



## **Flood Response – Village Action Plan March 24, 2011**

### **Background**

Large storms can at times create flooding concerns in portions of our Village. Although various projects have been undertaken by the Village over the years to reduce the impact of heavy rains, resident concerns over damage from last year's storms have prompted Village officials and staff to take additional action.

The Village's Engineering & Capital Projects Committee has been tasked with investigating various options, and the costs associated with such, to further improve how our Village infrastructure handles sewage and storm water flows. The Committee is made up of Village Trustees, and has been meeting regularly, supported by Village staff and engineers. A good amount of work has already been done, but much more is needed, as most of the projects needed to address this flooding can be very costly. Each idea must be evaluated as a cost vs. benefit, while realizing that residents living in different areas of the Village may have different needs, depending upon the impact storms have on an area. This is further complicated by the fact that homes have different plumbing systems, where some are more susceptible to sewer back-up, while others are immune from it.

### **Flood Response Incident Action Plan**

One immediate result of these meetings is the development of a Flood Response Incident Action Plan, which is in the final stages of being completed. Although in the past, the Village has overall responded very well to storms, the committee tasked the supervisors from Fire, Police and Public Works to develop a formal plan for dealing with flooding. The purpose of the Plan is to:

1. Ensure community readiness
2. To make certain systems in place are working properly
3. To prevent further property damage by identifying additional actions to be taken by Village staff and public safety personnel.

### **Public Information**

One added component as a result of the Incident Action Plan is to have information made available for residents, to provide guidance in how to reduce potential flood damage, and to inform what can be done to limit damage in the event of flooding.

Residents are encouraged to visit the Village's website regularly for updates about flood relief and response and guidance for residents.



## **Resident's Guide to Flooding Conditions**

### **Flooding & Emergency Preparedness**

#### **Know Your Flood Terms**

- Flood Watch: Flooding is possible. Tune in to NOAA Weather Radio, commercial radio, or television for information.
- Flash Flood Watch: Flash flooding is possible. Be prepared to move to higher ground; listen to NOAA Weather Radio, commercial radio, or television for information.
- Flood Warning: Flooding is occurring or will occur soon; if advised to evacuate, do so immediately.
- Flash Flood Warning: A flash flood is occurring; seek higher ground on foot immediately.

#### **Resident Instructions**

##### **Before a Flood – Educate Yourself**

##### **Safeguard your possessions**

Create a personal “flood file” containing information about all your possessions and keep it in a secure place, such as a safe deposit box or waterproof container. This file should have the following items:

1. A copy of your insurance policies with your agent’s contact information.
2. Conduct a household inventory. For insurance purposes, be sure to keep a written and a visual (i.e. videotaped or photographed) record of all major household items and valuables, even those stored in basements, attics or garages. Create files that include serial numbers and store receipts for major appliances and electronics. Have jewelry and artwork appraised. These documents are critically important when filing insurance claims. For more information visit [www.knowyourstuff.org](http://www.knowyourstuff.org).
3. Copies of all other critical documents, including finance records or receipts of major purchases.

##### **Prepare your house**

1. First make sure your sump pump is working and then install a battery-operated backup, in case of a power failure. Installing a water alarm will also let you know if water is accumulating in your basement.
2. Clear debris from gutters and downspouts.

3. Raise your electrical components (switches, sockets, circuit breakers, and wiring) at least 12 inches above your home's projected flood elevation.
4. Place the furnace, water heater, washer, and dryer on cement blocks at least 12 inches above the projected flood elevation.
5. Move furniture, valuables, and important documents to a safe place.
6. Install "check valves" in sewer traps to prevent floodwater from backing up into the drains of your home
7. Seal the walls in your basement with waterproofing compounds to avoid seepage

### **Develop a family emergency plan**

1. Create a safety kit with drinking water, canned food, first aid, blankets, a radio, and a flashlight.
2. Post emergency telephone numbers by the phone and teach your children how to dial 911.
3. Plan and practice a flood evacuation route with your family. Know safe routes from home, work, and school that are on higher ground.
4. Ask an out-of-state relative or friend to be your emergency family contact.
5. Have a plan to protect your pets.

*For more information on emergency preparation, talk to your insurance agent or visit [Ready.gov](http://Ready.gov).*

### **During a Flood**

1. Listen to a battery operated radio or television for information
2. Be aware that flash flooding can occur. If there is any possibility of a flash flood, move immediately to higher ground. Do not wait for instructions to move.
3. If water rises in your home before you evacuate, go to the top floor, attic, or roof. Take warm clothes, a flashlight and portable radio with you. Wait for help. Don't try to swim to safety.
4. Be aware of streams, drainage channels, canyons, and other areas known to flood suddenly. Flash floods can occur in these areas with or without such typical warnings as rain clouds or heavy rain.
5. If you come in contact with floodwaters, wash your hands with soap and disinfected water.

### **If you must prepare to evacuate, you should do the following:**

1. Secure your home. If you have time, bring in outdoor furniture. Move essential items to an upper floor.
2. Turn off utilities at the main switches or valves if instructed to do so. Disconnect electrical appliances. Do not touch electrical equipment if you are wet or standing in water.

### **If you have to leave your home, remember these evacuation tips:**

1. Do not walk through moving water. Six inches of moving water can make you fall. If you have to walk in water, walk where the water is not moving. Use a stick to check the firmness of the ground in front of you.
2. Do not drive into flooded areas. If floodwaters rise around your car, abandon the car and move to higher ground if you can do so safely. You and the vehicle can be quickly swept away.

## **Driving Flood Facts**

The following are important points to remember when driving in flood conditions:

1. Six inches of water will reach the bottom of most passenger cars causing loss of control and possible stalling.
2. A foot of water will float many vehicles.
3. Two feet of rushing water can carry away most vehicles including sport utility vehicles (SUVs) and pick-ups.

## **After a Flood**

1. If your home has suffered damage, call your insurance agent to file a claim.
2. Check for structural damage before re-entering your home to avoid being trapped in a building collapse.
3. Take photos of any floodwater in your home and save any damaged personal property.
4. Make a list of damaged or lost items and include their purchase date and value with receipts, and place with the inventory you took prior to the flood. Some damaged items may require disposal, so keep photographs of these items.
5. Keep power off until an electrician has inspected your system for safety.
6. Boil water for drinking and food preparation until authorities tell you that your water supply is safe – listen for news reports to learn whether the community's water supply is safe to drink.
7. Prevent mold by removing wet contents immediately.
8. Wear gloves and boots to clean and disinfect. Wet items should be cleaned with a pine-oil cleanser and bleach, completely dried, and monitored for several days for any fungal growth and odors.
9. In major floods, avoid floodwaters; water may be contaminated by oil, gasoline, or raw sewage. Water may also be electrically charged from underground or downed power lines.
10. Avoid moving water.
11. Be aware of areas where floodwaters have receded. Roads may have weakened and could collapse under the weight of a car.
12. Stay away from downed power lines, and report them to the power company.
13. Return home only when authorities indicate it is safe.
14. Stay out of any building if it is surrounded by floodwaters.
15. Use extreme caution when entering buildings; there may be hidden damage, particularly in foundations.
16. Service damaged septic tanks, cesspools, pits, and leaching systems as soon as possible. Damaged sewage systems are serious health hazards.



### Important Flood Contacts

In a flood situation, it is important to know who to contact should assistance become necessary. The contact list below serves as a guide to residents.

Situation	Who to Call:
To report a flood emergency (vehicles stranded or public safety concern):	Call 9-1-1
To report a downed power line:	Call 9-1-1
To report street flooding:	Call Police Non-emergency: 708-352-2151
For a well-being check about a neighbor or resident:	Call Police Non-emergency: 708-352-2151
To report an electrical outage:	Call ComEd: 800-334-7661
To report telephone outage:	Call AT&T 800-244-4444 - or your provider
To request a special pick-up, as a result of property or flood damage.	Call Allied Waste: 708-345-7050
Note: In emergency flooding situations, the Village may arrange a special pick-up with the waste hauler; call Village Hall for more information.	708-354-0225
Not sure who to call?	Call Police Non-emergency: 708-352-2151 or Village Hall at 708-354-0225.