

# Media release



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## STATE OF EMERGENCY DECLARED IN NORTHLAND

A state of emergency has been declared for Northland as at 1pm Tuesday 31 January, for an initial period of seven days, as part of the response to the current weather event.

The emergency declaration was requested by Northland Civil Defence Emergency Management (CDEM) Group Controller Graeme MacDonald and signed by CDEM Group chair Kelly Stratford. An Emergency Mobile Alert advising of the declaration is being sent to phones in Northland which are capable of receiving the alerts.

Mr MacDonald said emergency declarations were relatively rare in Northland, with only five emergency declarations since 1973, some of which affected only parts of the region.

“Declaring an emergency is a step under our legislation which allows the Civil Defence Controller and/or those to whom they delegate authority, access to emergency powers, granting authority to protect life and property in extraordinary emergency events under the Civil Defence Emergency Management (CDEM) Act 2002.”

He said some of the most commonly-used emergency powers include evacuating premises and places, entering premises, closing roads and public places, removing aircraft, vessels, vehicles etc and requisitioning property, equipment, material or supplies. Of these, enabling evacuations is often the key reason for an emergency declaration.

“We don’t know for certain that we will need to make use of these emergency powers but given the potential for the main impact of this event to happen overnight, we’ve done it now as a precautionary step so we have them available if they’re needed.”

He said although this weather event has begun with only moderate rainfall for most parts of Northland and no further significant issues on the roads as yet, Northland Civil Defence – along with all of the region's emergency services and partner agencies - continue to urge Northlanders to take it seriously.

This afternoon and evening are the key times of concern, with the possibility of localised downpours compounding widespread rainfall.

***MORE***

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Emergency services and partner agencies such councils and contractors, health and welfare agencies have all been making co-ordinated preparations, holding regular briefings and sharing information. [Police](#), [Fire and Emergency](#), Hato Hone St John and [NZ Defence Force](#) have all brought additional personnel and equipment into the region.

Mr MacDonald asked Northlanders to continue to stay up-to-date with weather forecasts and official information, have a plan in case they need to evacuate, check on neighbours, avoid non-essential travel and take extreme care if it was necessary to be on the roads.

He said MetService expected weather conditions to ease overnight as the weather system moves down the region but it was very difficult to predict. Showers are expected tomorrow (Wednesday), with a possibility of further rain on Friday.

***ENDS***

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### **Further information:**

- Graeme MacDonald  
Group Controller, Northland Civil Defence Emergency Management Group  
Controller
- Ph (027) 476 7978