

Attica stockpiles sandbags as flood precaution

Creek level in Batavia rising but well below flood stage late Monday



State inmates from Wyoming Correctional Facility fill bags with sand Monday afternoon at the village of Attica Department of Public Works. (Mark Gutman/Daily News)

Posted: Tuesday, November 25, 2014 12:00 am | Updated: 12:13 am, Tue Nov 25, 2014.

Attica stockpiles sandbags as flood precaution By Paul Mrozek mrozek@batavianews.com | 0 comments

ATTICA — The village of Attica stockpiled bags of sand Monday as a precautionary measure in the event of flooding on Tonawanda Creek.

“We’re just doing some pre-emptive sandbagging. We’re also doing them for Genesee County,” Wyoming County Emergency Services Director Anthony Santoro said, as he stopped by the Attica Fire Department Monday afternoon.

A crew of 15 state prison inmates from Wyoming Correctional Facility was at the village Department of Public Works Monday. The convicts joked and laughed as they filled sandbags and stacked them on wooden pallets.

Corrections officers did not allow the inmates to be interviewed.

“The bags, right now, are for anybody in the village that may need them. Just preventive,” DPW Superintendent Craig Kazmierczak said.

The bags were obtained from a state storage facility in Alden. The sand was from a local gravel pit,” Kazmierczak said.

Filling the tube-style sacs and tying off the open ends “goes fast with all the guys they’ve got,” he said.

Santoro said the stream gauge on Tonawanda Creek in Attica was a 6.75 feet Monday afternoon. Regular seasonal flow is about 2.5 feet.

“Right now we’re about a foot from having problems on Prospect Street,” Santoro said.

The north end of Prospect Street has a bridge over the Tonawanda. The commercial strip of small businesses just north of the creek is in a low-lying area and often floods during periods of high water.

The rising waters was caused by a rapid increase in temperature that followed last week’s epic snowstorm that dumped from 4 feet to more than 7 feet of snow on parts of the two counties.

Monday’s weather forecast was for Tonawanda Creek level to “hold steady, unless we get rain,” Santoro said.

It began to drizzle as Santoro spoke.

The stream gauge on the Tonawanda in the city of Batavia was at 5.34 feet at 11 p.m. Monday. The stream is considered at flood stage when it reaches 9 feet, according to the United States Geological Survey.

The USGS website did not list what the flood stage is for the Tonawanda in Attica.

The National Weather Service extended on Monday afternoon its flood warnings for Wyoming County and southern Genesee County, including the city of Batavia. The warning for area creeks and small streams continues until 4:15 p.m. today.

Today’s weather forecast calls for a 40 percent of light snow, a high of 38 degrees and winds out of the west-southwest at 20 to 30 mph.