



TOWNSHIP OF PEQUANNOCK

Public Outreach Program

FLOOD PROTECTION INFORMATION



The low-lying areas of the Township are subject to periodic flooding caused by the overflow of the Pompton River, the Pequannock River, the Ramapo River, East Ditch, West Ditch and the tributaries of the East Ditch. The greatest flood of record occurred in 1903. Other significant floods occurred in 1955, 1968, 1984, 1999, 2004, 2007 and most recently in 2010.

Flood waters sometimes come with very little warning and are dangerous. Even though they appear to be moving slowly, a flood two feet deep can knock a man off his feet and float a car.

Your property may be high enough that it was not recently flooded. However, it can still be flooded in the future because the next flood could be worse. If you are in the flood plain, the odds are that someday your property will be damaged. This information gives you some ideas of what you can do to protect yourself.

Township Flood Services: The first thing you should do is check your flood hazard. Flood maps and flood protection references are available at the Pequannock Township Public Library. You can also visit the Planning or Engineering Departments at 99 Alexander Avenue to see if you are in the mapped floodplain. If so, they can give you more information, such as depth of flooding over a building's first floor, past flood problems in the area, and copies of elevation certificates on buildings built in the floodplain since 1994.

What You Can Do: Our success depends on your cooperation and assistance. Here's how:

- Do not dump or throw anything into the ditches or streams. Please do your part and keep the banks clear of brush and debris. The Township has a stream maintenance program which can help remove major blockages such as downed trees.
- If you see dumping or debris in the ditches or streams, contact the Public Works Department at 973-897-0327.
- Always check with the Township Construction or Engineering Departments before you build on, alter, regrade, or fill on your property. Any development in the Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) requires a development permit prior to construction.
- If you see building or filling without a Township permit sign posted, contact the Construction Department at 973-897-0323.

Protecting Your Property: Floodproofing – There are several different ways to protect or floodproof a building from flood damage.

- The ultimate way to floodproof is to raise the house above flood levels. This option may not be for everyone, depending on your type of construction, but if you would like to check out some recently elevated houses in the area, the Construction Department has a list.
- Another approach is to make your walls waterproof and have ready, watertight closures for the doorways. This method, however, is not recommended for houses with basements, or if the water will get over two feet deep.
- A third flood proofing approach is to raise your utilities (boiler, furnace, water heater, central air-conditioning etc.) out of harms way above the flood levels.

Less costly precautions to take before a flood occurs could include:

- Checking your home for loose siding, shutters and shaky chimneys.
- Elevating hazardous materials (paints, oils, pesticides, gas, etc.)
- Storing valuables, such as books, photographs, records and documents in a safe area not subject to flooding.
- Visiting www.fema.gov for “Are You Ready” information.



If you know a flood is coming:

- Shut off the gas, electric and water supplies at the main shut off in the house. Leave the sump pump breaker on if you have one.
 - Elevate your possessions. Since it is unlikely that you will get much warning, keep a detailed checklist prepared in advance to ensure you don't forget anything.
- Open basement windows to allow for water to enter into the lower level.

We can help: The Planning Department provides individual assistance in evaluating your current insurance plan, elevation certificate, and physical characteristics of your home. We might be able to suggest mitigation measures to lower your insurance premiums. Make an appointment with us for an individual evaluation (973-835-5700 x189). For most people, your home is your greatest investment. If you don't have flood insurance, talk to your insurance agent. Homeowner's insurance policies do not cover damage from floods. ***However, because Pequannock Township participates in the National Flood Insurance Program, you can purchase a separate flood insurance policy.*** This insurance is backed by the Federal government and is available even if your property has previously been flooded.

Don't wait for the next flood to buy insurance protection. Contact your insurance agent today for more information on rates and coverage.

Flood Safety:

Do not walk through flowing water. Drowning is the number one cause of flood deaths, mostly during flash floods. Currents can be deceptive; as little as six inches of moving water can knock you off your feet. If you walk in standing water, use a pole or stick to ensure that the ground is still there.

Do not drive through a flooded area. More people drown in their cars than anywhere else. Don't drive around road barriers; the road or bridge may be washed out.

Stay away from power lines and electrical wires. The number two flood killer after drowning is electrocution. Electrical current can travel through water. Report downed power lines to the Power Company or Township emergency management office.

Look out for animals, especially snakes. Small animals that have been flooded out of their homes may seek shelter in yours. Use a pole or stick to poke and turn things over and scare away small animals.

Look before you step. After a flood, the ground and floors are covered with debris including broken bottles and nails. Floors and stairs that have been covered with mud can be very slippery.

Be alert for gas leaks. Use a flashlight to inspect for damage. Don't smoke or use candles, lanterns, or open flames unless you know the gas has been turned off and the area has been ventilated.

