



Flood Preparation and Protection Checklist

Flooding is a fact of life in the Chehalis Basin, but there are simple steps you can take to better prepare and minimize the chance that floods damage your property. This checklist includes actions to minimize potential damage to structures or belongings in the case of a flood.

Be Aware of Flooding

- ☐ **Understand your flood risk** by looking at Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) maps (<https://msc.fema.gov/portal/home>) or reach out to the Office of Chehalis Basin.
- ☐ **Find your local flood gage** to be up to date on flood situations near you (<https://chehalisriverflood.com>).
- ☐ **Know when a flood is coming.** Sign up for the Chehalis River Basin Flood Warning System to receive high water alerts (<https://chehalisriverflood.com>). Contact your county's emergency management department for other emergency and evacuation alerts.

Prepare Before a Flood Hits

- ☐ **Maintain active flood insurance** to help financially recover after a flood.
 - ☐ *If you are a renter*, consider adding flood protection to your renter insurance policy.
- ☐ **Prepare a household response plan** that can help you take quick action in the event of a flood. This is your customized action plan for what to do when a flood happens. Your plan should include steps such as turning off utilities; packing important documents; ensuring pets are safe; and moving valuables and essential items to higher ground.
- ☐ **Limit the use of crawlspaces and basements** to only quickly movable storage.

- ☐ **Identify and secure items** that are damageable or could float away during a flood. Don't forget to include items in your garage, patio, crawlspace, animal pens, or other storage areas.
- ☐ **Move or store damageable or sentimental items safely above flood levels**, such as upstairs, on hooks, or on top of tables, shelves, or counters.
- ☐ **Elevate utilities** above the flood level. Utilities you could elevate include the furnace, water heater, air conditioner, appliances, and/or electrical and plumbing systems.
- ☐ **Prepare a grab-and-go kit.** Visit county websites for grab-and-go-kit resources.
- ☐ **Place sandbags** at low points where water could enter.
- ☐ **Consider renovating flood-prone areas** to make post-flooding clean-up easier (e.g., install concrete floors, do not paint lower wallboard, provide access to quick insulation removal).

Recover After a Flood

- ☐ **Ensure your safety.** If you had to evacuate your home, check with local officials whether it is safe to return. Upon returning, look out for hazards like mold and structural integrity.
- ☐ **Document damages.** Before beginning any repairs, thoroughly document all damages by taking clear photos and detailed notes. This is essential for insurance claims and for establishing a timeline of events.
- ☐ **Contact your local building department** to report damages and ask about any needed repair work. They will help you determine what permits you need, and what is considered an emergency repair. Connect with resources through the WA State Attorney General's office.
- ☐ **Contact your landlord and neighbors** to ensure they are aware of flood situations.
 - ☐ *If you are a renter*, discuss any flood damage with your landlord and capture the conversation in writing. Repair timelines begin after written requests are submitted.



For More Information

For additional assistance or questions, contact Nat Kale (OCB Principle Planner) at nkal461@ecy.wa.gov, or see the resources at <https://officeofchehalisbasin.com/basin-residents/>

