



FEMA

Joint Information Center Disaster News



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Contact: FEMA Newsdesk
(410) 585-2952

Quentin Banks (MEMA)
(410) 517-5135

Colleen Hiam (SBA)
(800) 659-2955

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FLOOD PROTECTION MEASURES LIMIT FUTURE DESTRUCTION

BALTIMORE — The rebuilding and repair phase of the recent disaster is the time to consider ways to reduce future storm damage. The recent hurricane and storms, with the flooding that followed, pointed the way toward measures that will keep both people and property safer in the future.

Following are a few ways to protect yourself and your property from future disasters:

Relocating or moving utilities and appliances to a higher floor or at least 12 inches above the base flood elevation (BFE) will reduce or eliminate future flood damage. In flood-prone houses, move heating, ventilating and cooling (HVAC) equipment from a basement or lower level to an upper floor or even the attic to protect it. Electrical system components, including service panels, meters, switches and outlets, are easily damaged by floodwater even if they are inundated for only a short time. You should also raise these at least a foot above the base flood elevation.

Protect wells from flooding by having a licensed well-drilling contractor install flood-proof solutions such as raising the well casing above the highest known flood elevation, installing a sanitary seal or cover on the casing, installing a backflow valve in the water line, or drilling a new well above expected flood levels and known sources of pollution.

Install sewer backflow valves to prevent sewage from backing up into the house through a drainpipe. A variety of backflow valves are available, ranging from simple ones with flap or check valves that close when the flow reverses, to gate valves that provide a stronger seal. Use a floating floor-drain plug to seal a basement floor drain. If the floor drainpipe backs up, the float will rise and plug the drain.

Some of these mitigation methods to avoid future flood damage are fairly simple and inexpensive, while others require the services of a professional contractor.

On March 1, 2003, FEMA became part of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. FEMA's continuing mission within the new department is to lead the effort to prepare the nation for all hazards and effectively manage federal response and recovery efforts following any national incident. FEMA also initiates proactive mitigation activities, trains first responders, and manages Citizen Corps, the National Flood Insurance Program and the U.S. Fire Administration.

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