

### After the flood (continued):

- Keep children and pets away from flood-damaged areas. If pets must be walked outside, make sure they are leashed.
- Check for structural damage, such as loose plaster or damaged ceilings.
- Throw away all foods, including canned goods, that have come into contact with flood waters; they may be tainted.

For more detailed information on flood cleanup, go to the following website:

<http://www.exnet.iastate.edu/Information/Floods/>

### Community & Financial Preparedness

- Find out if your community has warning sirens and if you can hear them from your home and work.
- Have a family meeting to identify what to do if flooding occurs and you are not at home.
- Learn who to call for help.
- Visit with neighbors to determine how you can work together during an emergency.
- Review basic safety measures, such as first-aid and CPR.
- Keep cash and one credit card in a remote location for emergencies.
- Maintain a safety-deposit box for family and business papers that cannot be replaced.
- Review specific flood damage protection provided by your home insurance policy.
- Prepare records that will verify losses for insurance, tax, or federal disaster purposes.

### References



### Additional Resources

University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension - Disaster Handbook

<http://www.uwex.edu/ces/news/handbook.html>

Keeping Food Safe during an Emergency

<http://www.fsis.usda.gov/oa/pubs/pofeature.htm>

Safeguard Your Neighborhood

<http://www.texas homelandsecurity.com/beprepared.html#neighbor>

Emergency Food and Water Supplies

<http://www.fema.gov/library/emfdwtr.shtm>

Citizen Preparedness Publications

[http://www.citizencorps.gov/ready/cc\\_pubs.shtm](http://www.citizencorps.gov/ready/cc_pubs.shtm)

Your local Texas AgriLife Extension Service county agent (listed under county government)

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# Preparing for the Unexpected



## Floods



## Get Informed

No one can stop a flood. But if you live in a flood prone area, there are actions you can take to protect your family and keep your property losses to a minimum.

- Do you know your flood risk? Your community officials or local emergency management office are your best resources to learn about the history of flooding for your area. Ask whether your property is in the flood plain and if it is above or below the flood stage water level. Are there creeks, rivers, lakes, bayous, etc. nearby that could flood with extreme rainfall? Are the storm drain systems adequate to carry off water during a heavy downpour?
- Learn flood-warning signs and your community's alert signals. Listen to NOAA Weather Radio, commercial radio, or watch television for weather information. Learn the difference between a **flood watch** and **flood warning**.
- Learn alternative routes to leave your property.
- Determine which of your personal and household possessions you could not replace, and determine where you would take them.
- Learn how to turn off all utilities at the main power switch and close the main gas valve.
- Learn about the National Flood Insurance Program.
- Learn what your home insurance covers in case of a flood.

## Be Prepared

### Have a plan:

- Plan and practice an evacuation route.
- Develop an emergency family communication plan. Select an out-of-town friend or relative for everyone to check in with if family members are in different locations during a disaster. Make sure everyone in the family knows the name, address, and phone number of this contact person.
- Keep your car fueled.
- Make sure family members know how to respond during and after a flood.
- Plan on how to take pets with you or provide for their care.

### Have emergency supplies in a portable kit:

- flashlight, portable battery-operated radio, and extra batteries
- first-aid kit and manual, and essential medicines
- at least three gallons of water per person
- protective clothing, bedding, and sturdy shoes
- emergency food, cooking equipment, can opener
- special items for infant, elderly, or disabled family members
- written instructions on how to turn off electricity, gas, and water if authorities advise you to do so

Preparation may help you save lives and avoid injury.  
The rest can be rebuilt.

## Respond

**During a flood,** listen to the radio for information, and evacuate immediately if instructed to do so. If you do not need to evacuate, bring outdoor belongings indoors. Fill bathtubs, sinks, and jugs with clean water in case water becomes contaminated. Do not attempt to walk through moving flood waters. Do not attempt to drive over a flooded road. Move valuable belongings to upper floors or to safe ground if time permits. If instructed by authorities, turn off all utilities.

### After the flood:

- Even when the disaster has passed, major health and safety hazards remain. Flood waters may have brought toxic chemicals, pesticides, fire ant colonies, snakes, and other animals in and around your home. Serious injury can result for anyone dealing with the aftermath of a major storm, so it's wise to be overly cautious.
- Wait until your local emergency personnel have announced it's safe to return home.
- Wear protective clothing, gloves, and sturdy rubber-soled shoes when you go into an area or home that has been flooded.
- Be alert to gas leaks. Leave immediately if you smell gas.
- Do not turn on any lights or appliances if the house has been flooded.
- Watch for snakes and other animals forced into your home by flood waters.
- To prevent accidental fires, use flashlights, not candles, to see if power is on or off after a flood.