

# Flooding Is Always a Potential Threat

---

Release Date: Février 28, 2017

**DENVER** - As winter comes to a close, communities look forward to the coming of spring and a return to the warm outdoors. But it's also a time to be aware of the threat of Mother Nature, meaning severe storms and flooding. Rapid snowmelt or a couple of inches of rainfall can create potential flooding.

FEMA Region VIII Preparedness and Mitigation experts have several recommendations to help people get ready for that threat. Region VIII includes Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming.

First and foremost on the list is to get flood insurance. In our region, the average cost of flood insurance is about \$700 a year. Since 1978, residents of the six states have collected more than \$404 million in insurance payments.

It's the first thing to do because there is a 30-day waiting period before a policy can take effect. If the waters are rising, it's too late to purchase a policy.

Other steps you can take to protect your family and your property include:

- Make sure downspouts carry water several feet from your house to a well-drained area. - About 2,500 gallons of water will come from a 1,000 square foot roof with one foot of snow depth across the roof. This much water may cause problems if allowed to drain next to the house.
- Examine and clean your sump pump if you have one. Test your sump pump by pouring water into the pit. Make sure the discharge hose carries the water several feet away from the house to a well-drained area. Also make sure that the pipe is on sloped ground so it drains to prevent it from freezing.
- Remove snow from around rural yards to minimize soft, wet soil conditions. Remember that a 20-foot diameter 10-foot high pile of snow contains about 2,600 gallons of water. Move the snow to well-drained areas.
- Anchor any fuel tanks. An unanchored tank in your basement can be torn free by floodwaters and the broken supply line can contaminate your basement. An unanchored tank outside can be swept downstream, where it can damage other houses.



**FEMA**

Page 1 of 2

- Have a licensed electrician raise electric components (switches, sockets, circuit breakers and wiring) at least 12" above your home's projected flood elevation.
- Place the furnace and water heater on masonry blocks or concrete at least 12" above the projected flood elevation.
- If your washer and dryer are in the basement, elevate them on masonry or pressure-treated lumber at least 12" above the projected flood elevation.
- Plan and practice a flood evacuation route with your family.
- Ask an out-of-state relative or friend to be the "family contact" in case your family is separated during a flood. Make sure everyone in your family knows the name, address, and phone number of this contact person.

Call 1-888-379-9531 or visit [www.FloodSmart.gov](http://www.FloodSmart.gov) to learn more about potential flood risks, flood insurance and how to prepare for floods.

FEMA's mission is to support our citizens and first responders to ensure that as a nation we work together to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards.

