

# AVOIDING FLOOD DAMAGE

*A checklist for homeowners*

- If you live in a flood plane, you may wish to obtain flood insurance. If your insurance agent is unable to write a flood policy, you can call 1- 800-688-6620 for information.
- Are your electrical switchbox and electrical outlets located above potential flood waters? You may wish to elevate these.
- Are the washer and dryer above potential flood waters?
- Are the furnace and water heater above potential flood waters?
- Is the fuel tank anchored securely?
- Does the door drain have a float plug?
- Does your sewer have a backflow valve?

**EAST PALO ALTO POLICE  
DEPARTMENT**

**141 DETEMER STREET  
EAST PALO ALTO, CA 94303**

**24-HOUR NUMBER: 650-321-1112**



## VEHICLE SAFETY

- 6 inches of water will reach the bottom of passenger cars and cause a loss of control and possible stalling.
- A foot of water will float many vehicles. 2 feet of rushing water can carry away most vehicles including sport utility vehicles (SUV's) and pick- ups.



# FLOOD SAFETY

City of East Palo Alto



## BEFORE THE FLOOD

- Learn the safest route from your location to high/safe ground if you have to evacuate in a hurry.
- Check your roof for leaks. Clean gutters and other drainage areas.
- Make a list of all personal property, including furniture, clothing and valuables. Photos of your home; both inside and out. This will assist your insurance adjuster in settling claims and help prove uninsured losses, which are tax deductible.
- Have a portable radio, emergency cooking equipment, and flashlights.
- Keep a supply of sandbags. Plywood, plastic sheeting, and lumber can be used to protect your property.
- Sandbags cannot be filled and stored for a long time because burlap bags when filled with sand or dirt will rot. Sandbags must be filled immediately before or during the storm.
- Sandbags should only be half full with sand (sandbags will not completely seal out water.)
- Decide on a meeting place with your family during and/or after the flood if your home is flooded out.

## DURING THE FLOOD

- Flood waters rise rapidly so be prepared to evacuate before the water level reaches your property.
- Keep a battery-powered radio turned to a local radio station and follow all emergency instructions.
- If you are caught in the house by rising waters, move to the second floor and, if necessary, to the roof. Take warm clothing, a flashlight, and portable radio.
- Wait for help. Do not try to swim to safety. Rescue teams will arrive.
- If you are outside, try to find high ground and do not attempt to walk through flooded waters that are more than knee deep.
- Turn off all utilities at the main power switch and close the main gas valve if evacuation appears necessary. Do not touch any electrical equipment unless it is in a dry area and you are standing on a piece of dry wood while wearing rubber gloves and rubber soled boots/shoes.
- Fill bathtubs, sinks, and jugs with clean water. You can sanitize these items by first rinsing with bleach.
- If you are in a car and it stalls in a flooded area, abandon it as soon as possible. Flood waters can rise rapidly and sweep a car away.

## AFTER THE FLOOD

- Prior to entering a building, check for structure damage. Make sure the building is not in danger of collapsing. Turn off any outside gas lines at the meter or tank and let the house air for several minutes to remove foul odors or escaping gas.
- Upon entering your home, do not use open flame as a source of light since gas may still be trapped inside. Use a battery-operated flashlight.
- Watch for electrical shorts or live wires before making certain that the main power switch is turned off. Do not turn off any lights or appliances until an electrician has checked the system for short circuits.
- Proceed with immediate clean up measures to prevent health hazards.
- Boil water vigorously for 10 minutes before drinking until the water is declared safe.
- Cover broken windows and holes in the roof to prevent further damage.

