

Parts of Winnipeg under flood emergency

by UPI

WINNIPEG, Manitoba -- Parts of the central Canadian city of Winnipeg, Manitoba, were under a flooding state of emergency Friday after the Red River crested at 22.5 feet.

Thursday afternoon, Mayor Sam Katz declared a state of emergency for all properties on the river side of the city's primary dike, but told a news conference there was no need to panic, the Winnipeg Sun reported.

"Overall, things are very under control but there could be some hot spots that we are definitely concerned about," he said.

The declaration gives officials the right to order mandatory evacuations, the report said.

"In the past, we have asked for voluntary evacuations, but I can tell you, the majority of times, when you ask for voluntary evacuations, no one leaves their homes and I understand why," Katz said.

Provincial water department spokesman Steve Topping, said both the Red and Assiniboine rivers had crested in the seasonal thaw flooding.

"The Red River will begin a very gradual decline and will remain above 20 feet until the middle of next week," he said.

Much of southern Manitoba is under water, and officials have said it's the second worst flooding in the past 100 years after the spring of 1997.

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