

## Question and Answer Period

At the conclusion of the presentation, the facilitator guided a question and answer period. Participants were encouraged to ask the team general questions during this time, and ask questions concerning individual matters one-on-one after the question and answer period. The question and answer period adjourned at 8:30PM. After the question and answer session, the Fire Chief thanked his team for their efforts during the March 2019 flood and reassured the audience that they act as soon as possible in emergencies.

The questions captured during the question and answer session are summarized below. The Q&A discussion documented here is specific to the conversations had during the presentation. Questions are noted with a “Q”, and answers with an “A”.

**Q. Who do you direct the call to when you call 911? Ambulance, fire, police? How do you respond?**

**A (Fire Chief).** Fire services. Once fire services are dispatched, police and ambulance get dispatched as well. Once you talk to fire services, they connect with other services, such as police that are listening to the call at the same time.

**Q. During an ice jam, would you take preventative measures like blasting ice before flooding, if there is an imminent problem? Like how CVC (Credit Valley Conservation) blasted ice to prevent flooding last year?**

**A (TRCA).** We would not blast an ice jam. CVC did not blast an ice jam either; they blasted an ice sheet, which is different. An ice sheet means that the ice is frozen all the way through and water is not able to flow under the ice. CVC blasted the deep ice which allowed the water to flow under the sheet. That said, we would act if there was an ice jam spotted that could result in flooding. We would do this through monitoring and excavation, not blasting. The challenge is that it can be hard to tell when an ice jam will lead to flooding.

**Q. How was the data collected for the graph on the slide titled, “Second melt brought the ice up stream”?**

**A (TRCA).** This data was collected after the flood by a gauge that collects real-time data.

**Q. Where is the gauge located?**

**A (TRCA).** There is a gauge located near the oxbow in the river just upstream of where the ice jam occurred. It is a real-time gauge, but in the winter the data can be unpredictable, with spikes caused by ice. The red line on the graph is the gauge at McFall dam. The purple line is

the Water Survey Canada gauge, located on the Humber River at Albion Hills Conservation area.

**Q. You are aware of the river depth, that it is shallow. If you know there is a low floor there, doesn't it make sense to know that it could jam and that you should be monitoring that location specifically?**

**A (TRCA).** There are low floors everywhere on rivers, and rivers change often. We had no knowledge that it could happen in this exact location. The graph (on the slide titled, "Second melt brought the ice up stream") was created after the fact, so it is now identified as one of the "usual suspects" for ice jams and will be monitored regularly.

**Q. You were sent information about ice jams earlier (in February), why didn't you walk upstream to see the other ice jam on March 15th? What did we learn from how we gathered the information and how we acted? We need to know that this will not happen again.**

**A (TRCA).** A lot of information was gathered from the March event; we now know that this is an ice jam location. We cannot walk the full extents of all of the rivers and watersheds that TRCA is responsible for. As such we will be using a drone to look at the full extent of the river. Drones are an excellent tool to monitor because we can see problems in other areas up and down stream that we cannot walk to. We can use the drone to cover more area going forward, and we will monitor this location moving forward.

**Q. I haven't heard anything about the post-flood and rebuild handbook that was suggested to Council after the March flood event given that people didn't know what to do and needed more information. Mayor Thompson, Councillors, Chief and TRCA, where are we with this handbook?**

**A (Fire Chief).** The handbook is being developed by our education and outreach team. It will be available to residents shortly. The former handout is being updated, as it was just a post-card.

**Q. Does this give you a step by step information on rebuild, like what to do about mold?**

**A (Fire Chief).** Yes, we are working on it now. We are partnering with Brampton, and are using Mississauga as an example. It will be available in the next month or so. The draft is here if you would like to take a look through. It is still being completed so your suggestions are welcome.

**Q. Can we have a 24-hour camera to monitor the area? Drones are great, but they still need humans to operate them and can lead to errors, we need cameras that operate all the time and store the images.**

**A (TRCA).** We have the technology for remote cameras, but where we put them is a challenge that requires coordination. We are interested in potentially placing one on the apartment building overlooking the river, but are not sure of the details at this time. This requires private property coordination which can take a while. There are also concerns with this kind of equipment being damaged as vandalism can be an issue. We may be able to install a temporary camera this winter, but in the future we will have a permanent solution.

- Note, a few audience members stated they would volunteer to have a camera on their property.

**Q. What about access for large equipment that is used during excavation? Do you have access points, or do you need to build any roads to access areas where ice jams need to be removed?**

**A (TRCA).** In an emergency, we get equipment in as soon as possible, anyway possible. If needed we will clear the way and remove trees. If we have to get in, we will do it. In this location, we now have an access route which is good. We don't want to destroy the valley, but we will make sure we can get equipment in when needed.

**Q. How much ice needs to jam before you bring equipment in and who makes the decision? Do you wait for flooding to start?**

**A.** This is a judgement call made by the TRCA. The people in this room are the ones who decide when to act. It is a tricky situation, you can make the situation worse by acting, and ice jams aren't an exact science. Rapidly rising water is an indication of when to react. In February, during the ice jam, there was no rising water and not much risk of a flood, but in March, the water rose significantly and there was rainfall. Every jam is unique, and the level of risk is different. Ice jams can also clear on their own, and ice jams in the same location can be different from each other. Rapidly rising water levels are a key factor in the judgement call.