

The Office for Civil Defense has called for the activation of barangay disaster councils in the city's 98 barangays as six calamity-prone areas have been identified with the onset of the rainy season.

OCD Regional Director Adriano Fuego said this list of six barangays was compiled by the Mines and Geo-sciences Bureau to enable the authorities to prepare for emergencies.

The six calamity-prone communities identified by the OCD and the MGB are Vitali, Putik, Divisoria, Lumbangan, Tugbungan and San Jose Gusu.

A small river from nearby Barangay San Roque flows under the runway of the Zamboanga International Airport besides San Jose Gusu.

While the river is small, it is fed by water runoff from adjacent mountains and hills causing flash floods at San Jose Gusu and at the airport runway.

The San Jose Gusu portion of the San Roque River regularly overflow its concreted banks and spill over to the San Jose Gusu Elementary School, the nearby Mein Colleges and lowland areas of the barangay and to the Baliwasan area near the shoreline.

Flooding of the streets and high waters at San Jose Gusu, some five kilometers from City Hall disrupts the flow of traffic towards the west coast of this city where military camps, industrial areas and canneries are located.

Barangays Putik and Divisoria are lowland areas that are flooded during rains destroying crops and submerging homes.

In the case of Tugbungan, water from the watershed passing through Pasonanca, Sta. Maria,

Tumaga end up at Tugbungan where water stagnates because the river flow is blocked by fishponds.

Barangay Vitali, 83.9 kms east of this city, is along the way of the big Vitali River that regularly flows the community, schools and nearby barangays.

The same river floods the 72 hectares fishpond developed in the area during the martial law regime.

Fuego said barangay officials should make use of their local Disaster Risk Reduction Management Fund to purchase rubber boats and other emergency equipment for use in case of floods, landslide along the highway to the Zamboanga Peninsula provinces on to other areas in Mindanao.