

REDUCING THE RISKS OF FLOODS



This guide is intended to help you understand the risks and take actions to protect your home against flooding.



What are mitigation activities?

Mitigation activities refer to actions taken to reduce or prevent the impact of hazards, such as wildfires, floods, and extreme heat events. These actions may include measures to protect homes and infrastructure, such as installing fire-resistant roofing, clearing vegetation and debris, retrofitting vents and eaves, and implementing flood-proofing measures.

Why are mitigation activities important?

Mitigation activities are important because they help to reduce the impact of hazards, protect lives and property, and save homeowners and communities money in the long term. By taking proactive steps to prevent or reduce the impact of hazards, communities can avoid the costs of recovery and rebuilding after an event occurs.



UNDERSTANDING FLOOD RISK

Floods are a common and destructive natural hazard that can have significant impacts on homes and communities. As a homeowner or tenant, it's important to be aware of the flood risk to your property and take steps to mitigate that risk to protect your home and family.

Mitigation activities can range from simple measures, like cleaning out gutters and downspouts, to more extensive projects like elevating your home or installing flood barriers. The Intact Centre on Climate Adaptation offers resources to help homeowners and tenants understand their flood risk and provide guidance on mitigation activities they can undertake to make their homes more resilient to flooding.



Learn more about home flood protection:

- Learn what to do before, during and after flooding: www.redcross.ca/floods
- Three steps to Cost-Effective Home Flood Protection:
www.intactcentreclimateadaptation.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/IntactCentre-3-steps-home-flood-protection.pdf
- Complete a free home flood risk self-assessment:
homefloodprotect.ca/checkup
- Access to how-to videos, checklists and more:
www.intactcentreclimateadaptation.ca/programs/home_flood_protect/resources

REDUCING RISK IS A SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

Whether you rent or own, residents are responsible for managing the risks to privately owned property such as homes, properties and personal belongings.

Tenants

Tenants are generally responsible for reducing the risk of damage to their personal belongings. Depending on their lease arrangements with the building owner, they may also be responsible for additional maintenance. They may purchase tenant insurance to help replace damaged belongings and cover the cost of emergency accommodation. These costs are not typically covered by landlords.

Property owners

Property owners are responsible for reducing the risk of damage to their lots, buildings and personal belongings. They may purchase home insurance, to help repair damage, replace belongings and cover the cost of emergency accommodation.

MITIGATION ACTIVITIES

Residential Maintenance Activities

Regular, once or twice a year, maintenance activities are straightforward, simple-to-do tasks that most people can take on themselves or with some extra help. They will help reduce the risk of floods around your residence.

INTERIOR ACTIVITIES:

- Raise personal belongings onto shelves and/or into waterproof containers
- Raise appliances, mechanical equipment, and electronics off the floor (especially for basements)
- Remove items from around floor drains
- Clean out existing backwater valve to ensure it is working properly
- Test sump pump to ensure it is working properly



Store valuables and hazardous materials in watertight containers up on a shelf

EXTERIOR ACTIVITIES:

- Remove leaves and other debris from eavestroughs
- Seal any openings in exterior walls where water may enter inside home
- Purchase dam bags or similar items

OTHER:

- Prepare an emergency preparedness kit in case of an evacuation



Remove leaves and other debris regularly.



MITIGATION ACTIVITIES

Residential Mitigation Activities

Residential mitigation activities require a bit more planning and more time to complete. They will help reduce the risk of floods to your residence.

INTERIOR ACTIVITIES:

- Install sump pump and alarm
- Replace existing sump pump
- Install backup sump pump and battery
- Extend sump pump discharge pipe to direct water at least 2m away from foundation



A sump pump will help reduce risk to your residence.

BACKWATER VALVE:

- Install backwater valve and alarm
- Install alarm on existing backwater valve

WINDOWS AND EXTERIOR:

- Replace at or below grade windows and/or exterior doors
- Replace/Install eavestroughs and downspouts
- Disconnect downspouts from foundation drain (deposits into underground storm or sanitary sewer)

OTHER:

- Install downspout extensions to direct water at least 2m away from foundation
- Install flood alarms



Keep water away from foundation.

BE READY

KNOW THE RISKS IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Taking action to protect your home from flood and wildfire damage can reduce your risk, but will not eliminate it.

For additional resources and to learn more about:

- What to do before, during and after an emergency: www.redcross.ca/beready
- Emergency preparedness for older adults: www.redcross.ca/readyolderadults
- Emergency preparedness for those with disabilities: www.redcross.ca/disasterplanningdisabilities

MAKE AN EMERGENCY PLAN

Make an emergency plan that includes emergency contacts and evacuation plans to help you be ready to deal with any emergency that comes your way. Be sure to practice your plan.

Download emergency plan templates and emergency kit checklists here:

www.redcross.ca/ready

BUILD AN EMERGENCY KIT

Buy or make an emergency kit with enough supplies to meet your family's needs for at least 72 hours. This kit should be easy to bring with you if you have to evacuate your home or be helpful if you are told to shelter in place.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The information in this publication is for reference only. It should not be considered as a substitute for consulting with specialists about particular situations. It should not be assumed that all fire, floods and extreme heat recovery measures are contained in this publication; other or additional measures may be required under particular or exceptional circumstances.

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Disclaimer: It is important to note that no measure can completely eliminate the risk of damage or loss. Mitigation activities can help reduce the risk and potential impact of natural disasters, but they do not guarantee that homes will not be affected or damaged in the event of a hazard. It is important to always have a plan in place for emergencies and follow any evacuation orders issued by local authorities.