

Use of Sandbags

The use of sandbags can help prevent or reduce damage to your home or property caused by flood water. Properly filled and placed sandbags will help redirect flood water and debris away from buildings instead of through them.

Quick Tips

- If time is of essence, first place sandbags at the bottom of all doors, foundation vents, and outside basement stairs before building a barrier around the structure.
- Plastic sheets or tarps placed under and around sandbags helps form a better barrier (see photo).

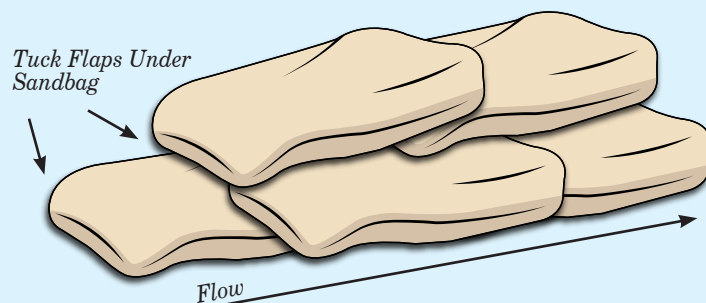
Filling a Sandbag

Filling a sandbag is a two-person job. Fill sandbags one-half to two-thirds full. Full, round sandbags are heavy and do not form a seal.



Stacking Technique

- Place sandbags in a line, ensuring that the untied flap is tucked under the bag. Pack each bag into place.
- If adding an additional row, offset that row to create a pattern similar to that of bricks in a wall.
- To redirect flowing water, build a pyramid and stack sandbags lengthwise in the direction of flow.



Other Considerations

Sandbags may not seal out all water; a pump inside the barrier may be needed in addition to sandbags. Do not use straw or hay bales in lieu of sandbags.

Cleaning Up Sandbags

Sandbags will deteriorate over several months. Keep sandbags and sand out of the storm drainage system and nearby streams. Failure to do so may increase future flood risk by adding debris in nearby stream channels.

Sandbags are not recyclable, and the City of Salem does not accept returned sandbags. It is the property owner's responsibility to dispose of them properly. Sand from sandbags can be used to level out your yard; however, flood water may have come in contact with raw sewage so avoid using sand in food gardens. Use care when handling bags since floodwater can transport debris that may get caught against them. Dispose of emptied bags in the trash.

To find sandbag locations near you, visit www.cityofsalem.net/community/safety/flooding/get-sandbags. For more tips, visit www.cityofsalem.net/alerts.



Preparing for a Flood

Find Out About Your Flood Hazard

Visit the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) website to see if you live in the designated floodplain: <https://msc.fema.gov/portal>.

20% of all flood claims are filed by people living outside of the FEMA mapped floodplain. Flood insurance for those outside the floodplain can be relatively inexpensive. Contact a flood insurance agent for more information.



How to Protect You and Your Family During Flooding

- DO NOT drive over flooded roads. The number one cause of flood-related drownings is from drivers attempting to drive through flooded roadways.
- DO NOT walk through flood waters. Flood waters often contain flowing debris and can contain raw sewage.
- Prepare an emergency kit that includes critical items such as medications, important documents, change of clothes, food, and drinking water.



How to Protect Your Household Items During Flooding

- Store valuable items such as jewelry and important documents in a waterproof container as high in your house as possible.
- Move items such as furniture, electronics, and other possessions upstairs, or elevate them on cinder blocks or wood scraps.
- Bring all outdoor possessions indoors and secure them.

Tips in Case of an Evacuation

- Disconnect appliances and turn off gas, electricity, and water.
- Take your emergency kit.
- Monitor local and regional emergency websites and radio stations for specific evacuation routes and orders.



Sign up for City of Salem Community Alerts by visiting www.cityofsalem.net/alerts. Click on *Sign Up for Alerts*.