

What Should I Do During a Flood?

You've done everything in your power to prepare for a flood. You've secured a flood insurance policy, and made your home flood-ready. Congratulations! You've become "flood smart."

Now, the floodwaters are rising, and there's nothing you can do to stop them. But there are things you can do to make sure your family stays safe until the water levels drop again.

- Fill bathtubs, sinks, and jugs with clean water in case water becomes contaminated.
- Listen to a battery-operated radio for the latest storm information.
- If local authorities instruct you to do so, turn off all utilities at the main power switch and close the main gas valve.
- If told to evacuate your home, do so immediately.
- If the waters start to rise inside your house before you have evacuated, retreat to the second floor, the attic, and if necessary, the roof.
- Floodwaters may carry raw sewage, chemical waste and other disease-spreading substances. If you've come in contact with floodwaters, wash your hands with soap and disinfected water.
- Avoid walking through floodwaters. As little as six inches of moving water can knock you off your feet.
- Don't drive through a flooded area. If you come upon a flooded road, turn around and go another way. A car can be carried away by just 2 feet of flood water.
- Electric current passes easily through water, so stay away from downed power lines and electrical wires.
- Look out for animals -- especially snakes. Animals lose their homes in floods, too.

What Should I Do After A Flood?

Your community has been flooded, and your property has suffered flood damage. Stay calm and stay safe in the days ahead by following these instructions.

- **FIRST STEP: If your home has suffered damage, call the agent who handles your flood insurance to file a claim.**
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 - If you are unable to stay in your home, make sure to say where you can be reached.
 - To make filing your claim easier, take photos of any water in the house and save damaged personal property. If necessary, place these items outside the home. An insurance adjuster will need to see what's been damaged in order to process your claim.
 - Check for structural damage before re-entering your home. Don't go in if there is a chance of the building collapsing.
 - Upon re-entering your property, do not use matches, cigarette lighters or other open flames since gas may be trapped inside. If you smell gas or hear hissing, open a window, leave quickly, and call the gas company from a neighbor's home.
 - Keep power off until an electrician has inspected your system for safety.
 - Check for sewage and water line damage. If you suspect damage, avoid using the toilets and the tap and call a plumber.
 - Throw away any food -- including canned goods -- that has come in contact with floodwaters.
 - Until local authorities declare your water supply to be safe, boil water for drinking and food preparation.
 - Make sure to follow local building codes and ordinances when rebuilding.
 - Use flood-resistant materials and techniques to protect your property from future flood damage.
 - Salvage water-damaged books, heirlooms and photographs with [restoration tips from the NFIP](#).

(Information provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency)