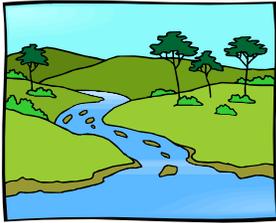


City of Jacksonville Flood Protection Information

Flooding in our city is caused by two sources the Bayou Meto and Jacks Bayou. When they leave their banks during heavy storms floodwaters can cover many blocks up to four or five feet deep. Although floodwaters are not always this deep they still cover streets and yards and can flood cars, garages, basements and lower floors.



Flooding in these areas can occur with little warning. After heavy rains in December of 2009, and May of 2011, Jacks Bayou flooded Highway 67/167 and John Harden Drive. The Bayou Meto flooded Highway 67/167, Dupree Park and the one lane bridge on West Main Street putting the park and bridge out of commission for a day or two. In addition to closing parks and bridges, floods are also dangerous. Even though they appear to move slowly (three feet per second), a flood less than two feet deep can knock a man off his feet and float a car.

Your property may be high enough that it was not flooded recently; however, it can still be flooded in the future because the next flood could be worse. If you are in the floodplain, the odds are that someday your property will be damaged. This flyer gives you some ideas of what you can do to protect yourself.

City Flood Services: The City of Jacksonville participates in NFIP and CRS programs to offer its citizens a discounted rate for Flood Insurance. There is usually a 30-day waiting period when applying for flood insurance before the policy goes into effect. The first thing you should do is check your flood hazard. Flood maps and flood protection references are available at the Jacksonville Public Library, or you can visit the Engineering Department at City Hall to see if you are in a mapped floodplain. They can give you more information such as depth of flooding and past flood problems in the area. If an Elevation Certificate was filed, they can make copies for you. If requested, someone from the Engineering Department will visit your property to review its flood problem and explain ways to stop flooding or prevent flood damage. They can be contacted at 982-6071, and the service is free.

What You Can Do: The City in their efforts to control flooding in our community depends on your cooperation and assistance. Here are ways you can help:

- Do not place debris into our storm water drainage system. This includes but is not limited to ditches, streams, curb and gutters. Placing debris in our storm water drainage system is a violation of Jacksonville City Ordinance 549 and Jacksonville Municipal Code 12.24.120. Even grass clippings and branches can accumulate and plug channels. A plugged channel cannot carry water and when it rains the water has to go somewhere. Every piece of trash contributes to flooding.
- If your property is next to a storm water drainage system, please do your part and keep the drainage system clear of brush and debris. The City has a drainage system maintenance program which can help remove major blockages such as downed trees.
- If you see dumping or debris in our storm water drainage system, contact the Engineering Department at 982-6071.
- Always check with the Engineering Department before you build, alter, regrade, or fill on your property. A permit may be needed to ensure that projects do not create problems on neighboring properties.
- If you see building or filling without a City permit sign posted, contact the Engineering Department at 982-6071.

Check out the following information on floodproofing and flood safety:

Flood proofing: There are several different methods in protecting a building from flood damage. One method of keeping the water away is by regrading your lot or by building a small floodwall or earthen berm. These methods work if your lot is large enough, flooding is not too deep, or if your property is not in the floodway. The Engineering Department can provide this information.

Another approach is to make your walls waterproof and place watertight closures over the doorways. This method is not recommended for houses with basements or if water will get over two feet deep.



A third approach is to raise the house above flood levels. This approach has not been used in the City of Jacksonville but would be an option if a flood did damage a house that was built below the Base Flood Elevation (BFE). Money is available from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to help pay for the costs of elevating a house that has been flooded because it was built below the BFE. There are several houses in Jacksonville that were built before the City became a member of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). The building regulations before the City became a member of the NFIP did not require a house to be built above the Base Flood Elevation, so many houses built before 9/29/1978 were built below the BFE.

These 3 measures are called floodproofing or retrofitting. More information is available at the Jacksonville Public Library. *Important note:* Any alteration to your building or land requires a permit from the Engineering Department. Even regrading or filling in the floodplain requires a permit.

If you know a flood is coming, you should shut off the gas and electricity and move valuable contents upstairs. It is unlikely that you will get much warning, so a detailed checklist prepared in advance would help ensure that you don't forget anything.

Flood Safety

Do not walk through flowing water. Drowning is the number one cause of flood deaths, mostly during flash floods. Currents can be deceptive; six inches of moving water can knock you off your feet. If you walk in standing water, use a pole or stick to ensure that the ground is still there.

Do not drive through a flooded area. More people drown in their cars than anywhere else. Do not drive around road barriers; the road or bridge may be washed out.

Stay away from power lines and electrical wires. The number two flood killer after drowning is electrocution. Electrical current can travel through water. Report downed power lines to the Power Company or City emergency management office.

Have your electricity turned off by the Power Company. Some appliances, such as television sets, keep electrical charges even after they have been unplugged. Do not use appliances or motors that have gotten wet unless they have been taken apart, cleaned, and dried.

Look out for animals, especially snakes. Small animals that have been flooded out of their homes may seek shelter in yours. Use a pole or stick to poke and turn things over and scare away small animals.

Look before you step. After a flood, the ground and floors are covered with debris including broken bottles and nails. Floors and stairs that have been covered with mud can be very slippery.

Be alert for gas leaks. Use a flashlight to inspect for damage. Do not smoke or use candles, lanterns, or open flames unless you know the gas has been turned off and the area has been ventilated.