and cautionary signs
- 3: Wait for the “all clear” before returning to an area impacted by flooding.
- 4: Talk to your insurance company to initiate a flood insurance claim. Take pictures of the damage before you begin the cleanup process and speak with your local community to determine any permitting requirements if improvements need to be made.

Key Message 6: **This year is the 40th anniversary of the 1983 Floods.**

- 1: The Wasatch Front saw widespread flooding in the spring of 1983 as a result of higher than normal snowpack and higher than normal temperatures.
- 2: The 1983 floods resulted in significant impacts, including a river running down State Street, the Great Salt Lake overflowing its shores, and more.
- 3: In communities in many Wasatch Front counties, church and school were suspended so community members could assist the response by helping to fill and place sandbags.
- 4: The 1983 flood triggered Utah’s first ever Presidential Disaster Declaration, with a total of \$478 million in grant funding.
- 5: Since the 1983 floods, many important mitigation measures have been taken such as the addition of reservoirs, county-specific hazard mitigation plans, improved flood maps, better maintained drainage ditches, and more.

Key Message 7: **The State has purchased and distributed almost 1.5 million sandbags**

- 1: Last November, through foresite, Governor Spencer Cox earmarked \$5 million, which was approved by the legislature, to use towards flood mitigation and response.
- 2: The \$5 million dollars is being administered by the Utah Division of Emergency Management (DEM).
- 3: DEM has used \$588,000 to purchase 1.5 million sandbags, 1.4 million of which have already been distributed to counties and tribes.

4: Distribution of the sandbags was coordinated with county and tribal officials through DEM's Community Liaison Officers.

5: All but two Utah counties requested and received sandbags, to be used as needed, including protecting public infrastructure and/or providing to the public.

6: DEM is in the process of ordering another .5 million sandbags, as they become available through the vendor.

7: The bulk of the \$5 million is being passed through DEM to the counties for additional flood mitigation and response expenses.