

Your property is located in or near a floodplain. This letter is being sent to all residents and businesses that are located in or within 100 feet of a floodplain as mapped by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The City of Pflugerville wants to make you aware of the flood hazard to your property, what the City is doing about the potential flood risk, and some things you can do in addition to the City's efforts.

Flooding is a real hazard in your part of town. In the Wilbarger and Gilleland creek floodplains and tributaries, floodwaters can move as fast as six feet per second. At that rate, water only one foot deep, can knock a person off their feet. Water two feet deep can wash a car off the road.

Your property may be high enough that floods have not flooded it. However, it can still be flooded in the future because the next flood could be worse. The odds are that someday Wilbarger Creek, Gilleland Creek or their tributaries may flood your property.

While the area is currently experiencing an extreme drought, there is an old Texas saying, "All droughts end in a flood."

The first thing you should do is check your flood hazard. Flood maps and flood protection references and handouts are available at the City of Pflugerville Public Library. You can also visit the Building Department at 100 E. Main Street, Suite 200 to see if you are in a mapped floodplain. If so, you can obtain more information, depth of flooding over a building's first floor and past flood problems in the area along with copies of Elevation Certificates on some buildings built in the floodplain.

You can also go online at www.cityofpflugerville.com/GIS and access the flood maps in a GIS format. Enter your address and view your lot in relation to the limits of the mapped floodplain. From the Maps/GIS link on the left side of the homepage, access is available to the General Map from the Interactive Web Mapping link. Once you access the general map, there are layers on the left side to turn on or off, one of which is the floodplain. If you have difficulties working with this mapping application, please contact the Building Department for help.

Building Department
100 East Main Street
Suite 100
512.990.6320
permits@cityofpflugerville.com

If requested, the Building Department will visit a property to review its flood problem and explain ways to stop flooding or prevent flood damage. Call the Department at 990-6320. These services are free. If you are in a floodplain or have had a flood, drainage or sewer back-up problem, check out these sources of assistance.

What You Can Do

Several of the City's efforts depend on your cooperation and assistance. Here's how you can help:

- Do not dump or throw anything into the ditches or creeks. Dumping in our ditches and creeks is a violation of Chapter 92 of the City of Pflugerville Code of Ordinances. Even grass clippings and branches can accumulate and plug channels. A plugged channel cannot carry water and when it rains the water has to go somewhere. Every piece of trash contributes to flooding.
- If your property is next to a ditch or creek, please do your part and keep the banks clear of brush and debris. The City 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 creeks, call the Code Enforcement Department at 251-4004.
- Always check with the Building Department before you build on, alter, regrade, or fill on your property. A permit may be needed to ensure that projects do not cause problems on other properties.
- If you see building or filling without a City permit card posted, contact the Building Department at 990-6320.

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 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 or the depth of the water over the bridge is too deep to drive through.

Flood Safety

- 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 the City of Pflugerville Police Department.
- 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.
- Look out for animals, especially snakes. Small animals that have been flooded out of their homes make 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.
- Carbon Monoxide exhaust kills. Use a generator or other gasoline powered machine outdoors. The same goes for camping stoves. Charcoal fumes are especially deadly, cook with charcoal outdoors.
- Clean everything that got wet. Floodwaters have picked up sewage and chemicals from roads, farms, factories, and storage buildings. Spoiled food, flooded cosmetics, and medicine can be health hazards. When in doubt, throw them out.
- Take good care of yourself. Recovering from a flood is a big job. It is tough on both the body and the spirit and the effects of a disaster have on you and your family may last a long time. Read Step 1 in Repairing Your Flooded Home on how to recognize and care for anxiety, stress, and fatigue.

There are several different ways to protect a building from flood damage. One way is to keep the water away by regrading your lot or building a small floodwall or earthen berm. These methods work if your lot is large enough, if flooding is not too deep, and if your property is not in the floodway. The Building Department can provide this information.

Another approach is to make your walls waterproof and place watertight enclosures over the doorways. This method is not recommended for houses with basements or if water will get over two feet deep.

These measures are called floodproofing or retrofitting. There are several good references on retrofitting in the reference section of the Pflugerville Public Library. Such publications include :

- Repairing Your Flooded Home (FEMA-234)
- Homeowners Guide to Retrofitting: Six Ways to Protect Your House from Flooding (FEMA-312).
- Floodproofing: How to Evaluate Your Options

Publications such as these can also help you decide what option may be the best for your flooding, building, and financial situation.

If you don't have flood insurance, talk to your insurance agent. Homeowner's insurance policies do not cover damage from floods. However, because the City of Pflugerville 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 it was required by the bank when they got a mortgage or home improvement loan. Usually these policies just cover the buildings structure and not the contents. During the kind of flooding that can potentially happen in the City of Pflugerville, there is usually more damage to the furniture and contents than there is to the structure.

Don't wait for the next flood to buy insurance protection. There is a 30-day waiting period before National Flood Insurance Program coverage takes effect. Contact your insurance agent for more information on rates and coverage.

At last count there were 37 flood insurance policies in the City of Pflugerville. 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 floodproofing, the next flood could be worse. Flood insurance covers all surface floods.

If your flooding problem is caused or aggravated by sewer backup, check out a sewer backup rider to your homeowner's insurance policy.

**City of Pflugerville
Building Department
100 East Main, Suite 200
P.O. Box 589
Pflugerville, TX 78691
permits@cityofpflugerville.com
512.990.6320
512.990.4374**

Living in the Floodplain

