For Immediate Release
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Hopkins Receives Telegraphic Reports from Stricken Flood Areas.

WPA workers throughout flood-stricken Eastern states have dropped their tools on work relief projects and thrown their efforts into the emergency task of saving life and property, Administrator Harry L. Hopkins announced today following a telegraphic survey among Works Progress Administrators in the affected states.

"Reports from half a dozen states had been received up to noon and others were expected during the afternoon, Mr. Hopkins states." In each case WPA workers were reported as engaged in large numbers in battling the flood waters, erecting dikes and temporary barriers, rescuing marooned families, building temporary roads and bridges into the most devastated areas, and in other ways helping to relieve the conditions of unprecedented distress.

Connecticut WPA officials wired that they had given emergency help to twenty-eight towns and that more calls for aid were coming in hourly. A number of dams and bridges have given way, they said, greatly increasing the danger in certain rural areas.

In Maine, approximately 1000 men are at work repairing bridges and streets and removing families from inundated areas.

"More units will start work as soon as rain ceases, rivers recede, and damages become ascertainable," the local administrator reported.
Another 500 men have been working since early in the week at Patterson, N. J., strengthening the walls and foundations of buildings threatened by the high water; salvaging furniture, food, and household supplies for stricken families, and patrolling flooded areas. Boat crews in other parts of the State are rescuing stranded families and cattle.

"Delaware River rising fast and endangering waterfront buildings and property (at Trenton) due to ice and floating debris," the New Jersey administrator wired. "Water power canal and control dams endangered. Chief Engineer Fred S Childs of State headquarters, now on scene organizing work to combat emergency."

Close cooperation with the Red Cross was reported from several sectors. "We have allocated funds to needy districts and are cooperating fully with Red Cross and other direct relief agencies. Can make full report tomorrow," was the message received from WPA officials in West Virginia.

Worst affected areas in Ohio are those bordering the Ohio River, officials of that state advised.

"All district directors in districts bordering on Ohio River have been contacted by telephone today and instructed to cooperate with Red Cross in meeting emergency conditions in flood work," they wired. "We have 2,500 men assigned to moving families to higher ground. They will work overtime if necessary. All district doctors along Ohio River instructed to spare no efforts and to cut all red tape in providing aid for flood victims."

No word had been received up to noon from Pennsylvania officials, but it was stated in press reports from the vicinity of Pittsburgh and Johnstown, where the most desperate conditions prevail, that large forces of WPA employees were working without rest in the battle against the waters.
In the District of Columbia, where the Potomac River has reached flood levels not exceeded in the last forty years, a force of between 500 and 600 WPA men worked until midnight Wednesday sandbagging a six block-long stretch westward from Washington monument in Potomac Park. District Works Progress Administrator George E. Allen reported that approximately 1,000 men had been added to the emergency crews today and were "doing a splendid job."

All WPA engineers in New Hampshire are prepared to take care of serious conditions which have just arisen, Mr. Hopkins was advised by WPA officials in that State.

The Maryland administrator wired as follows:

"On March 17, at 4 P.M., the Red Cross called on the WPA for help in evacuation in flood areas at Cumberland. We immediately compiled and assigned 300 workers. On March 18, twenty-five workers assigned to flood project in Williamsport. Anticipate giving further assistance to alleviate suffering and disease as water subsides."