



## *Board of County Commissioners*

Lewis County Courthouse • 351 NW North Street • Chehalis, WA 98532-1900

○ 360.740.1120  
TDD 360.740.1480

[bocc@lewiscountywa.gov](mailto:bocc@lewiscountywa.gov)

### **PRESS RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

*Lewis County, Washington – Dec. 8, 2025*

## **Emergency officials urge caution as flood threat looms**

Chehalis, WA – Lewis County emergency officials are urging residents to prepare for significant flooding beginning today as a strong storm system moves into the region. Forecasts indicate the possibility of a “double-crest” event, meaning rivers may rise, fall briefly and then rise again Tuesday into Wednesday – potentially reaching higher levels during the second surge.

With forecasters predicting high winds in addition to flooding along the Chehalis, Skookumchuck, Newaukum and Cowlitz rivers, officials say road closures and power outages are likely. Floodwaters are predicted to reach major flood stage along the Cowlitz River, prompting officials to warn residents and travelers about the potential closure of Cora Bridge on U.S. Highway 12, which would disrupt access to Randle and Packwood and potentially isolate those areas until the waters recede.

### **Double-crest flood risk**

During a Monday-morning National Weather Service (NWS) briefing with hundreds of emergency personnel from across the state, meteorologist Kirby Cook said a strong atmospheric river is likely to dump up to 7 inches of rain on Lewis County, delivering a one-two punch as it slams the area today then returns with a second wave Tuesday night into Wednesday. He said that “double crest” likely will be followed by a weaker system Thursday.

“Widespread, significant river flooding is expected,” Cook said.

On top of that, experts are predicting wind gusts of 35 to 40 mph today, increasing the chance of downed trees and power lines.

County officials urged residents to be vigilant about the high winds and the “double crest.” As Department of Emergency Management Deputy Director Erika Katt noted, the second crest can be higher and more dangerous, especially when soils and rivers are already saturated.

*Ryan Barrett*  
County Manager

*Sean Swope*  
First District

*Lindsey R. Pollock, DVM*  
Second District

*Scott Brummer*  
Third District

*Rieva Lester*  
Clerk of the Board

## **Highway 12 / Cora Bridge concerns**

The Cora Bridge area along Highway 12 is historically flood-prone, and with elevated flows expected on the Cowlitz River, officials warn that access through the area could close with little notice.

Residents, travelers and commercial drivers should:

- Avoid non-essential travel between Randle and Packwood.
- Prepare for the possibility of extended isolation if the highway closes.
- Monitor county updates and Washington State Department of Transportation advisories.

## **Campers along the Cowlitz River strongly urged to leave**

Lewis County is issuing a strong advisory for anyone camping along the Cowlitz River – particularly at River Run Ranch and Cascade Peaks – to leave immediately.

Because these campgrounds sit directly on the riverbank, conditions can become dangerous very quickly during a double-crest event. Rising water may arrive suddenly, especially overnight.

Campers should:

- Evacuate now to higher ground or alternate lodging.
- Not wait for evacuation orders – water can rise faster than warning systems can notify.
- Move RVs, trailers and belongings only if it can be done safely.
- Avoid driving through standing or moving water.

## **County actions**

Lewis County Emergency Management, Sheriff's Office and Public Works personnel are:

- Monitoring river gauges around the clock.
- Preparing sandbag stations in flood-prone areas.
- Coordinating with first responders for potential evacuations and road closures.
- Providing updates to residents through local media and emergency alert systems.

## **Self-serve sandbag locations (bring your own shovel)**

Lewis County and other governmental entities have opened self-serve sandbag locations throughout the county. They are as follows:

- **Chehalis** (Lewis County): 350 W Main St. (in the brick garage at the corner of Main Street and Cascade Avenue).

- **Randle** (Lewis County): Kiona Shop at 8911 Highway 12, Randle (between Morton and Packwood).
- **Centralia** (city of Centralia): Corner of Center Street and Tower Avenue.
- **Toledo** (Fire District 2): Fire station at 150 2nd St., Toledo; 360-864-2366.
- **Winlock** (Fire District 15): Fire station on SW Kerron Avenue, Winlock; 360-785-4221.
- **Vader** (Fire District 20): Fire station at 801 B St., Vader; 360-295-0906.
- **Pe Ell** (Fire District 11): Fire station at 721 N Main St., Pe Ell.
- **Onalaska** (Fire District 1): 1733 WA 508, Onalaska.
- **Mossyrock**: 500 block of Larson Road, Silver Creek.
- **Ashford** (Pierce County Fire District 23): Big Creek Fire Station at 136 Osborn Rd., Ashford.

### **Lewis County Department of Emergency Management (DEM) web page and links**

DEM's page at <https://lewiscountywa.gov/departments/emergency-management/> includes county-specific flood information, including links to the following:

- **Lewis County Rivers** (<https://rivers.lewiscountywa.gov/#/>): Includes forecasts and real-time look at rivers as well as comparisons to historic floods.
- **Lewis County Road Conditions** (<https://roads.lewiscountywa.gov/>): Includes updates regarding road closures, etc.
- **Lewis County Alert** (click on the icon on the right of the page, or access it here): Sign up for emergency alerts, which would be sent to notify residents of road closures, evacuations, etc.

### **Water and wind safety**

Emergency officials advise residents to heed the "Turn around, don't drown" warning, noting that six inches of fast-moving water can knock over and carry away an adult while 12 inches can carry away a small car and 18-24 inches can carry away most large SUVs, vans and trucks.

With strong winds also in the forecast, officials warn residents to secure loose outdoor objects, steer clear of downed trees and power lines, and prepare for power outages.

### **To report water over the roadway or power outages**

- To report roadway flooding, call the county's non-emergency line at 360-740-1105.
- To report a Lewis County PUD outage, call 360-748-9261.
- To report a City Light power outage (for residents within Centralia city limits) call 360-330-7512 (during regular business hours) or 360-736-7040 (after hours).

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