



# Victim Services of Waterloo Region

Fact Sheet on Floods

pt. 2/2

## Before a Flood

Everyone should have a battery operated radio, set to a local radio station. Follow the emergency instructions given by the station. If you are aware of a flood risk, the following steps are advised:

- Turn off your power and gas.
- Move valuables to a higher elevation in your home.
- Fill bathtubs, sinks and plastic water bottles with clean water. Before filling, sanitize sinks and tubs with bleach, then rinse well before filling.
- Bring outdoor possessions such as barbeques safely inside or tie them down securely.

## During a Flood

- Do not drive through a flooded area. If you find that you are approaching one, turn around! More people drown in their cars than by any other means during a flood.
- Do not walk through flooded areas. Six inches of moving water can knock you off your feet.
- Stay away from downed power lines and electrical wires - you risk being electrocuted.
- Look out for animals, especially snakes. Flood water can drive animals from their homes, and they may seek shelter in yours.
- If you come in contact with flood waters, wash with antibacterial soap and disinfected water. or

use hand sanitizer if no water is available.

- If water begins to rise around your home or business before you have evacuated it, go to the second floor, attic or roof. Take dry clothing, a flashlight and a portable radio with you. You may want to bring a tarp or raincoat to keep you dry. Don't try to swim to safety, wait for rescuers to come to you.
- All family members should be taught how to swim, particularly if living near a body of water. In the event that waters rise quickly or someone falls, knowing how to swim and tread water for long periods may be important to your survival. But, even the strongest of swimmers should remain where they are and wait for rescuers to find them.
- If your car stalls and you are surrounded by flood waters, get yourself and your family out of the vehicle right away and climb to higher ground!

## After a Flood

- Remember, additional water or flash floods can occur at any time. Be prepared!
- Listen to your local radio station for information on what areas to avoid.
- Try to limit your travel - emergency workers will need full access to roads to assist people.
- Do not move barricades in order to drive towards your destination, they are placed there for your safety!



# Victim Services of Waterloo Region

North: 45 Columbia St. E. Waterloo, ON  
Central: 134 Frederick St. Kitchener, ON  
South: 176 Hespeler Rd. Cambridge, ON  
Email: [victimservices@wrps.on.ca](mailto:victimservices@wrps.on.ca)

Phone: 519-585-2363  
Phone: 519-650-8500 ext. 4464

- Your neighbourhood may have experienced changes due to erosion, and remember to look before you walk. Debris, animals and slippery terrain make it safer to stay indoors.
- Be careful when walking – debris such as broken glass and nails could be anywhere.
- If your residence has been damaged, call your insurance company to make a claim right away. Take photos of the damage if possible.
- Before entering a building, check for structural damage. Do not enter if it looks unsafe to do so.
- Once entering a building, do not light a match or lighter, smoke or use any sort of open flame. Use a flashlight to see, as there may be gas trapped inside the home.
- Do not turn your electricity back on until your home has been inspected by an electrician.
- Clean your home right away, as flood waters pick up chemicals and bacteria in their path. Throw out any food or medicine that has come in contact with the waters (including canned items). Cleaning immediately also helps you to battle mould and mildew.
- Check your water and sewage lines for damage before using sinks and toilets.
- Boil any drinking water you take from the tap until local authorities tell you that your water is safe for human and animal consumption.
- Have a specialist come into your home to determine whether or not you have mould, mildew or rot problems as a result of the flood.
- Consider flood preparation while making any repairs to your home. Remember to follow the Ontario Building Code, and to obtain permits from your municipal building authority.
- Remember to focus on your health in the days following a flood. Cope with stress by sleeping and eating as well as possible, and try to keep a manageable schedule. Talk to emergency

support workers for assistance, such as those from Victim Services of Waterloo Region.

## Resources

### Your Insurance Company

\_\_\_\_\_

Your Representative: \_\_\_\_\_

Policy No.: \_\_\_\_\_

### Clean-up Companies

If you hire a cleanup crew or a contractor for repairs, be sure that they are qualified and skilled enough to do the job.

Be wary of people who drive through neighbourhoods offering to help in cleaning up or repairing your home. Ask for a quote on paper, check their references and read the contract carefully before signing it.

Don't forget to ask to see references for their subcontractor if they are going to sub out the job, and remember to obtain a permit for all work planned before you start!

Check your Yellow Pages  
or [www.Canada411.com](http://www.Canada411.com) for  
names of local companies to consider.

### Red Cross

Cambridge – (519) 621-1840  
Kitchener-Waterloo – (519) 742-2785  
[www.redcross.ca](http://www.redcross.ca)

### Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada

(613) 991-3283  
[www.psepc-sppcc.gc.ca](http://www.psepc-sppcc.gc.ca)



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