

SPRING FLOODING



The National Weather Service and Minnesota Climatology Department are both predicting another wet spring with major flooding in 2020. There is a high chance of flooding on the Mississippi and St. Croix Rivers, as well as in lakes, ponds, farm fields, and low lying areas.

Local experts offer the following advice to prepare for and recover from flooding on your property.

HIGHEST PRIORITY ACTIONS:



FLOOD INSURANCE

Consider enrolling in FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) to supplement your homeowner's policy. A standard homeowner's policy does not provide flood coverage and you only get disaster assistance if the President declares a disaster. Paying for flood insurance is less expensive than paying back a disaster loan. **Talk to your insurance company or contact NFIP at floodsmart.gov or 1-888-379-9531.**



EMERGENCY RESPONSE & PREPAREDNESS

While Washington County Emergency Management coordinates community-level flood response activities, your city or township is your first call for help in coordinating disaster/emergency preparedness actions. Request sandbags from your city or township to protect buildings at risk of flooding. If they don't have them available, contact a private company or check online for sand and bags.



SEPTIC SYSTEMS

If your septic system is flooded, you must stop using it until floodwaters recede and the soil has drained. If you have a pump tank, disconnect the circuit that controls the pump to avoid risk of electrical hazard. Avoid digging around the septic tank or driving heavy equipment over the drain field while the soil is water-logged. Before flooding, cover drains with a sheet and sandbag to prevent floodwaters from rising up into your home.



WELLS

Check to ensure that your well casing extends above the 100-year flood level. If flooding is imminent, disconnect the power supply for your well and install a watertight cap or cover on your well. Be prepared to have your well disinfected and tested after flood waters recede.

FACT SHEET: SPRING FLOODING

If your property is flooded, here are some considerations to mitigate damage and begin the recovery process. Find step-by-step instructions: extension.umn.edu/flooding/cleaning-after-flood

ADDITIONAL ACTIONS:



WET BASEMENT

Use the follow strategies to help keep your basement dry.

Gutters and downspouts: If water seeps in when it rains, install gutters and downspouts to direct water away from your home.

Window wells: Use downspout extenders to direct water away from your home and install protection around window wells to keep water out. Check your gutters and downspouts periodically to make sure they aren't clogged by leaves or seeds.

Landscaping: If water flows downhill into your home from a driveway or the street, install landscaping to re-route the water around your home. Landscaping features could include a dry stream bed, contoured berm of soil, or a series of raingardens to capture and redirect the water. Be careful NOT to redirect water into your neighbors' homes.

Sump pumps: When surficial groundwater levels are very high, groundwater will seep into basements. This happens most often in areas that are landlocked, have heavy clay soils, or are located near wetlands and lakes. The only remedy to groundwater seepage is to use a sump pump to pump water out of the basement and direct it downhill, away from your home.

Temporary protection: If you live near a lowland, wetland, lake, stream, or river, consider building temporary levees around doors and window wells to protect your home from flooding.



FLOODED LAWN

Remove structures and debris such as landscaping materials, sheds, and playground equipment from flood-prone areas.

As soon as the lawn is dry (this could take several weeks), aerate it by going over it several times with a core-type aerifier. Repeat the process in early September and again the following spring. Break up aerification cores with a lawn or power rake.

Overseed after aerating, or delay seeding until mid-August through mid-September. Sodding can be done throughout the growing season.



FLOODED CORN AND SOYBEAN FIELDS

Minnesota Extension offers advice for farmers:

- > extension.umn.edu/growing-corn/flooded-corn
- > extension.umn.edu/growing-soybean/flooded-soybean