

AFTER THE FLOOD

- Check on elderly or disabled neighbors to make sure they are well and any appropriate precautions have been taken.
- DO NOT enter flooded basements where electricity could be present. Call 3-1-1 for assistance.
- If you have flood insurance, contact your agent once your safety is secured. Photograph any damage to your property and save receipts for replacement items or repair work.
- Avoid floodwaters for reasons of health and safety. Do not let children play in the water.
- Avoid down power lines and muddy waters where power lines may have fallen.
- Discard food that may have been contaminated by flooding or as a result of spoilage due to power outage.
- Flood water in basements is likely from a sewer back-up, therefore when cleaning up take precautions to avoid direct contact by wearing waterproof gloves and boots, and washing your hands, body and clothing with soap and water afterwards.
- After a flooded basement or other area has been cleared of water, scrub down the area with hot, soapy water, followed by a rinse with a solution of warm water and household bleach (1 cup of bleach per 5 gallons of water).
- Mold is a serious concern. Dry all areas and items quickly and thoroughly to prevent mold growth.

INFORMATION & RESOURCES

City of Chicago 3-1-1 City Services
www.cityofchicago.org, 312-744-5000

- Report flooding

City of Chicago Department of Public Health
www.cityofchicago.org, 312-747-9884

- Tips on cleaning up after a flood

City of Chicago Office of Emergency Management and Communications
www.AlertChicago.com, 312-746-9111

- Emergency preparedness

City of Chicago Department of Water Management
www.cityofchicago.org, 312-744-4420

- Flooding, storm water management, sewer and water supply system information

Chicago Climate Action Plan
www.chicagoclimataction.org

- Strategies for preparing for climate change

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) www.fema.gov, 1-800- 621-FEMA (1-800-621-3362)

- Emergency preparedness

For more information about emergencies in the City of Chicago visit
www.AlertChicago.com

ALERT CHICAGO FLOOD PREPAREDNESS



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In the event of any emergency, the City of Chicago's Office of Emergency Management and Communications (OEMC) coordinates efforts with local state and federal agencies to ensure the safety of all residents. In the event of a flood, the City will provide residents important information and keep residents informed, however, it is essential that residents be prepared for any situation.

Scientists predict changing weather patterns and heavy rains and snow could become more frequent in winter and spring. Flooding caused by heavy rains is dangerous and can occur without warning. The City of Chicago advises residents to be prepared and to take precautions against flooding that can occur anytime during the year. Preparedness is key to ensuring life safety and minimizing property loss during a storm or flood.



Photo by: Chris Glazier

BEFORE THE FLOOD

PLAN AHEAD

- Before or during heavy rain, remove debris, such as leaves, sticks and litter, from sewer structures (i.e., catch basins) in your area to allow the water to enter.
- Determine an emergency meeting location in the event of a flood. Provide your insurance agent, employer, and family members with emergency contact information so that you can be reached before, during, and after a flood.
- Store important documents in a waterproof container, including insurance information, vehicle titles, and receipts and warranties for major appliances.
- Prepare a Go Bag with items you may need if you must leave your home. Be prepared to improvise and use what you have on hand to make it on your own for at least three days and maybe longer. Include items such as fresh water, food and prescription medications. To learn how to assemble a Go Bag, visit www.AlertChicago.com

Note: the City installs "Rain Blockers" or restrictors in many catch basins in the street to slow the rate at which the water enters the sewer system. While this results in stormwater ponding in the streets, it helps to prevent sewers from backing up into basements. Since Chicago's sewer system combines stormwater and wastewater (or "sewage") like many older cities, this mix is what ends up in basements during basement floods.

PREPARE YOUR HOME OR BUSINESS

- Elevate the furnace, water heater, electric panel and other electric or valuable items.
- Use temporary barriers such as sandbags to stop floodwater from entering the building. A more permanent barrier may require special permits.
- Seal walls in basements with waterproofing compounds to avoid seepage.
- Keep an adequate supply of food, flashlights, batteries, and drinking water in case you are trapped inside your home.
- Green space that includes trees, plants, and grass, can absorb or slow down the rush of water in a heavy rain. If possible, plant trees and plants, especially those with deep roots, and avoid paving over green space on your property. If your property has adequate green space, consider disconnecting one or more downspouts to keep water out of the sewers and help prevent basement backups.

DURING THE FLOOD

- DO NOT enter flooded basements where electricity could be present. Call 3-1-1 for assistance.
- Call 9-1-1 if you or anyone you know is in danger. Check on elderly or disabled neighbors to make sure they are well and any appropriate precautions have been taken.
- Call 3-1-1 (TTY: 3-1-1 or 312-744-5000) if your basement or street is flooded.
- Be aware of flash flood areas such as low-level roadways, beneath viaducts, and areas adjacent to waterways.
- Be ready to evacuate. Move essential items from the basement or first floor to upper floors. If time allows bring outside furniture indoors, to upper levels.
- If you must leave your home, do not walk through moving water. Six inches of moving water can knock you off your feet. Use a stick to test depth.
- Do not try to drive over a flooded road. If your car stalls, abandon it immediately and seek an alternate route on foot.

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