



ARE YOU PREPARED FOR A FLOOD?

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS





LOS ANGELES COUNTY'S FLOODING HISTORY:

Los Angeles County has experienced eight rainy seasons with major rainfall generated by El Niño conditions and eleven federally declared flood disasters since 1975. Many of these resulted in significant flood damages to residential properties. During the 1997-98 El Niño season, nearly 300 drainage complaints were documented with approximately 400 flood insurance claims filed. Being prepared is your best defense against such events.



POTENTIAL FLOODING LOCATIONS:

You have received this guide because the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works (Public Works) have identified one or more of your properties as being subject to flooding due to:

- Being located in or near a Special Flood Hazard Area, subject to the 100-year flood, according to FEMA's Flood Insurance Rate Maps;
- Being identified as a Repetitive Loss Property with more than one flood insurance claim of at least \$1,000 within a 10-year period;
- Being located near a Repetitive Loss Property and likely subject to similar flooding.

Historically, flooding has occurred in Lancaster, Malibu Lake, Quartz Hill, Rowland Heights, and the San Gabriel and Santa Monica mountains. Some properties in these areas are located near steep hillsides, where rainwater can quickly flood areas along the foothills. Other properties are situated near streams or lakes, where rainwater tends to run off quickly and flood adjacent areas.

To identify your property's flood risk, Public Works provides flood zone determinations through its hotline (626) 458-4321. FEMA maps are also available online and at County libraries.



FLOOD ZONE INFORMATION:

FEMA's Flood Insurance Rate Maps show the Special Flood Hazard Area, which is subject to the base flood and other flood areas. The maps also show base flood elevations, the anticipated water surface elevation for the base flood. Structures in the Special Flood Hazard Area with a federally backed mortgage require flood insurance.

Special Flood Hazard Areas	
ZONE A	No base flood elevations determined.
ZONE AE	Base flood elevations determined.
ZONE AH	Flood depths of 1 to 3 feet (usually areas of ponding); base flood elevations determined.
ZONE AO	Flood depths of 1 to 3 feet (usually sheet flow on sloping terrain); average depths determined. For areas of alluvial fan flooding, velocities are determined.

Other Flood Areas	
ZONE X (shaded)	Areas of 0.2% annual chance flood; areas of 1% annual chance flood with average depths of less than 1 foot or with drainage areas less than 1 square mile; and areas protected by levees from 1% annual chance flood.
ZONE X (unshaded)	Areas determined to be outside the 0.2% annual chance floodplain.
ZONE D	Areas in which flood hazards are undetermined, but possible.

PURCHASE FLOOD INSURANCE FOR PROTECTION:

The County of Los Angeles has been a National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) participant since December 1980, making flood insurance available to all County unincorporated area residents. You can purchase a flood insurance policy from most insurance agents.

More than 25% of flood insurance claims occur outside of Special Flood Hazard Areas. Homeowner's insurance seldom covers flood damage. In most cases, property owners must purchase flood insurance to protect against damage caused by flooding.

The cost of your flood insurance policy will depend on factors that include, but are not limited to the type of property, level of flood risk, and amount of coverage selected. Coverage can also be purchased for the contents of the building. Elevation Certificates may provide a discount on your flood insurance policy. Check the Public Works website at dpw.lacounty.gov/wmd/nfip/ for more information on Elevation Certificates or to see if a completed Elevation Certificate is available for your property.

Contact your insurance agent for more information. Also, see the Resources Quick Guide section for web addresses and other related information.





WHAT SHOULD YOU DO BEFORE A FLOOD?

- Purchase flood insurance. (Note there is a 30-day waiting period before, coverage goes into effect.)
- Understand and be aware of your property's flood risk.
- Research flood mitigation information.
- Prepare a family emergency response plan.
- Prepare your home for floods.
- Make disaster kits.
- Register your cell telephone number and/or e-mail for automated notification in emergencies with Alert LA County at alert.lacounty.gov.
- Request Public Works mudflow advice by calling (800) 214-4020 if your home is located within a recently burned watershed.

For more information, visit Public Works NFIP and Emergency Survival Program websites. Also, see the Resources Quick Guide section for web addresses and other related information.



WHAT SHOULD YOU DO DURING A FLOOD?

Flood warnings are issued to the community through the Emergency Alert System (EAS) and Alert LA County. EAS broadcasts a message by the Sheriff's Department through public radio and television stations. Alert LA County uses a Community Mass Notification System that contacts residents and businesses by recorded phone messages, text messages, and e-mail. During a flood you should do the following:

- Listen to radio (KFI 640 AM, KNX 1070 AM, KFVB 980 AM, KROQ 106.7 FM, KHTS 1220 AM, KRLA 870 AM, KCBS 93.1 FM, KABC 790 AM or KAVL 610 AM), and TV emergency broadcasts.
- Follow instructions from emergency and local officials.
- Initiate your family's emergency response plan.
- Turn off the electricity and gas.
- Report interrupted service to local utility companies.
- Stay out of flood control channels and watercourses.
- Do not drive, walk, or swim through moving water.
- Avoid low-lying areas; seek shelter in the highest areas possible.
- If you are in danger, call 911 for assistance.

For more information, visit Public Works NFIP and Emergency Survival Program websites. Also, see the Resources Quick Guide section for web addresses and other related information.



WHAT SHOULD YOU DO AFTER A FLOOD?

- Listen to radio and TV for emergency instructions.
- Call utility companies to restore service.
- Dispose of flood contaminated supplies.
- Boil tap water until local officials indicate it is safe to drink.
- Avoid disaster areas.
- Stay away from electrical equipment in wet areas.
- Avoid driving if possible.
- Do not use open flame devices.
- Obtain permit for property damage repairs.
- Hire only licensed and insured contractors.
- Report any suspected permitting violations.

For more information, visit [Public Works NFIP](#) and [Emergency Survival Program](#) websites. Also, see the [Resources Quick Guide](#) section for web addresses and other related information.

FLOOD PROTECTION MEASURES FOR YOUR PROPERTY:

- Elevate structure above flood waters.
- Flood proof structure to limit water intrusion.
- Deflect flood waters with temporary devices (i.e., sandbags, which are available at County fire stations).
- Clear drainage paths on your property.
- Report illegal dumping and obstructions in drainage channels by calling **(888) CLEANLA**.
- Seal doors and windows.
- Move valuables and furniture to higher areas of the home.
- Install permanent drainage devices (i.e., French drains).
- Control erosion with plantings, grading, and drains.



CODE COMPLIANCE FOR IMPROVEMENTS AND REPAIRS:

“Substantial Improvements” are defined as improvements which cost at least 50% of the market value of the structure before the improvement is made. “Substantial Damage” is defined as damage to a structure where the cost of restoring it to its prior condition would cost at least 50% of its market value before the damage.

Structures determined to be substantially damaged are automatically considered Substantial Improvements. Projects involving Substantial Improvements must meet applicable NFIP requirements for new buildings, such as elevating the structure above the flood waters.



BENEFICIAL FUNCTIONS OF FLOODPLAINS:

Floodplains are a natural component of the Los Angeles County environment. When flooding spreads out across the floodplain, its energy is dissipated. This results in lower flood flows downstream, reduced erosion of the streambank and channel, deposition of sediments higher in the watershed, and improved groundwater recharge.

Floodplains are scenic, valued wildlife habitats, and blend with the natural environment. Poorly planned development in floodplains can lead to streambank erosion, loss of valuable property, increased risk of flooding to downstream properties, degradation of water quality, and decreased quality of life.

Understanding and protecting the natural functions of floodplains will help reduce flood damage, protect resources, and extend the enjoyment of this important natural resource for years to come.





AVAILABLE FLOOD PROTECTION PUBLICATIONS AT DESIGNATED COUNTY LIBRARIES

Visit County libraries or the Public Works NFIP website to review the below documents. See the following Resources Quick Guide section for library and web addresses and other related information.

- FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps effective September 26, 2008
(these maps are also available at www.msc.fema.gov)
- FEMA-15 (12/81) *Design Manual for Flood Drainage Reduction*
- FEMA-54 (3/84) *Elevated Residential Structures*
- FEMA-85 (9/85) *Manufactured Home Installation in Flood Hazard Areas*
- FEMA-100 (3/86) *A Unified National Program for Floodplain Management* (Malibu Library only)
- FEMA-102 (3/86) *Floodproofing Non-Residential Structures* (Valencia Library only)
- FEMA-165 (5/89) *Alluvial Fans Hazards and Management*
- FIA-2 (2/87) *Answers to Questions About the National Flood Insurance Program*
- FEMA-309 (1996) *Addressing Your Community's Flood Problems*
- FEMA-467-1 (5/04) *Floodplain Management Bulletin on the Elevation Certificate*
- FEMA-312 (12/09) *Homeowner's Guide to Retrofitting Second Edition*

AVAILABLE FLOOD PROTECTION PUBLICATIONS AT DESIGNATED COUNTY LIBRARIES (CONT.)

- Additional FEMA resources available for download at www.fema.gov/library/index.jsp
- Homeowner's Guide for Flood, Debris, and Erosion Control, by Public Works and available at dpw.lacounty.gov/wmd/HomeOwners
- Be Flood Aware, published by Public Works
- Homeowner's Guide to Fire and Watershed Safety at the Chaparral/Urban Interface, by the U.S. Forest Service, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County of Los Angeles Fire Department
- Floodplain Management Plan for Repetitive Loss Properties, by Public Works adopted by the Board of Supervisors on May 11, 2010
- Floodplain Management Resource Center, by Association of State Floodplain Managers
- For monthly tips and advice on emergency survival for all recognized local hazards, visit the County's Emergency Survival Program at ceo.lacounty.gov/esp.htm



RESOURCES QUICK GUIDE:

Flood Protection Information Available at these Libraries:

Malibu Library

23519 West Civic Center Way
Malibu, CA 90265

Rosemead Library

8800 Valley Boulevard
Rosemead, CA 91770

Valencia Library

23743 West Valencia Boulevard
Santa Clarita, CA 91355

Resource Websites:

Public Works NFIP Website

dpw.lacounty.gov/wmd/nfip/

Coordinated Agency Recovery Effort (CARE)

dpw.lacounty.gov/CARE/

Chief Executive Office

Emergency Survival Program (ESP)

ceo.lacounty.gov/esp.htm

FEMA Elevation Certificate Form
and Instructions

www.fema.gov/business/nfip/elvinst.shtm

FEMA Flood Insurance Information

www.fema.gov/plan/prevent/floodins/infocon.shtm

FEMA FIRM Maps

msc.fema.gov

FEMA NFIP Website

www.fema.gov

NFIP Flood Smart Website

www.floodsmart.gov

Contractors State License Board

www.cslb.ca.gov


RESOURCES QUICK GUIDE:

Telephone Numbers:

Public Works Flood Zone Hotline	(626) 458-4321
Public Works Building and Safety Division	(626) 458-3173
Public Works Mud Flow Advice	(800) 214-4020
Public Works Illegal Dumping Hotline	(888) CLEANLA
NFIP Flood Insurance Information	(888) FLOOD29
Emergency Survival Program (ESP)	(323) 980-2260
Floodsmart.gov Official NFIP Website	(888) 379-9531
State Contractors and License Information	(800) 321-CSLB

This information is provided by the County of Los Angeles and is applicable only to properties within the limits of the County. This guide was prepared to educate you about the flood hazards and the things you can do to protect yourself, your family, and your property from floods.





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