

 Risk Solutions

Emergency Management Checklist for Floods and Flash Floods

Floods are the most common and widespread of all natural disasters. Most communities in the United States can experience some degree of flooding after spring rains, heavy thunderstorms or winter snow thaws. Most floods develop slowly over a period of days. Flash floods, however, are like walls of water that develop in a matter of minutes. Flash floods can be caused by intense storms or a dam failure.

Your organization should have a written plan for responding to floods and flash floods. Consider the following when developing your plans:

	YES	NO	NA
Have you asked your local emergency management office whether your facility is located in a flood plain?			
Have you learned the elevation of your facility in relation to streams, rivers, and dams, as well as the history of flooding in your area?			
Have you reviewed the community's emergency plan?			
Have you learned the community's evacuation routes, as well as where to find higher ground in case of a flood?			
Have you established warning and evacuation procedures for the facility?			
Have you made plans for assisting employees who may need transportation in an emergency?			
Have you inspected your facility for areas that may be subject to flooding?			
Have you identified records and equipment that can be moved to a higher location, and made plans to move records and equipment, in case of flooding?			
Have you purchased a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Weather Radio with a warning alarm tone and battery backup to listen for flood watches and warnings?			
Have you asked your insurance agent or carrier for information about floods?			
Have you considered the feasibility of flood-proofing your facility (see below)?			
Are you participating in community flood control projects?			

About Flood-proofing

There are three basic types or methods of flood-proofing, including:

Permanent flood-proofing: This method requires action before a flood occurs and requires no human intervention when flood waters rise. Actions include: installing check valves to prevent water from entering where utility and sewer lines enter the facility; reinforcing walls to resist water pressure and sealing walls to prevent or reduce seepage; building watertight walls around equipment or work areas within the facility that are particularly susceptible to flood damage; constructing floodwalls or levees outside the facility to keep flood waters away; and elevating the facility on walls, columns, or compacted fill (this approach is most applicable to new construction, though many types of buildings can be elevated).

Contingent flood-proofing: This method also requires action prior to a flood but requires some additional action when flooding occurs. These measures include: installing watertight barriers called flood shields to prevent the passage of water

through doors, windows, ventilation shafts or other openings; installing permanent watertight doors; constructing movable floodwalls; and installing permanent pumps to remove flood waters.

Emergency flood-proofing: This method is generally less expensive than the others, though it requires substantial advance warning and does not satisfy the minimum requirements for watertight flood-proofing as set forth by the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Included are: building walls with sandbags; constructing a double row of walls with boards and posts to create a "crib," then filling the crib with soil; constructing a single wall by stacking small beams or planks on top of each other; and having backup systems available, such as portable pumps to remove flood water, alternate power sources, such as generators or gasoline-powered pumps, and battery-powered emergency lighting.

▶ To learn more about Hanover Risk Solutions, visit hanoverrisksolutions.com



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