



Warm Temperatures Bring High Flows to Yampa/Elk Rivers

River Awareness and Safety Knowledge Vital During Spring Runoff

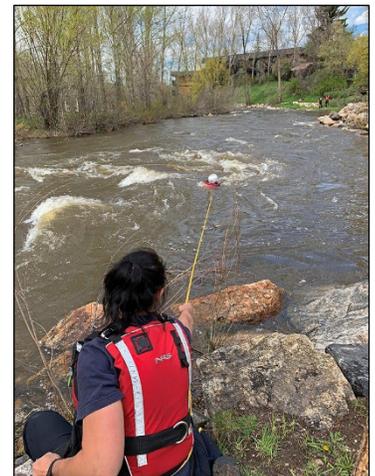
STEAMBOAT SPRINGS, COLORADO-June 9, 2021-With spring runoff surging along, and now warmer weather approaching, river levels anticipated to swell for the Yampa and Elk Rivers, creating potentially hazardous conditions.

The National Weather Service says the Elk and Yampa Rivers are experiencing high volume and flow rates due to rapid snow melt with warmer weather. The Elk River is expected to be at 5000 cubic feet per second (cfs) today and Friday, but then should taper off pending any rain/showers. In addition, areas along the Yampa are spilling over banks in areas with minor flooding at the confluence with the Elk River. Fire danger increases Sunday and Monday ahead of an approaching Pacific storm system.

Public safety agencies are urging residents and guests to exercise extra caution around fast-moving streams and rivers, especially during the spring runoff season, which is showing increased signs of strengthening with warmer temperatures and continued rapid melt off.

"It's easy to be complacent around the Yampa River and our other water bodies because there is so much recreation on them," said Steamboat Springs Fire Rescue Fire Marshal Doug Shaffer. "In the springtime, the high water and cold-water temperatures poses significant risks."

The Yampa River is one of Steamboat Springs' popular recreation locations. Rafters, kayakers, and SUPers should always wear a Personal Flotation Device (PFD) and practice river safety. Recreational tubers should follow the same guidelines and wait until flows drop below 700 cfs before venturing into the river.



In addition, bridges such as the railroad bridge (behind the Flower Mill), 5th Street Bridge and the ones downriver near Steamboat II and the Steamboat Golf Club bring additional hazards and low clearance issues. When flows exceed 2,400 cfs, traveling under these bridges is not recommended.

If you lose a watercraft on the river, let public safety responders know you're okay. Each year numerous calls of concern are received when an empty craft is seen floating downriver. If you do lose your kayak/SUP/raft, call the non-emergency dispatch number 970.879.1144 with the location and description of your vessel. First, dispatch will be happy to know you're okay; and, that there's no cause for emergency services to respond.

The following tips should always be adhered to, so you ensure a fun and safe season on the Yampa River, Elk River, lakes, and reservoirs.

- Never Boat/Kayak/Raft/SUP/Tube/Swim Alone
- Wear A Personal Flotation Device (PFD)
- Be Prepared For Extremes In Weather
- Never Mix Alcohol and River Use
- Watch Out For Your Dog & Use Caution along Water Edge
- Carry A First Aid Kit And Know How To Use It.

Steamboat Springs Fire Rescue is trained in swift water rescue and ready to respond; however, the best deterrent to requiring their assistance is individual responsibility, river awareness, safety knowledge and common-sense. Please be safe as we all enjoy the Yampa River and local waterways.

-WeServeTheCity-

Contact

Doug Shaffer Fire Marshal, 970.879.7170 or [email](#)

Sherry Burlingame, Police Chief, 970.879.4344 or [email](#)

Angela Cosby, Parks & Recreation Director, 970.879. or [email](#)