

Basic Information

A Flood Watch is issued by the National Weather Service when there's a possibility of flooding.

A Flood Warning is issued by the National Weather Service when flooding is imminent or has begun to occur.

Floods cause more damage nationwide than any other disaster.

River flooding is a slow process, however flash flooding can wreak havoc with very little advanced warning.

Six inches of moving flood water can knock an adult off their feet and wash a small child away.

Do not drive through flooded areas, if you do and your car stalls get out immediately and go to higher ground.

Flood waters often become contaminated by trash, sewage, hazardous materials and dead animals.

Flood waters can contain trip and fall hazards, broken glass and electrically charged wires.

For more flood information go to www.fema.gov



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Flooding Facts & Tips



Columbia County EMA

Pre-Flood Activities

Standard homeowners insurance policies normally do not cover damage caused by floods.

Check with your municipality to see if they've joined the National Flood Insurance Program. If they have, residents are eligible to purchase flood insurance. If you live in a low risk zone the cost will be very reasonable. It usually takes five days before a new policy becomes effective. Contact your homeowners insurance agent for details.

It's important to realize that it's not necessary to live near a river, creek or stream to be flooded. During torrential rains, water could start flowing in areas where water never flowed before, flooding areas that never flooded before.

Maintain a list of personal property and consider taking pictures or a video. This may be helpful in settling insurance claims. Keep this information in a safety deposit box along with other important papers.

Purchase a NOAA weather radio and set it so the alarm will sound when a Flood Warning is issued for Columbia County.

When Flooding Is Imminent

Keep informed by staying tuned to a local radio or TV station for regular weather updates.

Move possessions from vulnerable areas to a safe location.

Pre-identify a safe place in which your family can relocate to in case an evacuation is required.

Make sure your vehicle's fuel tank is full.

Prepare an evacuation kit containing the following supplies:

- Medicine
- Drinking water
- Non-perishable food
- Change of clothing and shoes
- Blankets & pillows
- Personal care items
- Personal phone book
- Keys, money & credit cards
- Important documents
- Flashlight & battery operated radio
- 1st aid kit

Turn off all utilities before you evacuate if time permits and it can be done safely.

The Red Cross will open shelters when large evacuations are anticipated or occurring.

After the Flood

Return home only when authorities say it's safe to do so.

Check the exterior of your home for structure damage before entering.

Do not strike a match or smoke while entering your home just in case of a gas leak.

If your home has suffered any flood damage, do not turn on utilities until a qualified service person has inspected all systems.

Open windows and doors to circulate the air.

Take pictures of all damage.

Call your insurance agent to file a claim.

Make temporary repairs to prevent further losses.

Discard food that was touched by flood waters.

When in doubt throw it out.

Throw out wet insulation. shovel mud and remove and thoroughly dry carpets.

Prevent mildew by cleaning surfaces with hot soapy water with a 5% bleach solution.

Never mix ammonia with bleach.