

# FLOODING

## EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS MONTHLY TOPIC



**Flooding** occurs in Oregon due to our seasonal rainfall, summer fires, melting snow, new development, and levee/dams. All influence how water is absorbed or directed downstream. Areas that have not flooded in the past may flood now due to changes that occurred somewhere else and caused a change in how the ground interacts with the water.

The Army Corps of Engineers plays a major role in a coordinated and complex system to reduce flood risks, thereby saving lives and reducing property damage. However, no combination of actions can prevent floods and no single agency can manage them.

<http://www.nwp.usace.army.mil/Missions/Water/Management.aspx>

## What to do during a flood:

### Flood Preparation

**Understand** what causes flooding in your area and where it is projected to occur

- [Flood Maps](#)

**Monitor** weather forecasts and know how to monitor river levels

- [Stream/River Gages](#)
- [Weather updates](#)

[Buy flood insurance](#)

**Prepare** emergency plans

- Develop a flood emergency preparedness kit
- Identify 2 evacuation routes from a flood prone area

**Prepare** for flood waters

- [Know how to build a sandbag levy](#)
- Stockpile or know where to obtain sandbags and sand
- Store items off the floor so you don't have to move them when flooding occurs

### During the Flood:

**Do not walk** through flowing water

- The number one cause of flood deaths
- 6 inches of moving water can sweep a person off their feet

[Do not drive through flooded areas](#)

- Vehicles can "drown" in water that is too deep and create a rescue situation
- Vehicles can float in 12-24 inches of moving water
- Flood waters can undermine the roadway

**Stay away** from power and electrical lines

- The number two cause of flood deaths

**Turn off** your electricity

- Some appliances maintain a charge after they are unplugged
- Do not use appliances that have gotten wet unless they have been taken apart, cleaned and dried

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# After the Flood:

Be alert for:

- Gas leaks
- Displaced rodents and animals seeking refuge in dry areas
- Broken sharp objects hiding under mud and debris

**Clean** everything that got wet

- Floodwaters may have carried sewage, chemicals, and other hazards into your home

**Dispose** of spoiled or flooded food, cosmetics and medicine.

- When in doubt, throw them out

**Ensure** your drinking water is safe to drink

- Do not drink water from a flooded well until you have had
- it tested
- Be prepared to boil water (rolling boil for 1 minute) or to purify water

Historic crests for the Willamette River at Corvallis include:

- 42.4 feet on December 1, 1861
- 38.2 feet on December 29, 1945
- 38.1 feet on January 2, 1943
- 36.8 feet on January 8, 1948
- 36.2 feet on January 19, 1953
- 34.9 feet on December 7, 1981
- 33.5 feet on February 9, 1996
- 32.7 feet on November 21, 1996
- 31.6 feet on January 1, 1997
- 30.7 feet on January 19, 2006

Flood stage is 30 feet. At this level, expect extensive flooding of low-lying agricultural land east and south of Corvallis. Some streets in Corvallis may be flooded, including portions of Highway 34.

Major flood stage is 36 feet. At this level, expect widespread flooding, with serious flooding possible between Corvallis and Albany on the west bank of the river. At this and higher stages, the river between Harrisburg and Corvallis has historically been up to 3 miles wide.

The 1996 flood saw the Willamette River crest at 33.5 feet, 42 inches above flood stage. (Photo from Wikipedia, data from [weather.gov](http://weather.gov))



## OSU EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND WARNING INFORMATION

[OSU Emergency Preparedness Website](#)

[OSU Alert—Sign Up](#)



OSU Emergency Plan mobile device app— *Crisis Manager*

- [Apple iTunes Store \(iOS\)](#)
- [Google Play \(Android\)](#)
- [Kindle Fire](#)
- For Window Devices, [Download the PDF version](#)

## More Information

[Ready.gov](#)—floods

[USACE](#) - before the flood

[Oregon Public Health](#) - water after a flood

[National Flood Insurance Program](#)