



LEGEND
 Colored sections
 denote flood hazard
 areas.



In accordance with provisions of the Americans With Disabilities Act, the City of Gatlinburg will attempt to make reasonable accommodations when necessary, for those with disabilities. If you or someone you know needs or requires accommodations to participate in this or a related program, or if information in an accessible format is needed, please contact the Gatlinburg Public Information Office at (865) 436-1400.

**Map of Flood Hazard Areas
 Gatlinburg, Tennessee**

For Additional Information Contact
 the Gatlinburg Planning Department
 (865) 436-7792



**City of
 Gatlinburg, Tennessee**

**IMPORTANT
 FLOOD
 HAZARD
 INFORMATION**

Flash floods are a fact of life - and death. They occur suddenly and without warning. With preparation, life and property can be protected. Gatlinburg's position astride the Little Pigeon River makes it vulnerable to flooding. Sooner or later, a large flood will strike Gatlinburg.

Because of the large number of visitors in motels adjacent to the river and creeks and permanent residents who have chosen to build in these areas, established emergency procedures must be followed to ensure the safety of those in the area. To see if you are located in a flood hazard area, refer to the map on the back.

Protective measures have already been taken such as the adoption of regulations by the Gatlinburg City Commission to guide further development within the city's flood hazard areas. A Computerized Early Flood Detection System has been installed which can predict flood levels and times of occurrence along the river near the Greystone Lodge at the Aquarium in downtown Gatlinburg. The warning system is headquartered at the Fire Department in the City Hall complex. There is a network of audio speakers that will broadcast sirens and warning messages in the flood hazard area. A detailed evacuation plan is in place to quickly move people to safe areas.

All of these are necessary preparations because of the short warning time associated with mountain flooding - anywhere from a few minutes to an hour or two at most - which may occur during times when many people may be asleep and unaware of impending danger.

A comprehensive flood preparedness program and evacuation plan has been developed for

Gatlinburg by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Tennessee Emergency Management Agency, the Tennessee Valley Authority, the National Weather Service, the U.S. Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Soil Conservation Service. It is ready to be implemented on a moment's notice should flooding begin.

The primary objective of the program is to save lives. Read on to find out what you should do if a flooding situation occurs.

1. Before the Flood

- Know the elevation of your property in relation to nearby streams and other waterways.

- Make advance plans of what you will do and where you will go in a flood emergency.

- Know the difference between a flash flood watch and a flash flood warning. A flash flood watch means that heavy rains may result in flash flooding for a specified area. If this occurs, be alert and prepared for the possibility of a flood emergency which will require immediate action. A flash flood warning means that flash flooding is occurring or is imminent in the specified areas.

Move to safe ground immediately.

2. When a flash flood watch is issued.

- Listen to area radio and television stations and NOAA weather radio for possible flash flood warnings and reports of flooding in progress from the National Weather Service and public safety agencies.

- Watch for signs (thunder, lightning) of distant heavy rainfall.

- Be prepared to move out of danger's way at a moment's notice, generally to higher ground. If you are on a street, watch for flooding at dips, bridges and other low-lying areas.

3. When a flash flood warning is issued.

- Listen to area radio and television stations and the public warning system for specific instructions.

- Act quickly to save yourself and those who depend on you.

- Do not attempt to cross a flooding stream on foot where water is above your knees.

- If you are on foot, do not attempt to evacuate in your vehicle.

- If you are driving, don't try to drive through water of unknown depth. If your vehicle stalls, abandon it immediately and seek higher ground. Rapidly rising water may easily sweep the vehicle and its occupants away.

- Keep children away from floodwaters near culverts and storm drains.

- Be especially cautious at night when it is harder to recognize flood dangers.

4. Where to get help and information.

- Your hotel or motel registration desk.

- The Gatlinburg Fire Department at 436-5112, or the Gatlinburg Planning Department at City Hall at 436-7792.

CITY OF GATLINBURG - FLOOD INFORMATION

FLOOD HAZARD AREAS

As you may know, Gatlinburg has several waterways that run throughout its downtown and Corporate Limits Area. The West Prong Little Pigeon River is the primary stream that impacts the downtown area of Gatlinburg. Other secondary streams that feed the W. Prong Little Pigeon River include Baskins Creek, LeConte Creek, Roaring Fork Creek and Dudley Creek. Due to the steep terrain of the area, Gatlinburg is susceptible to flooding and most often flash flooding. A flash flood is a flood that rises and falls very quickly and usually consists of high flow velocities. It is very important that you understand your property's risks associated with these flood hazard areas. Information on the location of flood hazard areas in Gatlinburg and their potential impact to your property can be obtained by contacting the Planning Department at (865) 436-7792.

FLOOD SAFETY

The following guidelines can help you from the dangers of flooding:

- Do not drive through a flooded area. More people drown in cars than anywhere else during a flood. Do not

drive through protective barriers.

- Do not walk through flowing water. Currents can be deceptive and water as little as six inches can knock you off your feet.
- Stay away from power lines and electrical wires. If your house or structure is about to be flooded, turn off the power at the service box. Electrical currents can travel through the water and electrocution is the 2nd leading cause of death during a flood.
- Be alert to gas leaks. Turn off the gas to your house before it floods. If you smell gas, report it to the Gatlinburg Fire Department or Sevier County Utility District. Do not use candles, lanterns or open flames if you smell gas or unsure if the gas has been cut off.
- Keep children away from the flood waters, ditches, culverts and storm drains. Flood waters can carry unimaginable items that have been dislodged from adjoining properties.
- Clean property items that have been wet from the flood. Flood water will be contaminated with sewage and other chemicals which can pose severe health threats to people and their pets.
- Look out for animals, especially snakes. Small animals that have been flooded out of their habitats may seek shelter in your home or business.

- Do not use gas engines, such as generators, or charcoal fires indoors during power outages. Carbon monoxide exhaust can pose serious health hazards.

ANSWERS FOR AFTER THE FLOOD

- What should I do now? Remain at your designated shelter site until the flood hazard area has been declared safe by the proper authorities.
- When and how may I contact my family? If a public telephone is not available at you designated shelter site, ask your shelter director or representative for assistance.
- How can I replace an emergency item (e.g. prescription medication) that was lost? Notify your shelter director or representative immediately for assistance.
- When may I return to my home or hotel? You may leave the shelter when conditions in the flood hazard area have been declared safe by the proper authorities.
- What about my personal property? Federal, State, and local government representatives will assist in the assessment of property damage and will follow established procedures for the recovery of personal property.

CITY OF GATLINBURG - FLOOD INFORMATION

DRAINAGE SYSTEM MAINTENANCE

It is very important to maintain community streams and ditches free of debris so that drainage facilities can function properly during flooding and run-off events. Illegal dumping should be reported to the Planning and Building Inspection Services Departments at (865) 436-7792.

PROPERTY PROTECTION MEASURES

If your property is susceptible to flooding, there are many measures that you can take to reduce flood damage:

- Watertight seals can be applied to brick and block walls to protect against low-level flooding.
- Utilities such as heating and air conditioning systems, water heaters and other major appliances can be elevated to higher floors in the structure or on raised platforms on the exterior of the structure.
- Temporary measures such as moving furniture and other valuables to higher floors or sandbagging exterior openings will also help protect your property.
- Elevating or relocating the entire structure may also be a feasible option.

FLOODPLAIN PERMIT REQUIREMENTS

Any and all development with the 100-year and 500-year floodplain areas, within the City of Gatlinburg, requires a development permit. The permits must be obtained prior to the start of construction and the permit must be posted in a conspicuous location. Applications for a development permit should be submitted to the Gatlinburg Planning and Building Inspection Services Departments located in City Hall at 1230 East Parkway, Suite 5. Illegal construction activities should be reported to the Planning and Building Departments at (865) 436-7792.

SUBSTANTIAL IMPROVEMENT/DAMAGE

The NFIP requires that if the cost of improvements to a building or the cost to repair damages (from any cause) to a building exceeds 50% of the market value of the building (excluding the land value), the entire building must be brought up to current floodplain management standards. Building improvement projects include interior and exterior remodeling, rehabilitation additions and repairs, and reconstruction projects. Note, any new buildings or additions must be elevated to current floodplain management standards.

RETROFITTING EXISTING STRUCTURES

Retrofitting is making changes to an existing building to protect it from flooding or flood damage. Retrofitting methods include: **Elevation**- Raising the structure so that the lowest floor is above the flood level; **Wet Floodproofing** – Making uninhibited portions of the structure resistant to flood damage & allowing water to enter during a flood; **Relocation** – Moving the structure out of the floodplain to higher elevations not exposed to flooding; **Dry Floodproofing** – Sealing the structure to prevent floodwaters from entering; **Levees & Floodwalls** – Building a floodwall or levee around the structure to restrain floodwaters; **Demolition** – Tearing down a damaged structure. For more information on retrofitting contact the Planning Department at (865) 436-7792 or visit FEMA website at www.fema.gov.

It is very important to understand your flood risks. Flooding in Gatlinburg can be severe and sudden, as demonstrated by significant flood events on the W. Prong Little Pigeon River in 1951, 1966, 1973, and 1994. These historical events are proof that flooding will occur again and a readiness plan is important to mitigate the impact of future flood damage to your property.