



NEWS LOCAL

Watching the water in Minden Hills



By Chad Ingram
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With spring just upstream, anxiety is starting to build in Minden about what it might bring. It's been a cold, snowy winter and some residents are getting worried about a repeat of last spring, when severe flooding left parts of the village under water for three weeks.

"The questions are starting to come in," Minden Hills fire chief Doug Schell told councillors during their Feb. 13 meeting.

Schell said the township was putting together media releases about flood preparedness for distribution.

"I did a little drive around this week," the chief said, adding he'd also been checking the Trent-Severn Waterway's website. "Water levels are average or below average for this time of year."

Schell said flooding is unlikely to be as severe as it was in 2013, but noted it will happen to some degree.

“There’s always flooding in Minden,” he said.

The community is built on a floodplain.

Schell said a flood preparedness plan would be posted on the township’s website, along with the links to the TSW and Ministry of Natural Resources websites.

The MNR is responsible for the dissemination of information around TSW operations and water levels.

Reeve Barb Reid said the township will be having a meeting with the MNR.

“The purpose of that delegation is to express our anticipation, even anxiety, that this community has,” Reid said, adding the public needs to know operational information, such as if the dams south of Minden are open.

“If the dams are open, then everything that can be done is being done,” she said.

Reid said the township has also been successful with its request for delegation with federal environment minister Leona Aglukkaq.

“We need to make sure she’s aware that our destiny lies in the decision-making of Parks Canada,” the reeve said.

That meeting will take place in March.

In 2014, the township will see a nearly 15 per cent increase in its insurance premiums, the equivalent of just more than \$30,000.

“The majority of this increase is the result of increased claims,” treasurer Lorrie Blanchard wrote in a report to council.

The per cent deductible for property damage related to flood has increased from \$50,000 to \$100,000, Blanchard wrote.

Damage to Riverwalk, the boardwalk and the fire hall were eligible for insurance.

Road damage is not eligible.

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