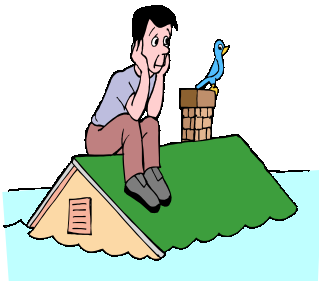


FLOOD FACTS

For Washington County and the Towns of Plymouth, Roper, and Creswell

LOCAL FLOOD HAZARD: Flooding in Washington County and the Towns of Plymouth, Roper and Creswell, are caused by three sources: The Roanoke River leaving its banks during heavy storms. Floodwaters can cover many blocks up to two or three feet deep. The Mackeys Creek and Scuppernon River are smaller streams, which flood during or soon after heavy storms. Floodwaters are not as deep, but they still cover streets and yards and can flood cars, garages, basements and lower floors. Flooding in all three areas can come with little warning.



COUNTY FLOOD SERVICES: The first thing you should do is check your flood hazard. Flood maps and flood protection references are available at the Washington County Public Library. You can also visit the Building Department on the second floor of the Courthouse to see if you are in a mapped floodplain. If so, they can give you more information, such as depth of flooding over a building's first floor and past flood problems in the area. They also have a handout on selecting an architect, engineer, or contractor. If requested, the Planning and Safety Department will visit a property to review its flood problem and explain ways to stop flooding or prevent flood damage. Call the Planning and Safety Department at (252) 793-4114. These services are free. If you are in a floodplain or have had a flood, drainage or sewer backup problem, check out these sources of assistance.

FLOOD INSURANCE: If you don't have flood insurance, talk to your insurance agent. Homeowner's insurance policies do not cover damage from floods. However, because Washington County 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 to everyone, even for properties that have been flooded. Some people have purchased flood insurance because the bank required it when they got a mortgage or home improvement loan. Usually these policies just cover the building's structure and not the contents. During the kind of flooding that happens in Washington County, there is usually more damage to the furniture and contents than there is to the structure. If you are covered, check out the amount and make sure you have contents coverage. Remember: Even if the last flood missed you or you have done some flood proofing, the next flood could be worse. Flood insurance covers all surface floods. **Note:** **There is a 30 day waiting period before most flood insurance policies go into effect.**



**NATIONAL
FLOOD
INSURANCE
PROGRAM**

FLOOD WARNING: The National Weather Service along with the Washington County Planning and Safety Office provides flood warning and evacuation data to local radio (WPNC-FM 95.9MHz, WJPI 1470kHz), and television (WITN-TV 7, WNCT-TV 9, and WCTI-TV 12) stations. Washington County Law Enforcement Agencies and Fire Departments will provide door-to-door warnings to those areas threatened by flooding. When a flood threatens, evacuations are ordered in areas expected to flood. Residents must be prepared to move to a place of safety. The Washington County Planning and Safety Office will announce emergency shelter locations.

PROPERTY PROTECTION MEASURES: Every year, flooding in the United States causes more property damage than any other type of natural disaster. While recent improvements in construction practices and regulations have made new homes less prone to flood damage, there are a significant number of existing homes susceptible to flood losses. The flooding to these properties can be minimized through temporary and permanent retrofitting techniques.

- One approach is to keep water away from your house by constructing a floodwall or earthen berm. These methods are accepted if you have a large lot, if the flooding isn't too deep and if your property is not in the floodway.
- Another approach is to waterproof your walls and place watertight closures over the doorways. This method should be used on homes with basements or if water will not get over two feet deep.
- A third approach is to raise your house above the flood level.

Measures to protect a property from flooding damage include retrofitting, grading a yard, correcting local drainage problems, and such as emergency measures as moving furniture and sandbagging.

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; 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 Dominion Power Company or Tideland EMC.

Have your electricity turned off by the Power Company. Some appliances, such as television sets, keep electrical charges even after they have been unplugged. Don't use appliances or motors that have gotten wet unless they have been taken apart, cleaned, and dried.

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.

DRAINAGE SYSTEM MAINTENANCE: The county of Washington has an inspection and maintenance program. The Planning and Safety conducts routine inspections on all ditches, streams and channels at least once a year. The drainage system in Washington County must be kept clean or flooding will occur. Debris, even grass clippings, in ditches and streams may obstruct the flow of water and cause overflow into streets, yards and homes. The Washington County Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance makes it illegal to take any action that will impede the flow of water in ditches and waterways or the dumping of debris into any ditch. If you see any violations please contact Planning and Safety at (252) 793-4114.

PERMIT REQUIREMENTS: All development in the floodplain requires a permit (Not just the construction of a building). You must contact the Inspection Office before you start any development. If you see any development in the floodplain without a permit you may contact Washington County Planning and Safety at (252) 793-4114.

The County of Washington requires that if the cost of reconstruction, rehabilitation, addition, or other improvements to a building equals or exceeds 50% of the building's market value, then the building must meet the same construction requirements as a new building. Substantially damaged buildings must also be brought up to the same standards (e.g., a residence damaged so that the cost of repairs equals or exceeds 50% of the building's value before it was damaged must be elevated above the base flood elevation).

NATURAL AND BENEFICIAL FUNCTIONS: The County of Washington is a beautiful place in which to live, and the areas within or near our floodplains is an important asset. The undisturbed wetlands provide a wide range of benefits in the human and natural systems. Water quality is improved through the wetlands ability to filter nutrients and impurities from runoff and process organic wastes. These areas provide breeding and feeding grounds for fish and wildlife, create and enhance waterfowl habitat, support a high rate of plant growth and maintain biodiversity and the integrity of the ecosystem. Floodplains provide green space for protection of streams from development and the forces of erosion.

WASHINGTON COUNTY FLOOD ZONES



ALL SHADED AREAS ARE CONSIDERED
WITHIN THE 100 YEAR FLOOD ZONE

CREATED BY:
WASHINGTON COUNTY GIS
OCTOBER 23, 2003
120 ADAMS ST.
PLYMOUTH, NC 27962
(252) 793-2662

