



Tide is high, but PI holding on

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NEWBURYPORT — With high tides expected to be upward of 10 feet on Monday and Wednesday, residents at Plum Island Center are watching the shores as the waves creep closer.

But the tides next week that some feared could significantly add to the island's erosion problem aren't causing alarm yet.

Tim Burn, a tenant at 6 Northern Blvd., said as the tides come in, he will keep a look out, though he is not planning on putting out sandbags to protect his oceanfront deck, which is hanging over the edge of the eroded beach.

"The erosion is horrible," Burn said. "The high tides are always a concern."

Burn motioned toward the deck of his 4 Northern Blvd. neighbors, who have had considerable damage from erosion and past storms done to their property. At Jeannie's restaurant on the other side of his home, the deck has been ordered to come down.

"We are mostly praying for no high winds," Newbury Selectman Vincent Russo said. "If they don't take down the deck of Jeannie's by then, it will fall into the ocean."

The National Weather Service is predicting east winds at 10 mph with gusts as high as 25 mph on Tuesday.

This weekend, tides will get higher through early Wednesday, when tides are expected to run more than a foot above normal. On Monday, high tide is scheduled for 11:47 p.m. at 10.2 feet, followed by a 10.3-foot high tide shortly after midnight Wednesday morning, and another 10.2-foot tide early Thursday morning about 1:29 a.m.

After last Tuesday's rainstorm, Newbury Building Inspector Sam Joslin ordered the deck at Jeannie's removed after about 8 feet of sand disappeared overnight, leaving much of the platform hanging in midair. Jeannie's sits a few yards back from the edge of the dune, which continues to crumble toward Jeannie's foundation.

"I expect the tides to go right back to the foundation of Jeannie's and wash out the rest of what is under the deck," Russo said.

Russo said he is awaiting word from Julian Geiger, owner of Jeannie's, over whether the deck will be taken down before the tides rise. Russo, who has been in talks with the Department of Environmental Protection said the agency is not doing its part to help Plum Island.

"The DEP told us if houses get damaged, then so be it, they don't really care," Russo said. "Private property is

not a top priority of the DEP."

But Newbury police Chief Michael Reilly said he does not expect too much trouble, though police will be checking on the beach throughout the weekend leading into the high tide week.

"I don't expect there to be much problem. As long as there is no heavy wave action, there will not be a ton of erosion," Reilly said, noting that if the deck is not removed and does fall into the ocean, Geiger will be responsible for cleaning it up.

Reilly said the sand now at Plum Island Center will be used for sandbags if needed.

"It is sitting at the center in case we need it," Reilly said. "If there is an emergency situation, we will use it as a stopgap measure. After the tides, we will remove the sand and put it back in storage for a storm."

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Photos



The deck at Jeannie's is being dismantled, as ordered by the town of Newbury after the dune beneath it eroded. Staff photo