



BUREAU OF RESOURCE INFORMATION AND LAND USE PLANNING
FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION & FORESTRY

Flood Safety Awareness Week March 10 – 14, 2025

What is Flood Safety Awareness Week?

Flood Safety Awareness Week is a week-long public awareness campaign held every March to help Maine residents, businesses, and communities better understand flood risks and take action to reduce damage, protect property, and stay safe before, during, and after flooding. Flooding is Maine's most common and costly natural disaster. Whether you live along the coast, near a river, in a low-lying area, or even on higher ground, it's important to know your flood risk and take steps to prepare.

Why Flood Safety Week Matters

Maine's flooding patterns are changing, with more intense storms, faster snowmelt, and rising sea levels. Preparing today helps reduce property damage, lower recovery costs, and keep families safe.

Flood Safety Week Themes and Tips

Throughout Flood Safety Awareness Week, we'll be sharing daily topics, tips, and resources designed to help Maine residents, businesses, and communities learn about flood risks and take steps to be better prepared. Each day highlights a different aspect of flood safety, encouraging everyone to learn something new and share important information with friends, family, and neighbors.

Floods can happen anywhere. To anyone. At any time.

No matter where you live or own property, flooding is always possible. Just because a flood has never happened near your home or property doesn't mean you don't need to worry about flooding in the future. Know your risk, stay informed, and be prepared!

Monday

Flooding is the most common disaster in Maine

For this reason, 97% of communities in Maine have opted to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and have adopted Floodplain Development Regulations that incorporate the minimum federal regulations for development in flood-prone areas. Learn more about the NFIP at https://www.maine.gov/dacf/flood/flood_insurance.shtml.

Know Your Risk

There is a 26% chance of a flood during the lifetime of a 30-year mortgage. Are you in a flood prone area? To find out, check the FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map at <https://msc.fema.gov/portal/home>. Or check the Maine Flood Hazard Map at <https://www.maine.gov/dacf/flood/mapping.shtml>. Or contact [Sue Baker](#), NFIP State Coordinator, 207-287-8063 or [Janet Parker](#), Planner II, 207-287-9981, to ask!

Stay Informed

Be “weather aware” by staying up to date on potentially significant weather threats. Start your day by visiting <https://www.weather.gov/gyx/> to find out if your area is under a flood watch or flood warning. Get updates throughout the day on your device by subscribing to a reliable weather alert notification app, like the FEMA Mobile App Alert or an equivalent weather app that alerts you of National Weather Service flood watches and warnings. If in a remote area, have access to a NOAA Weather Radio that is programmed for the local transmitter. FMI on alert information visit <https://www.fema.gov/about/news-multimedia/mobile-app-text-messages> and <https://www.weather.gov/nwr/>.



(Photo courtesy of Wells Police Dept.)

Tuesday

Different types of flooding: snowmelt, ice jams, flash flooding, river flooding, tropical storms, coastal, storm surge, hurricane

If you live, work, or play in Maine, you could be at risk from a number of different types of floods! Do you know the difference between the types of flooding? Find out more about the state’s flood hazards and some historical flood events by visiting <https://www.weather.gov/safety/flood-states-me> or <https://www.maine.gov/dacf/flood/docs/maineriverbasin/maineriverbasinreport.pdf>.

Snowmelt

By far the biggest threat, contributing to most of the historical flood events in the state, is river flooding during the spring run-off. The combination of rapidly melting snow, weakening river ice, and heavy spring rains has led to countless flood events across the state over the ages. Which leads us to the next type of flooding.

Ice Jams

The second largest flood threat across interior Maine is caused by ice jams during the winter and early spring months. Ice clogs the river channel causing water to back up into surrounding areas. A second threat is when the ice jam releases causing a torrent of water to move downstream. This is a very dangerous situation!



Flash Flooding

Defined as a rapid and extreme flow of high water into a normally dry area, or a rapid water level rise in a stream or creek causing them to overflow their banks. This can be caused by intense rainfall during a thunderstorm, dam break, or ice jam.

River Flooding

Occurs when rivers rise and overflow their banks, inundating areas that are normally dry. Although river flooding is by far most prevalent during spring, it can occur anytime of the year.

Tropical storms

Can bring heavy rain to the coast and even interior Maine which can cause widespread flooding. In addition to the freshwater flood threat, tropical storms and Nor'easters can bring the threat of storm surge and wave run-up to low-lying coastal areas.

(Photo Courtesy of NWS Caribou.)

Wednesday

Turn Around – Don't Drown!

Do not walk or drive through water – 6 inches can make you fall; 12 inches can float a car! Follow updates on flooded areas, road closures, and re-entry points. And when you're on the road, be aware of areas where floodwater has receded - roads may be weakened or collapsed.

Be sure to stay safe after the flood.

Flood waters can contain contaminants that cause disease and can make you sick. Wear heavy work gloves, protective clothing, boots, and masks during clean up – mold can grow fast. Also be aware of the risk of electrocution. Do not touch electrical equipment or appliances that are wet or in standing water. To learn more, visit www.ready.gov/floods.



Flood Reference Guide

Designed to assist in preparing for, and responding to, flooding events. This short-term guidance lists common problem areas and action items that can be implemented in the last days before a flood. There are also resources for reducing risks in the long term. Responses covered includes those for fuel storage and spill response, debris management and solid waste, emergency repairs to infrastructure, and for stormwater, wastewater, and drinking water infrastructure. FMI visit: <https://www.maine.gov/dep/government/flood-reference-guide.pdf>

(Photo courtesy of Knox County EMA.)

Thursday

Purchase Flood Insurance

Just 1 inch of water can cause \$25,000 of damage to your home. In Maine, flood insurance policy counts have been decreasing over the years, while claims for severe weather incidents have increased! Do you have flood insurance? It takes 30 days for a flood insurance policy to go into effect. Don't wait. Learn more today at <https://www.floodsmart.gov/first-prepare-flooding>.



After the water recedes and you've ensured it's safe to enter your home, you'll need to document damage and file your claim. Take photos of the damage and itemize your property. After documenting the damage, be sure to throw away items that could pose a health risk, such as food, clothing, pillows, and cushions. If contacted by a claims adjuster, remember – never let anyone into your home without identification! FMI: <https://www.floodsmart.gov/document-damage-and-start-clean>

(Photo courtesy of Maine Floodplain Management Program.)

Friday

Rebuilding

If your home or business is damaged by a flood, you may be required to meet certain building requirements to reduce future flood damage before you rebuild or repair. Another reason why having flood insurance is helpful – the National Flood Insurance Program can help with costs associated with bringing your home into compliance. Learn more at <https://www.floodsmart.gov/increased-cost-compliance-coverage>. You can always call on [Sue Baker](#), NFIP State Coordinator at 207-287-8063 or [Janet Parker](#), Planner II at 207-287-9981, for more information.

Mitigate before it is too late!

Need funding? FEMA Flood Mitigation Assistance Program provides funding to states, local communities, federally recognized tribes, and territories. This money can be used for projects that reduce or eliminate the risk of repetitive flood damage to buildings insured by the National Flood Insurance Program. The application for the national competition is complex so contact your County EMA Director, Town Manager, or State Hazard Mitigation Officer today!



Grant Programs

FEMA's Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) funding supports states, local communities, tribes, and territories as they undertake hazard mitigation projects, reducing the risks they face from disasters and natural hazards. There are 2 streams of money for applications: The State of Maine Competition and the National Competition. The application is complex so contact your County EMA Director, Town Manager, or State Hazard Mitigation Officer today!

(Photo courtesy of Knox County EMA.)

Thank You

A big thank you to everyone who makes this possible!

We work closely with many partners to plan, prepare for, and respond to floods. For some excellent resources on potential flood threats, flood monitoring, and flood preparation, please check out these links from our partners:

- USGS Maine - <https://www.usgs.gov/centers/new-england-water>

- National Weather Service – Gray: <https://www.weather.gov/gyx/>
- National Weather Service – Caribou: <https://www.weather.gov/car/>
- Maine Floodplain Management Program - <https://www.maine.gov/dacf/flood/index.shtml>
- Maine Emergency Management River Flow Advisory Commission - <http://www.maine.gov/rfac/>
- FEMA Flood Preparedness - <https://www.ready.gov/floods>
- FEMA Flood Maps - <https://msc.fema.gov/portal/home>
- FEMA Flood Insurance - <https://www.fema.gov/national-flood-insurance-program>

Learn More & Get Involved

Maine residents are encouraged to follow @MaineEMA, @NWSSGray, and @NWSCaribou on social media to access tips, resources, and flood safety reminders.

To learn more about flood risks in Maine, floodplain mapping, and flood insurance, visit the Maine Floodplain Management Program at www.maine.gov/dacf/flood.