



OREGON DEPARTMENT OF GEOLOGY AND MINERAL INDUSTRIES

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Be alert for debris flows in central and eastern Oregon

PENDLETON, Ore. - The National Weather Service has issued a flash flood watch for today and Saturday for portions of central and eastern Oregon. Debris flows are possible in areas with steep terrain during this weather event, and the risk is even higher in areas recently burned.

A flash flood watch is in effect from 3 p.m. today through Saturday evening for the John Day Basin and Ochoco-John Day Highlands. A flash flood watch is in effect from 6 p.m. today through Saturday morning for Baker County and Malheur County.

Debris flows are rapidly moving, extremely destructive landslides. They can easily travel a mile or more, depending on the terrain. They will transport boulders and logs in a fast-moving soil and water slurry.

"Intense rainfall is a common landslide trigger," says Ali Ryan, earth science information officer for the Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries (DOGAMI). "Debris flows are possible during this event, so it's important to be aware of the potential hazard and avoid areas with steep terrain."

For latest flash flood watch updates, visit: <http://alerts.weather.gov/cap/or.php?x=1>

People, structures and roads located below steep slopes in canyons and near the mouths of canyons may be at serious risk. Caution should be used when traveling. According to DOGAMI, the most dangerous places include:

- Canyon bottoms, stream channels, and areas of rock and soil accumulation at the outlets of canyons.
- Bases of steep hillsides.
- Road cuts or other areas where slopes of hills have been excavated or over-steepened.
- Places where slides or debris flows have occurred in the past.

Learn more about landslides and debris flows and how to prepare for them:

Statewide Landslide Information Database (SLIDO): www.oregongeology.org/slido

Landslide and debris flow resources: <http://bit.ly/landslidehazards>

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