

THE RECORDER

Published on the *The Recorder* (<http://www.recorder.com>)

Water, water ... everywhere: Fast, heavy rains causes flooding, power outages, and damage to some apple trees

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Wednesday, September 30, 2015

(Published in print: Thursday, October 1, 2015)

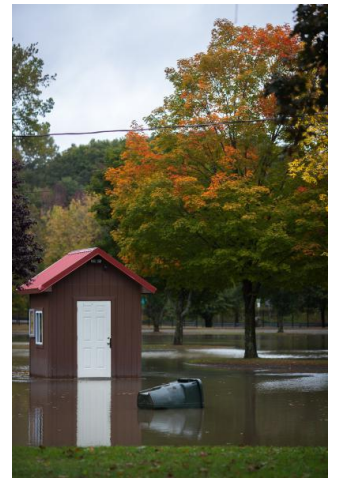
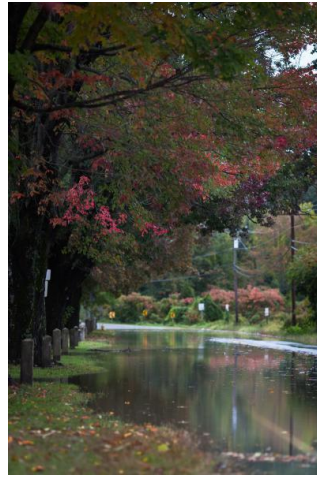
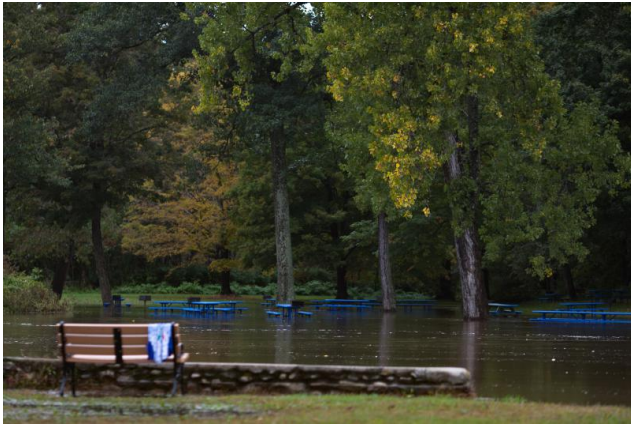
A morning of solid rain and the localized flooding and power outages it caused had public employees and utility crews scrambling around the county Wednesday, and many bracing for a week with more of the same.

In Greenfield, the rising Green River invaded the Greenfield Recreation Department's summer office off Nashs Mill Road, submerged the town beach and recreation area and closed the road.

Personal weather stations reporting through weather service Weather Underground reported between 4 and 5.6 inches of rainfall Tuesday through Wednesday evening.

The worst of the rain passed before the real flooding began. Recreation Director Christy Moore said as the storm went north, runoff continued to head downstream to Greenfield and the Green River Swimming and Recreation Area. "We had to leave because it was in the building at 11:30, but we did get everything out of there in time," Moore said. Everything included recreation equipment and the contents of the freezers. The building itself is concrete up to the rafters. Moore said the beach floods regularly, but they will have to wait until the water recedes to gauge the damage. "This is obviously a lot of water in a short period of time," Moore said. Flooding caused by Tropical Storm Irene destroyed the beach in 2011.

Nashs Mill Road remained closed into the afternoon as did nearby Plain Road, where a utility pole broke



Water from the Green River flooded the Green River Swimming and Recreation Area on Nash's Mill Road in Greenfield due to heavy rains Wednesday September 30.

Recorder Staff/Matt Burkhartt



and spilled wires onto the road.

In Montague, flooding closed a portion of Montague City Road — the Montague City end of Avenue A — with traffic diverted onto Walnut Street and Turnpike Road.

The Montague police chief warned residents of the closure via the town's telephone emergency alert system, and predicted further closures over the next few days.

The road remained closed at 3 p.m.

Greenfield firefighters responded to a number of power line calls in the morning, said Fire Lt. Andrew Eisch, but outages were brief and few.

The Orange District Court was without electricity at 10:20 a.m., as was much of the town. Utility National Grid listed 1,747 of 3,932 Orange customers without power at 10:30 a.m., with a late afternoon restoration estimate, but the lights were back on by 11:30. Overall, the utility listed 3,049 of 8,558 customers without power in Franklin County.

Orange Fire Chief James Young Jr. said he hadn't heard what caused the outage or how far it spread. "We were out dealing with a few calls, by time we got back the power was on," he said.

A tree trunk bowed power lines over Route 2 in Gill, closing the westbound lane, but was cleared away before noon.

At Apex Orchards in Shelburne, owner Tim Smith said a row of 80 trellised trees, carrying at least 100 bushels of apples, went over. Smith said he'll know in the morning whether the apples and any of the trees are salvageable. Smith said they had 6 inches of rain in Shelburne, and 17 inches this month. He has another 25,000 or 30,000 trees, but the weather has him seeing uncomfortable parallels.

"This is very similar to what they said the conditions were before the hurricane of '38; it rained so much it loosened up the ground, and then the storm came through and tore out a lot of trees ... very similar conditions right now, so we aren't looking forward to this event on the weekend," Smith said.

The National Weather Service is tracking Hurricane Joaquin, with a possible mid-Atlantic coast landfall Sunday.

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Source URL: <http://www.recorder.com/news/18831091-95/water-water-everywhere-fast-heavy-rains-causes-flooding-power-outages-and-damage-to>