

FEMA Region 3: Act Now to Prevent Problems from Spring Flooding

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PHILADELPHIA- While Spring brings the promise of warmer weather and longer days, it also brings the threat of spring flooding. That is why the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Region 3 is urging residents to take a moment and look at whether they're prepared should parts of the region experience spring flooding.

Floods are the most common natural disaster in the United States and can occur anywhere at any time. Rainfall is only one of the many reasons flooding can disrupt a community. Other causes include melting snow, coastal storms, storm surges, and overflows of dams and other water systems. Floods can develop slowly or quickly with little or no warning at all.

"Every step you take now to prepare ahead of a storm or flooding event can help not only protect your family and the life you have built, but help you recover quicker as well" said FEMA Region 3 Regional Administrator MaryAnn Tierney. "I encourage everyone to make a plan and practice it with their families."

Mitigation measures reduce a property's risk. They allow residents to return home more quickly, with less damage, after the next storm. While it may cost more to begin with, mitigation pays off in the long run. In fact, it's estimated that for every dollar spent on mitigation, you save six dollars from future losses.

Here are some actions you can take if you know your property is vulnerable to floods:

- Raise or flood-proof your washer, dryer, water heater and HVAC systems. If possible, move these appliances out of your basement to the second floor or attic.
- Relocate electrical outlets to three feet above the floor.
- Seal your basement walls with waterproofing compounds.
- Elevate the exterior air conditioning compressor 2-3 feet.



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Now is also a great time to consider flood insurance through the [National Flood Insurance Program \(NFIP\)](#). Just one inch of water in your home can cause \$25,000 in damage and flooding is typically not covered by homeowners' insurance.

Last year, The National Flood Insurance Program completed a holistic update to the way it prices flood insurance called Risk Rating 2.0. This new rating methodology ensures rates are more specific to the flood risk for each property, rather than generic flood zones. Call your insurance agent to get a quote in just a few minutes. Having a policy in place can provide financial peace of mind before the next storm hits.

It's also important to make-a-plan for your household, to include your pets, so that you and your family are aware of what to do if flooding occurs. As a part of your plan make sure to include safest evacuation routes, nearby shelter locations, how to listen for warning notifications, and packing a safety preparedness kit.

- Gather essential documents and information and place them in a waterproof container, along with creating password protected digital copies.
- Move all valuable items to a higher level of the home. Prepare your home by performing regular inspections to identify home weaknesses.
- Check and clean home gutters often to ensure that the home has a well operated draining system.

During flood, pay attention to first responders and evacuate immediately if told to do so.

- Do not ignore signs, detours, and road barriers; they are there to keep you safe.
- Avoid walking, swimming, or driving through heavy flood waters. Follow the golden rule of "Turn Around. Don't Drown!"
- If trapped in rapidly flowing water, stay in your vehicle unless water is rising in the car. If water is rising inside, move to the roof of the vehicle.
- If confined to a house, do not climb into closed spaces. Move to the highest level of the home and only get on the roof if necessary to signal for help.

Stay informed by downloading the FEMA mobile app. The app is available for download on [iOS](#) or [Android](#).



For more information on the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), visit floodsmart.gov and to find information on preparing for a storm, visit ready.gov.

To schedule an interview, reach out to the FEMA R3 News Desk at femar3newsdesk@fema.dhs.gov.

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FEMA's mission is helping people before, during, and after disasters. FEMA Region 3's jurisdiction includes Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia.

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