

PROTECTING YOUR FAMILY AND YOUR HOME AGAINST FLOODING

General Information



Do you know enough about flood risk? There are many factors which may lead to flooding, including weather conditions during snowmelt in May and June, concentrated rainfalls, coastal high tides amplified by storms — learn if your home is in a flood risk area and keep current with reports and advisories. Information is available at www.pep.bc.ca. If you are at risk, there is much you can do now to prepare.

PREPARE FOR POSSIBLE FLOODING IN YOUR AREA

Flooding may occur in the area where you live, and although your home may not be immediately affected, you may be cut off from outside resources (phone, electricity, safe drinking water, road access) and even some members of your household.

You should have in place, at all times:

- **An emergency plan that every household member knows.** The plan should include information on how to shut off electrical power and natural gas sources, safe meeting places out of the flood-risk area, an out-of-province contact, plans for pets and livestock, and a neighbourhood safety plan that identifies people who may need extra help.
- **An emergency supply kit** containing food, water, necessary medications, flashlights and batteries, personal toiletries, identification for each family member, some cash and any important family documents. Be prepared to be on your own for at least 72 hours, possibly longer.
- **A battery-powered or wind-up radio** that allows you to access weather warnings and disaster instructions from local radio stations.
- **A plan for protecting your home** and the tools and items you may need to do so (wrenches for shutting off valves, plastic sheeting or sandbags).
- **A full gas tank in your vehicle.**

WHAT TO DO WHEN FLOODING IS IMMINENT

Rising water levels may indicate your home will become unsafe to be in and you will most likely have to evacuate. There are things you can do now to prepare if you are at high risk:

- Have a grab-and-go emergency kit ready for each member of your household as you may have to leave in the middle of the night or on short notice. This kit should have basic essential items such as prescription medications, eye glasses, important papers, flashlight, battery powered radio, clothing, identification and some cash.

- Always follow the instructions of local emergency officials. They may come door-to-door or provide information through local radio or TV stations.
- Review and update your personal emergency plans, including having an out-of-province contact.
- Make sure everything is in place for the possible evacuation of your pets or livestock.
- Prevent illness by understanding there is a possibility that drinking water may become contaminated. Listen for boil water advisories or other safety instructions from emergency officials.
- Keep in mind that flood waters may make travel unsafe — know if there are different routes out of the area if floodwaters are impacting roads.
- Be prepared to report to a reception centre if you are evacuated so emergency officials know you are safe. Local authorities and emergency officials will advise you of the location.
- Consider moving important items or appliances to a higher level if possible.
- An oil tank will float if it isn't full. Stabilize your oil tank and weigh it down with sandbags or wedge it against a solid object.
- Anchor propane tanks. Both full and empty propane tanks will float. Turn off valves and anchor tanks to a solid object with a chain or cable.
- Know how to safely shut off your gas. Have the tools to do so on hand so this can be done as you evacuate. Get instructions on how to do this correctly and safely at <http://www.fortisbc.com/Pages/default.aspx>
- Move pesticides, weed killers, fertilizers and anything else that may contaminate water to a higher level.

EVACUATION STEPS

Prevent electrical accidents

- Shut off electrical power at the main switch to your house. If the room is already flooded do not attempt to turn off power!
- For electrical safety information go to www.bchydro.com
- Unplug all electrical appliances.

Prevent gas or oil accidents

- Turn off propane tank valves.
- Get information on how to safely shut off your gas at <http://www.fortisbc.com/Pages/default.aspx>

Prevent water contamination

- Turn off the main water supply to your house.
- Plug all basement sewage connections. Plug toilet, sink & shower drains with a plug, plastic bag filled with rags, or other device, held in place with a weight or wood brace.

Take extra precautions if there is time

- Move all furniture and personal effects that could be damaged by flooding or which could float and cause damage.
- Disconnect downspouts draining to storm sewers to help relieve the overloaded system.

Secure your home

- Lock all doors and windows and double-check to ensure gas, electricity and water are shut off.

RETURNING HOME AFTER A DISASTER

Do not return to your home until you know it is safe, and make sure water, sewage and garbage systems are operating. You will be advised by local authorities. Once you return, a few additional precautions will help keep you and your family safe:

Destroy contaminated foods

Floodwater is contaminated and can make food and drinks unsafe to consume. Destroy all:

- Non-liquid foods, including cereals, flour, shortening & spices
- Packaged food and meats (fresh and cured)
- Canned goods (if damaged or leaking),
- Bottled foods, including home preserves
- Bottled drinks (contamination can seep under the edge of the cap)
- Fresh vegetables and produce

Have your electrical system checked and call the gas company

Before you turn on electrical switches or electrical equipment, have them checked by a qualified electrician. Call the gas company to have them turn your gas back on.

Find out about insurance

Contact your insurance agency about any damages. Information about flood recovery and assistance programs will be made available or contact your local government for more information.

Additional resources

Go to www.pep.bc.ca for more complete information and resources regarding flood safety, including emergency supply kit checklists and links to current river level information and weather reports.

BC Hydro www.bchydro.com

FortisBC <http://www.fortisbc.com/Pages/default.aspx>

DISASTER FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

How do I apply?

Once Disaster Financial Assistance has been approved for a disaster, follow these steps:

- 1. Review DFA Guidelines for eligibility**
- 2. Complete a DFA application, available at www.pep.bc.ca/dfa_claims/dfa.html or through the PEP Recovery Unit at (250) 952-5505 or toll-free at 1-888-257-4777.**

Eligible applicants will be contacted by a DFA evaluator who will visit you to review the damage and complete an assessment.

The evaluator will submit a report to PEP for final adjudication of your claim, and if your claim is accepted you will receive a settlement payment.

Printed copies of this and other brochures are available at all Provincial Emergency Program locations, or go to www.pep.bc.ca

***Provincial Emergency Program Recovery Office
Toll-free within BC: 1-888-257-4777***

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