

## Sandbags Protect Property

Sandbags also play an important role in helping you protect your home or business from heavy winter rains and possible flooding. Don't wait until it's raining or flooding to get them; plan ahead! Sand and sandbags can be purchased from any local hardware or building supply store, and are easy to construct and use. Several local agencies also provide sandbags – free of charge – during heavy rains or emergencies. You can find them at:

**Town of Fairfax** - The Pavilion parking lot, behind the Bank of America at Bank St. and Broadway Blvd, opposite the ballfield, [www.town-of-fairfax.org/DisasterPreparedness](http://www.town-of-fairfax.org/DisasterPreparedness)

**City of Larkspur** – The parking lot of Piper Park

**Town of Ross** - Natalie Coffin Greene Park and at the Town corporation yard behind the fire station. [www.townofross.org/fire-department](http://www.townofross.org/fire-department)

**Town of San Anselmo** – Sunny Hills Drive next to the tennis courts. Empty bags are distributed to all businesses, and sand is also available at the town corporation yard

**Kentfield** - The Kentfield Fire Station has sandbags and sand may also be available. Call the firehouse for more information at (415) 453-7464 or [www.kentfieldfire.org](http://www.kentfieldfire.org)

**The Marin County Office of Emergency Services has more sandbag information on its website at [www.co.marin.ca.us/depts/ES/main/EEP/weather/flood.cfm](http://www.co.marin.ca.us/depts/ES/main/EEP/weather/flood.cfm)**

**To learn how to fill and stack sandbags, go to [www.rossvalleywatershed.org](http://www.rossvalleywatershed.org) and click on "Living with Your Creek."**

## Creek Care – Our Shared Responsibility

During creek walks throughout the Ross Valley, staff from Marin County Department of Public Works observed many cases of streambank erosion and some amazing, creative efforts at preventing further loss. Not all streambank erosion is harmful. Undercut banks and fallen trees provide important habitat for salmon and other aquatic animals, but we need to intervene when erosion threatens property, structures and roads, or if it threatens prime riparian habitat. We recommend that you inspect your creek bank after each rainy season to determine if your property needs work in the upcoming summer. All stream bank and creek work requires permitting from various state and federal regulatory agencies. The permitting process can sometimes take up to six months, so plan ahead.

We can help you navigate the permitting process and arrange for you to present your project to a joint meeting of representatives from the regulatory agencies and receive guidance at the beginning of your project. The Marin County Flood Control District and the Marin Countywide Stormwater Pollution Program has brochures available to help. Suggested brochures are:

- **Repairing Streambank Erosion**
- **Controlling Erosion** – Tips for the "weekend warrior".
- **Creek Care** – A Guide for Marin Residents (online at [www.Rossvalleywatershed.org](http://www.Rossvalleywatershed.org) in "Library")

**You can also call 499-6528 for a free copy or stop in at Room 304, Marin County Civic Center. Please visit [www.rossvalleywatershed.org](http://www.rossvalleywatershed.org) and [www.mcstoppp.org](http://www.mcstoppp.org) for more in-depth information.**



### FEMA Flood Insurance Program

The FEMA National Flood Insurance Program allows property owners in participating communities to purchase insurance protection against losses from flooding. This insurance provides an insurance alternative to disaster assistance to meet the rising costs of repairing damage to buildings and their contents caused by floods.

Participating in the National Flood Insurance Program is based on an agreement between our local communities and the federal government. The federal government offers flood if the local community adopts and enforces a floodplain management ordinance to reduce future flood risks.

For more information on the FEMA Flood Insurance Program, visit [www.FEMA.com](http://www.FEMA.com)

In the Ross Valley, you'll find more information about the current local and county flood protection and watershed enhancements at [www.rossvalleywatershed.org](http://www.rossvalleywatershed.org) or [www.mcstoppp.org](http://www.mcstoppp.org)

*Brochure written, designed and produced by MIG, Inc., Berkeley, California*

## ROSS VALLEY

### FLOOD PROTECTION and WATERSHED PROGRAM



## Protecting Yourself and Your Property Against Flooding

As residents of Ross Valley, we live in one of the most beautiful and unique regions of the San Francisco Bay Area. However, the mountainous geography that makes our area so beautiful also makes us susceptible to flooding – especially flash floods (flooding caused by very heavy rainfall within a short period of time). The County of Marin has partnered with towns and cities in Ross Valley to develop comprehensive watershed solutions that will help you protect yourselves, your property and your loved ones. The County has taken major steps toward achieving comprehensive flood protection and damage reduction, while preserving the natural creek network and aquatic habitat – but ultimately, the responsibility to prepare for and protect against flooding lies with each resident.

To help you prepare for the rainy season, the County of Marin, and the municipalities of Fairfax, Larkspur, Ross, and San Anselmo, have partnered to provide you with this helpful Flood-Safe Tip Sheet. Inside you'll find tips and information on how to prepare for flooding during the rainy season, as well as a list of important contact information to help you educate yourself about flooding in your area.

For more information about what's being done to prevent flooding in your area, or to learn more about protecting your home and preparing for the rainy season, visit us on the web at [www.rossvalleywatershed.org](http://www.rossvalleywatershed.org).



## Smart Tips Before a Flood

### Flood and Watershed Management Contacts

For emergencies, dial 911.

#### For non-emergency, flood-related information:

Marin County Flood Control and Water Conservation District  
(415) 499-6528

#### For more information about creek care and creek banks:

Marin County Stormwater Pollution Prevention Program  
(415) 499-6528  
[www.mcstoppp.org](http://www.mcstoppp.org)

#### For drainage concerns in your area:

Town of Fairfax –  
Department of Public Works  
(415) 453-0291  
[www.town-of-fairfax.org](http://www.town-of-fairfax.org)

City of Larkspur –  
Department of Public Works  
(415) 927-5017  
[www.ci.larkspur.ca.us](http://www.ci.larkspur.ca.us)

Town of Ross –  
Department of Public Works  
(415) 453-1453  
[www.townofross.org](http://www.townofross.org)

Town of San Anselmo –  
Department of Public Works  
(415) 258-4616  
[www.townofsananselmo.org](http://www.townofsananselmo.org)

Learn more about flood prevention and response at [www.rossvalleywatershed.org](http://www.rossvalleywatershed.org)

Check your town's website for more detailed, localized, flood-related information.

#### Useful websites:

Real time stream and rain data for Ross Valley: <http://marin.onerain.com>

Forecasts and satellite weather info:  
[www.wrh.noaa.gov/mtr](http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/mtr)

NOAA/NWS Weather Radio information:  
[www.weather.gov/nwr/](http://www.weather.gov/nwr/)

#### National Weather Radio setup information:

SAME Codes (Specific Area Message Encoding)  
Marin County: 006041  
San Francisco: 006097

Radio frequencies in our Area:  
Monterey: 162.550  
San Francisco: 162.400



### For Your Family

- Find out if you live in a flood prone area
- Prepare a family disaster plan – know how to respond and whom to call in an emergency
- Keep a hand-cranked or battery-operated radio or TV with fresh batteries on hand
- Know where your emergency supplies, first aid kit and flashlights are kept
- Be safe – do not walk or bike near rising creeks and flood water!
- Make sure nearby storm drains are kept clear of leaves and debris – contact your Department of Public Works for heavier work
- Consider purchasing an affordable emergency radio-alarm to receive immediate flood and disaster information (like the Midland WR series radios)
- Don't interfere with emergency work crews during floods
- Know how to obtain and place sandbags to protect your home

### For Your Business

- Determine the risk of flooding in your area
- Know which local radio and TV stations broadcast emergency information
- Update emergency contact information for all employees
- Know where to safely move and store critical equipment like computers, machines, etc.
- Know where to get sandbags and how to protect your business
- Prepare and practice an emergency evacuation plan with your employees

## Be Safe During a Flood

### Do Not Walk Through Flowing Water

Drowning is the leading cause of flood-related deaths, with most occurring during flash floods. It's hard to believe, but even six inches of moving water can knock you off your feet! Use a pole or stick to test the ground before walking across any flooded areas where you cannot see the ground.

### Stay Away from Power Lines and Electrical Wires

Electrocution is also a major cause of death in floods. Electrical currents travel through water – check your area for downed power lines and report them to your utility company or local emergency manager.

### Turn Off your Electricity When you Return Home

Some appliances, such as TVs, can shock you even after being unplugged. Do not use electrical appliances or motors that have gotten wet until they have been taken apart, cleaned and dried.

### Watch for Animals

Some small animals may seek shelter from floodwater in your home. Use a pole or stick to poke through debris and overturn items to frighten any animals away.

### Be Careful Where you Step

Walk slowly—watch for dangerous or slippery debris like broken glass or nails that may have been spread across the ground during a flood. Floors and stairs that are wet or muddy can also be very slippery.

### Be Alert for Gas Leaks

Use a flashlight to inspect for damage. Never use candles, lanterns, or open flames unless you are certain the gas has been turned off and the area has been thoroughly aired out. If you turned off your gas, it is best to call PG&E to turn it back on and check for leaks.

### Carbon Monoxide Kills

Never use a generator or any gasoline-powered machine (including camping stoves) indoors. Charcoal fumes are also deadly – cook with charcoal outdoors only.

### Clean Anything that Gets Wet

Floodwater is not safe – it can carry sewage and chemicals from roads, farms, factories, and storage buildings. Spoiled food and flooded medicines and cosmetics are also health hazards. When in doubt, throw them out.

### Take Care of your Health

Recovering from a flood is extremely mentally and physically draining. The after effects of a disaster may be long-term, so learn to identify and care for anxiety, stress, and fatigue.

*For more information of flood safety and preparedness, visit the FEMA website at [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov)*



### Driving Flood Safe

More people drown in their cars than anywhere else. Here are some tips to help you respond safely if you are caught driving during a flash flood.

- Do not drive through a flooded area – less than a foot of water can float most cars.
- If your car stalls in a flooded area, leave it and move to higher ground immediately.
- Avoid any unnecessary trips – you are not safe in your car.
- Never drive around emergency road barriers; roads or bridges may be washed out.
- Don't sightsee in flooded areas or near rising waters – you can impede rescue workers and cause additional damage.
- Avoid being stranded by keeping your gas tank full when heavy rains are predicted or occurring .
- Keep an emergency and first aid kit in your car at all times.
- Listen to the radio for important traffic information and follow recommended alternate routes.