



How to Prepare for a Flood

Find out if you are in a flood prone area

Know your flood risk and the elevation above which flooding occurs. Do streams or rivers near you flood easily? Find out if you are located in a high, medium, or low flood risk area.

Check with your city or county government to find out if your community is participating in the [National Flood Insurance Program](#). Start with the Building or Planning Department to review the Flood Insurance Rate Maps published the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

- View and print custom online maps using Lane County data including parcels, floodway and floodplain boundaries at http://lanecounty.org/Planning/Flood_Info/Flood_Maps.htm (high speed internet connection required).
- [FEMA Flood Hazard Maps](#)
Information on locating Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM), understand how to read them, and requesting a map change.
- [FEMA Flood Map Store, Online Map Viewer](#)
Order or view current Flood Insurance Rate Maps online.
(registration required, no charge to view maps)

Consider buying flood insurance to protect your property

- Homeowners' insurance does not cover flood loss, but most homeowners' insurance agents also sell flood insurance. Anyone can get flood insurance, even if you are located in an area not mapped as a floodplain, or even if you have never been flooded before. Learn More FloodSmart.gov

Know what the different weather terms mean

- **Flood Potential Outlook** means heavy precipitation and/or snow melt could produce flooding
- **Flood Watch** means conditions are favorable for flooding but the occurrence is not certain
- **Flood Warning** means longer, more gradual flooding usually beginning after 6 hours of excessive rainfall or during spring snow runoff.
- Learn more from the [National Weather Service](#)

Update flood procedures for your family, farm or business (every year)

- Make sure everyone knows the emergency phone numbers, and when to call them.
- Learn the safest route from your home or business to high ground.
- Make arrangements for housing in the event you need to evacuate your home.
- Establish meeting places and phone numbers in case family members are separated by rising flood waters.
- Teach all family members how and when to turn off gas, electricity and water lines.

Talk to neighbors and share information on preparedness and previous experiences

- Remember, the next flood can always be bigger than floods you have seen before.

Buy sand and sandbags ahead of time

Water and debris control aids (such as sandbags, sand, lumber and plywood) are inexpensive when compared to the protection received, and can be installed with normal household tools. Materials are readily available at your local home improvement store, lumber yard and/or sand & gravel yard. Sandbags are also available for purchase online. To find vendors, just type “sandbags” in your search tool. Sandbags, when properly placed, will redirect storm and debris flows away from built structures.

- [Learn how to use sandbags](#) from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. [Click here](#) for another resource.

Minimize flood damage

- [Learn how to flood-proof your home](#) from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
- Store valuables at higher elevations (second story, if possible).
- Store household chemicals above flood levels.
- Ensure that underground storage tanks are fully sealed and secure.
- Close storm shutters and sandbag doorways.
- Have check valves installed in building sewer traps to prevent flood waters from backing up in sewer drains.
- Move vehicles and RVs to higher ground.

Keep emergency supplies on hand

- [Learn how to prepare a disaster supply kit](#) from the Federal Emergency Management Agency FEMA
- [Download a checklist for a 72-hr kit](#) from Lane County Emergency Management.

- Keep a portable radio, emergency cooking equipment, flashlights, fresh batteries, non-perishable food and drinking water, essential medicines and a first-aid kit.

Consider purchasing a [NOAA Weather Radio](#)

Protect Your Pets

- [Develop a plan](#) for taking care of your pets with help from FEMA.

Stop Erosion Run-Off

- Keep street drains, storm grates and flap gates free of leaves, sediment, soil and other debris.
- Cover exposed soil and stockpiles with materials such as tarps, mulch and hydro-seeding to protect soil surfaces from heavy rains.
- Install plants along the gentle slope of a river bank or stream to help hold the bank and slow the river's speed.

During a Flood

Keep a battery-powered radio tuned to a local station

- Follow all emergency instructions.

If you are caught in your building by rapidly rising waters, call 911 for help

- Then move to a higher floor or to the roof. Take warm, weatherproof clothing, a flashlight, a cellular phone and a portable radio.

Do not walk or wade in flooded areas

Be prepared to evacuate

Be prepared to move to a safe place. Know your evacuation routes and have a higher ground location in mind in case flooded roads cut off your escape route.

- If advised to evacuate, do so immediately. Evacuation is much simpler and safer before flood waters become too deep for ordinary vehicles to drive through.

If you evacuate by car

- Do not drive where water is over the road or past barricaded road signs.
- If your car stalls in a flooded area, abandon it as soon as possible and walk to safety in the direction you came from.
- Follow recommended evacuation routes, as shortcuts may be blocked.

When flooding is imminent, but only if time permits

- Close the main gas valve.
- Turn off all utilities in your building at the main power switch. Do not touch any electrical equipment unless it is in a dry area or you are standing on a piece of dry wood while wearing rubber-soled shoes and rubber gloves.
- Record flood statistics such as time, gage reading, and local flood elevations for use in future home flood forecasting.

After a Flood

Before re-entering your home

- Check for structural damage that could cause the building to collapse. Be cautious of potential gas leaks, electrical shorts and live wires.

When re-entering a building

- Use flashlights, rather than lanterns or candles (in case of gas leaks).

Have a professional check

- Your heating system, electrical panel, outlets and appliances for safety before using. Call the gas company to have them turn the gas back on.

Document your losses

- Photograph damages and record repair costs.

Contact your insurance agent for flood loss claims

Remove and empty sandbags

- Do not dump sand into the river or on its banks. Store it for future use.

Apply for financial assistance

- Only available following a federal disaster declaration. Listen to the radio or television for updates on disaster assistance and registration procedures.