

When Flooding is Imminent

- ❑ Begin implementing your emergency plan.
- ❑ Remind your family to stay inside and away from all flood waters and downed power lines.
- ❑ Listen to local media updates and alerts.
- ❑ Move valuables to higher areas.
- ❑ Securely anchor or store outdoor furniture.
- ❑ Sandbag areas subject to the entry of water.
- ❑ If evacuations are ordered, follow instructions, shut off gas and electricity, evacuate promptly, and securely lock your home or business.

During the Flood

- ❑ Stay inside. Avoid contact with all flood waters and downed power lines.
- ❑ Turn around, don't drown. Never drive through flooded areas or any water.
- ❑ Do not wade through any water as it may contain toxic materials or venomous animals or insects.
- ❑ Check local media and official websites such as FEMA.gov and CharlestonCounty.org for emergency notifications.
- ❑ If your dwelling begins to flood, shut off electricity and gas connections.

After the Flood

- ❑ Upon return from an evacuation, if your building is flooded or otherwise damaged, do not:
 - occupy dwelling until officially notified it is safe.
 - turn on any electrical switches or appliances.
- ❑ If you smell gas, immediately contact your utility company or emergency personnel.
- ❑ Remove standing water with a portable sump pump once flood waters have receded.
- ❑ Remove wet insulation, drywall, flooring and rugs.
- ❑ Contact your insurance agent if you have damage.
- ❑ Hire contractors only after verifying they are properly licensed.
- ❑ Obtain proper permits for all work.
- ❑ Refer questions or complaints about contractors and permits to your local jurisdiction.

Charleston County Building Inspection Services

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FLOODING

The Risk Is Real.

Are You Prepared?

A flood can be devastating, and you don't have to live near water to be at risk.

The time to prepare is now.



Charleston County Hurricane & Emergency Evacuation Routes

Be Prepared

1. Know Your Flood Hazard

Contact your local jurisdiction to see if your property is in a Special Flood Hazard Area or subject to flooding.

Check historical flooding records in your area with your local government or media outlets.

Know your evacuation routes.

Schedule a site visit by your local jurisdiction to gauge your flood risk and learn flood protection measures.

2. Build Responsibly & Protect Your Property

Permits are required, even if you do the work yourself. Report construction done without permits to your local jurisdiction.

Hire design professionals, who are familiar with local hazards, to prepare construction plans. Only hire contractors licensed by Charleston County.

Set buildings back from water and wetlands. Use flood resistant material. Elevate the lowest habitable floor and place utility machinery per local requirements. Install backflow prevention on plumbing systems susceptible to flooding.

Libraries, government offices, and the internet have extensive floodproofing information.

Federal aid may be available for retrofitting, relocating, or demolishing structures with repetitive flooding. Contact Charleston County Building Inspection Services at (843) 202-6930 to learn more.

Charleston is part of the Lowcountry for a reason! Even if your property is not in a flood zone, you are still at risk!

3. Purchase Flood Insurance

Everyone needs flood insurance. Homeowners and renters insurance do not cover floods. Properties in the Special Flood Hazard Area, with a federally backed mortgage, must have flood insurance.

Flood insurance is available to homeowners, residential renters, commercial owners and commercial renters. Policies can cover the building, the contents, or both.

Visit FloodSmart.gov or contact your insurance agent for more information. Ask about discounts and if your building's date of construction helps reduce the rate.

Your insurance agent may require an Elevation Certificate. If you do not have one, contact your local jurisdiction to see if it is on file. If not, you will need a surveyor, engineer or architect.

Prepare for a future claim now. Inventory and photograph your building's contents and store this information in a safe place.

4. Protect People from the Hazard

Consider how an emergency might affect you and your family. How will you have enough food, water, medicine, etc. to survive?

Create an emergency supply kit. It should contain supplies needed to shelter in place for at least three days. You may also consider creating a more portable kit to take with you in case of evacuation.

Develop an emergency plan and keep copies of it in your emergency supply kit and share with your family.

Your plan should include:

- A strategy for family communication. Appoint an out-of-town relative as a point person for everyone in your household to contact. Find out how your family's schools and workplaces will communicate with you during an emergency.

It takes 30 days after buying flood insurance for the policy to go into effect. Buy your policy now!

- Monitoring local media for the latest information and official instructions.
- Details on how you will safely shelter in place or evacuate. Keep evacuation route maps in each car and incorporate these routes into your plan.
- Requirements of household members with special needs.
- Caring for your pet(s) if you shelter in place or evacuate. Know that most shelters prohibit pets.

To learn more about preparing your emergency supply kit and emergency plan visit FEMA.gov or Ready.gov.

5. Keep Drainage Channels Clear

Keeping drainage channels and catch basins free from obstruction reduces flooding during heavy rains.

Residents are asked to maintain the channels near their property by removing or reporting obstructions such as shopping carts, trash and tree limbs.

Request a ditch cleaning or report dumping violations, before a storm occurs, by contacting Charleston County's Department of Public Works at (843) 202-7639 or PWCustomerService@CharlestonCounty.org.

6. Protect Natural Floodplain Functions

Wetland areas and oceanfront sand dunes help protect property from flooding. Preserve these areas. Keep them clean and do not walk on sand dunes.

To report disturbance to beachfront and wetland areas, contact the Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management of the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control at (843) 953-0200.

You can help support the natural floodplain functions by landscaping to establish vegetative buffers using only native plants and minimal amounts of fertilizer.

It's against the law in Charleston County to dump trash, household items and wastewater into storm drains or waterways.