



# 7 WAYS TO SAFEGUARD YOUR HOME FROM FLOOD DAMAGE



Flooding is one of the most frequent and costly natural disasters in the United States, and it can occur in conjunction with other events such as heavy rains, hurricanes and landslides. In fact, 90% of natural disasters involve flooding.

Flooding causes severe water damage that leaves residents facing significant restoration projects and potential displacement from their homes. When purchasing a home, consider some aspects related to flooding, including whether it's on a flood plain, whether there have been recent floods in the area and how often major floods occur.

However, homeowners in high-risk areas aren't the only ones who need to be careful. Residents of low- to moderate-risk areas file 25% of all flood insurance claims.

## **1. Know Your Risk**

We all live in a flood zone and we all live with the risk of flood damage to our property. Know the flood zone your home is located in and the risks associated with that zone designation. Visit [www.georgiadfirm.com](http://www.georgiadfirm.com) or [www.msc.fema.gov/portal/home](http://www.msc.fema.gov/portal/home) to learn more about your flood zone.



## **2. Insure Your Property**

It is important to insure your home and personal belongings regardless of your flood zone designation. Flood damage isn't covered by standard homeowners insurance. Just a few inches of floodwater can end up costing thousands of dollars in repairs. Contact your insurance agent for more information about a separate flood insurance policy.



### **3. Sign Up For Emergency Alerts**

Columbia County utilizes the Hyper-reach emergency alert system to provide advanced alert notifications and critical alerts regarding severe weather, missing persons, road closures, water outages, and other emergencies. The system supports multiple communication methods, including voice calls, text messages, emails, and social media notifications. If you would like to sign up to receive Hyper-reach emergency notifications, please visit the website at:

[https://signup.hyper-reach.com/hyper\\_reach/sign\\_up\\_page\\_2/?id=113127](https://signup.hyper-reach.com/hyper_reach/sign_up_page_2/?id=113127)



### **4. Modify Water Valves**

A flooded sewer system can cause sewer back up into your home which can be costly to remediate and repair. To avoid this “smelly” problem, you should install an interior and exterior backflow valve.



### **5. Safeguard In-Home Electrical & Climate Control Systems**

Columbia County advises you to have an electrician raise switches, sockets, circuit breakers and wiring at least 3 feet above the Base Flood Elevation (BFE).

You should also consider raising the furnace, water heater, and any other system that services the structure so that it is 3 feet above the BFE.



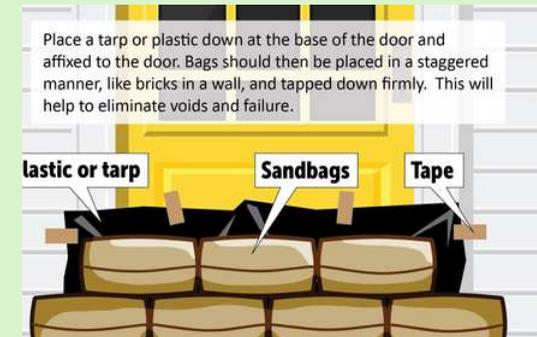
### **6. Anchor & Raise Outdoor Equipment**

Fuel tanks, air-conditioning units and generators should also be raised a minimum of 3 feet above the BFE. During a flood event, unanchored fuel tanks can become a hazard, and supply lines will contaminate surrounding ground. Columbia County recommends that you hire licensed contractors to perform the elevation of the equipment.



### **7. Flood Barriers - Short Term**

If you need a quick short-term solution to a potential flood threat, you can put up temporary flood barriers to lessen the impact of the flood. Flood barriers may include sandbags or other alternatives that may be as or more effective.



**Want To Learn More?**  
Visit the following websites:

**FEMA, Protect Your Property**  
[www.fema.gov/protect\\_your\\_property](http://www.fema.gov/protect_your_property)

**Homeowner's Guide To Retrofitting**  
[www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/480](http://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/480)

**Protecting Building Utility Systems From Flood Damage**  
[www.fema.gov/media-library/assests/documents/3729](http://www.fema.gov/media-library/assests/documents/3729)

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