

Number 5

Mines Health, Safety and Enforcement Division: Mine.Safety@gov.bc.ca

April 2022

SPRING FRESHET

Spring in British Columbia means the potential for flooding in many areas throughout the province. As of April 1, 2022, the overall snowpack indices for BC are 99% of normal, with some areas experiencing higher than average snowpacks, including the Northwest at 134%, North Thompson and Quesnel at 119%, Upper Fraser East at 117%, and Upper Columbia at 115%.



Please refer to the BC River Forecast Centre [website](#) for current snow, flood and freshet conditions, including advisories and water supply bulletins.

Spring run-off at mine sites, particularly when combined with heavy rainfall events, can potentially impact critical mine infrastructure, including tailings storage facilities, waste dumps, mine roads, and other infrastructure. As a result, infrastructure failure may lead to significant environmental impacts and put people at risk.

Good water management practices and vigilant monitoring of changing conditions are critical during this period. Mine managers must be prepared to implement any site management or response plans related to run-off management. Responses include contingencies found in Operations, Maintenance and Surveillance Manuals for tailings storage or water management facilities, site monitoring and water management plans, mine emergency response plans, and, if available, action response plans.

Consider inspecting higher-risk areas of your mine site more frequently and regularly assess the adequacy of monitoring and performance of the water management structures at those locations. In addition, staff responsible for implementing run-off management and response plans must be aware of their roles and have the necessary contingency resources (e.g. pumps and hoses) available and operable on short notice.

REMINDER: Report all incidents resulting in significant surface instabilities, an unexpected in-rush of water, mud or debris, damage to a dike or dam, or impacts to the environment, workers or public safety. A complete list of reportable dangerous occurrences can be found in section 1.7.3 of the Health, Safety and Reclamation Code for Mines in BC.

Mine Incident Reporting Line

Toll-free number: 1 – 888-348-0299

Email: mineincidents@gov.bc.ca.