Waterlogged Iowa lashed by heavy rain

FLOODING

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floor control operations in several locations.

He said the Iowa National Guard had sent 50 troops to Polk County and 67 to Scott County to help with the flood efforts, including stacking sandbags.

As of 5 p.m. Tuesday, 467 people had applied for federal flood aid by calling the toll-free number, 800-462-9029, Disaster Services officials said.

In Ames, the same residents and merchants who over the weekend pulled themselves out of the muck left from the swollen Skunk River raced back to stack more sandbags Tuesday as rain fell again.

Story County called the state disaster center asking for more sandbags, but Ostendorf had to refer them to Marshall County. "We're all out," he said of the state's reserve of sandbags.

Polk County

In West Des Moines and Des Moines, rain pooled in several low-spot streets because it could not drain into the swollen Raccoon and Des Moines rivers.

Des Moines police and firefighters, concerned about a break in a 4-mile-long levee system that had been battered for two days by an angry Raccoon River, went door-to-door to suggest that 250 residents northeast of 63rd Street and Railroad Avenue prepare to leave.

Register staff writers Tom Alex, Mary Challender, Mary Ann Lickteig, Anne Carothers-Kay, William Ryberg and Veronica Fowler contributed to this article.

The residents were warned in fliers, "The situation may become critical."

To ease the strain on rivers, the amount of water being released from Saylorville, Red Rock, Rathbun and Coralville reservoirs was reduced, according to the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. All four had plenty of room for floodwater, although officials expected to send more water downstream later in the day, natural resources officials said.

Officials were not worried about a flood downtown from the Des Moines River because of Saylorville Reservoir's flood-control ability — unless another heavy rain hit the city.

At a news conference, Des Moines City Manager Cy Carney said that storm water "had no place to go" in the metropolitan area.

Phone Failure

MCI telephone long-distance service was interrupted when a fiberoptic cable was washed out by the Des Moines River in Des Moines late Monday or early Tuesday, company officials said.

The exact time of the service failure was not known, but customer service representative Paul McCollum said it was reported about 3:30 a.m. Tuesday. MCI spokeswoman Janice Bowen in Denver, Colo., said the failure probably affected MCI customers all over eastern Iowa, but she did not know how many customers were included.

Although it seems like it has been raining buckets recently, this month, about two-thirds over, has far to go before it equals the wettest June ever, according to State Climatologist Harry Hillaker.

The state had an average 5.14 inches of rain up to 7 a.m. Monday, well below the 10.33 inches recorded in June 1947, the Iowa's wettest month ever.

Flood disaster areas

Associated Press

Here is a list of the 33 counties included in the flood disaster declared by Gov. Terry Branstad:

Audubon, Benton, Boone, Carroll, Cedar, Cherokee, Clarke, Clinton, Crawford, Dallas, Hamilton, Iowa, Jasper, Johnson, Jones, Linn, Louisa, Madison, Mahaska, Marion, Monona, Muscatine, Pocahontas, Polk, Scott, Shelby, Story, Tama, Wapello, Warren, Washington, Webster, Woodbury.

BILL BUTLER/The Register

Iowa's wettest years

State average Jan. 1 - July 1

1951	23.55"
1947	22.68
1892	22.37
1944	21.30
1973	21.13
1984	20.64
1945	20.25
1882	20.01
1909	19.93
1908	19.91
1959	19.85
1881	19.31
1990	19.03*
normal	15.71

*State average through June 18

SOURCE: State climatologist