

1997 Grand Forks Flood By The Numbers

Release Date: Apr 19, 2022

Below are figures that encapsulate the impact of the 1997 flood in Grand Forks.

- **Red River crested at 54.35 feet.** Earthen levees in place could protect to a level of 52 feet (49 feet for levee + 3 feet of freeboard)
- **Water rise was 1 inch/hour** (2 feet/day) during flooding
- **3.5 million sandbags** (17,500 tons of sand) plus 170,000 cubic yards of clay and 20,000 cubic yards of gravel used to fight the flood
- 90 percent of Grand Forks' 52,500 residents evacuated
83 percent (9,001) of Grand Forks homes and 62 percent (751) of the city's commercial units damaged
- All 385 businesses in downtown Grand Forks impacted (400,000 sq. ft of space)
- 11 historic buildings and 60 apartments burned
- No water for 13 days; no drinkable water for 23 days
- More than \$74 million damage to Grand Forks Public School District (16 of 22 schools significantly damaged)
- More than \$48 million damage to University of North Dakota (72 state-owned buildings)
- **More than 20,000 volunteers** came to the community to help clean up and rebuild
- **60,000 tons of flood debris** hauled to landfill



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