Preparations for El Niño

COMPILED BY RCFC & WCD

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CREATE AN EMERGENCY FAMILY PLAN

- Discuss what to do about power outages and personal injuries.

- Draw a floor plan of your home, and mark an escape route from each room

  - Locate the main electric fuse box, water service main, and natural gas main. Learn how and when to turn these utilities off. Teach all responsible family members. Keep necessary tools near gas and water shut-off valves.

  - Remember, turn off the utilities only if you suspect the lines are damaged or if you are instructed to do so. If you turn the gas off, you will need a professional to turn it back on.

- Pick one out-of-state and one local friend or relative for family members to call if separated by disaster (it is often easier to call out-of-state than within the affected area).

- Post emergency telephone numbers near telephones.

  - Teach children how and when to call 911, police and fire.

  - Teach children how to make long distance telephone calls.

- Instruct household members to turn on the radio for emergency information.

- Pick two meeting places:
  A place near your home in case of a fire.
  A place in your neighborhood in case you cannot return home,

- Learn the safest route from your home or job to high, safe ground in case you have to evacuate in a hurry, and be sure to keep your gas tank full!!

- Take a basic first aid and CPR class.

- Make at itemize list of personal property, including furnishings, clothing and valuables; photograph your home inside and out, which will help settle insurance claims. Keep photos in a safe deposit box.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

The federal Emergency Management Agency offers free publications on protecting your home and assembling and emergency kit, 1-800-638-6620. El Niño information is available on the agency's web site: http://www.fema.gov

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EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN

-RESIDENTIAL

Losses due to flooding can often be cut dramatically by carrying out an effective pre-planned set of actions. The emergency plan may consist primarily of a checklist of things to be done and a little pre-thinking about where contents will be moved, who's going to help, where things will be stored and so on. Among others, items on the emergency "to do " list might include:

- Moving items to be left in the structure to an upper floor or stacked on top of each other to put at least *some* furniture above flood level.
- Throwing curtains and drapes up over rods.
- Pulling up and removing carpets and rugs.
- Motors to be removed from furnace and other equipment located in the low levels of the house.
- Unplug equipment that can't be moved.
- Assemble medicine, heirlooms, valuables and other items to be for taking during evacuation.

-COMMERCIAL

Commercial and industrial sites offer the opportunity and need for more detailed planning and sometimes new construction or other preparations to facilitate putting the plan into action when necessary. This may include such things as:

- Preparing electrical equipment for quick disconnect.
- Preparing equipment for quick evacuation.
- Keeping raw materials and products on pallets for quick removal.
- Providing means for opening all necessary doors manually in the event of a power outage. Arranging for transportation when needed.
- Arranging for storage space when needed.
- Keeping on hand all items needed for rapid cleanup and restoration of production.

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PREPARE A DISASTER SUPPLY KIT

Assemble supplies you might need in an evacuation. Store them in an easy-to-carry container such as a backpack or duffel bag. Put aside in a special box in garage. Keep heat-sensitive items inside home and rotate stock throughout season. Batteries can go in refrigerator.

WATER

Having an ample supply of clean water is a top priority in an emergency. A normally active person needs to drink at least two quarts of water each day, hot environments can double that amount. Children, nursing mothers and ill people will need even more. You will also need water for food preparation and hygiene. Store a total of at least one-gallon per person, per day. You should store at least a two-week supply of water for each member of your family. If supplies run low, never ration water. Drink the amount you need today, and try to find more for tomorrow. You can minimize the amount of water your body needs by reducing activity and staying cool. Store water in sealed, unbreakable containers. Identify the storage date and replace every six months.

- A supply of non-perishable packaged or canned food and a non-electric can opener.
- A first aid kit and prescription medications
- Flashlights and extra bulbs
- Battery-operated lanterns. (Candles and kerosene lanterns are fire hazards.)
- Working fire extinguishers
- Battery-operated radio

- Extra batteries
- Matches
- Clock (wind-up or battery-operated)
- Blankets or sleeping bags.
- Scissors
- Plastic garbage bags
- Map of the area
- Clean change of clothes & rain gear

- List of important phone numbers (family, physicians, etc.)
- Copy of insurance policy
- Credit cards and cash
- An extra set of car keys.
- Inexpensive rabbit-ears television antennas to use when cable goes out.
- Special items for infants, elderly or disabled family members.

Sandbag Construction

Buffalo District
US Army Corps of Engineers

The use of sandbags is a simple, but effective, way to prevent or reduce floodwater damage. Properly filled and placed, sandbags can act as a barrier to divert moving water around instead of through buildings. Sandbag construction does not guarantee a watertight seal, but is satisfactory for use in most situations. Sandbags are also used successfully to prevent overtopping of levied streams and for training current flow to specific areas.

Untied sandbags are recommended for most situations. Tied sandbags should only be used for special situations when pre-filling and stockpiling may be required for specific purposes such as filling holes, holding objects in position or to form barriers backed by supportive planks. Tied sandbags are generally easier to handle and to stockpile, however sandbag filling operations can generally best be accomplished at or near the placement site and tying of bags would waste valuable time and effort. If the bags are pre-filled at a distant location, due consideration must be given to transportation vehicles and placement site access.

The most commonly use bags are untreated burlap sacks available from feed or hardware stores. Empty bags can be stockpiled for emergency use and will be serviceable for several years if properly stored. Filled bags of earth material will deteriorate quickly.

A heavy bodied or sandy soil is most desirable for filling sandbags, but any usable material at or near the site has definite advantages. Course sand could leak out through the weave of the bag (to prevent this double bag the material). Gravely or rocky soils are generally poor choices because of their permeability characteristics.

Sandbag barriers can easily be constructed by two people, as most individuals have the physical capabilities to carry or drag a sandbag weighing approximately 30 pounds.

HOW TO FILL A SANDBAG

Filling sandbags is a two-person operation: One member of the team should place the empty bag between or slightly in front of widespread feet with arms extended. The throat of the bag is folded to form a collar and held with the hands in a position that will enable the other team member to empty a rounded shovel full of material into the open end. The person holding the sack should be standing with knees slightly flexed and head and face as far away from the action of the shovel as practical.

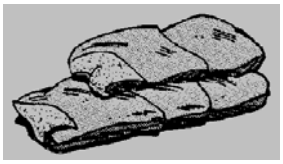
The shoveler should carefully release the rounded shovel full of soil into the throat of the bag. Haste in this operation can result in undue spillage and added work. The use of safety goggles and gloves is desirable and sometimes necessary.

For large-scale operations, filling sandbags can be expedited by using bag holding racks, metal funnels, and power loading equipment. However, the special equipment required is not always available during an emergency. Bags should not be filled more than half full or less than one-third their capacity.

Sandbag Construction

Buffalo District
US Army Corps of Engineers

PLACEMENT



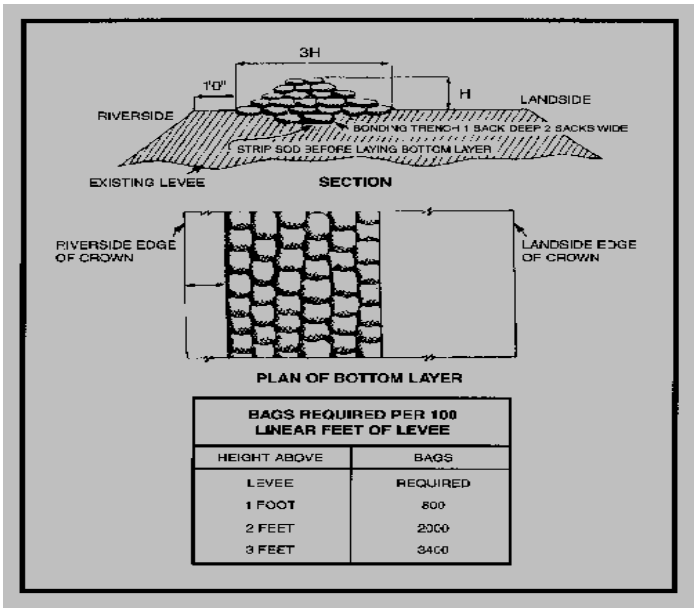
Remove any debris from the area where bags are to be placed. Place the l/2-filled bags lengthwise and parallel to the direction of flow. Fold the open end of the unfilled portion of the bag to form a triangle. (If bed bags are used, flatten or fire the tied end.) Place succeeding bags on the folded or fired portion of the previous bag and stamp into place to eliminate voids and form a tight seal. Stagger the joint connections when multiple layers are necessary, for unsupported layers over three courses high, use pyramid placement method.

PYRAMID PLACEMENT

Pyramid placement is used to increase the height of sandbag protection.

Place the sandbags to form a pyramid by alternating bags placed crosswise and bags placed lengthwise).

Stamp each bag in place, overlap sacks, maintain staggered joint placement and tuck under any loose ends.



BAGS REQUIRED PER 100 LINEAR FEET OF LEVEE

HEIGHT ABOVE LEVEE	BAGS REQUIRED
1 FOOT	800
2 FEET	2000
3 FEET	3400

RIVERSIDE FLOOD CONTROL DISTRICT SANDBAG POLICY

The Riverside Flood Control District maintains a limited stockpile of sandbags intended to supplement the stocks of local fire departments, during actual flood emergency situations. If you anticipate a need for sandbags, please obtain them from local retail stores ahead of time, during regular business hours.

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SANDBAG SUPPLIERS

AA Saddleback Sand and Gravel
6090 Etiwanda Ave.
Mira Loma
909/685-8492

Delivery Available
Pick Up Available

Corona Dee Gee Co.
5971 Jurupa Ave.
Riverside
909/737-4496

Delivery Available

Home Depot
(Various Locations)

Pick Up Available
(self-fill only)

Sepulveda Building Materials
32605 Harry Oliver Trail
Thousand Palms
760/343-0272

Delivery Available
Pick Up Available

…Also check your telephone directory for suppliers in your area.

Local Fire Department
Emergency only
Small quantities available
909/940-6934 (service center)

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WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT FEDERAL DISASTER ASSISTANCE AND FEDERAL FLOOD INSURANCE

DO YOU HAVE THESE KINDS OF REACTIONS ABOUT BUYING A FLOOD INSURANCE?

DID YOU KNOW THAT:

- Before most forms of Federal disaster assistance are offered, the President must declare a major disaster?
- More than 90 percent of all disasters are not Presidentially declared?
- Flood insurance claims are paid even if the President does not declare a disaster.
- Floods are the most common natural disaster?

WHAT TO ASK YOUR INSURANCE AGENT.

- Do I have flood insurance?
- Do I qualify for a preferred risk policy? You do if are in flood zones "B" or "C".
- How much flood insurance should I purchase?
- How much contents coverage should I purchase?
- Should I consider a three-year policy to reduce my premiums?

➢ For more information about the National Flood Insurance Program's Preferred-Risk policy, ask your insurance agent or call the NFIP's toll-free number, 1-800-427-9662.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT FEDERAL DISASTER ASSISTANCE AND FEDERAL FLOOD INSURANCE

FACTS AND MYTHS….

These are the most common myths people have about flood insurance, it is important that you know the facts before you make a decision about purchasing flood insurance.

MYTH: "Flood insurance is only available for homeowners."

FACT: Flood insurance is available to protect homes, condominiums and nonresidential buildings including farm and commercial structures in participating communities. Contents coverage also is available, so coverage is available to renters as well.

MYTH: "I can't buy flood insurance because my home has been flooded previously."

FACT: If your community is participating in the NFIP, it doesn't matter that your home has been flooded before. You may still buy flood insurance.

MYTH: "I live outside the floodplain, so I don't need to buy flood insurance."

FACT: More than 25 percent of the National Flood Insurance Program's (NFIP) flood insurance claims are for structures outside identified flood plains. Floods can occur anywhere. An area that is near a levee or a dam is at risk of levee or dam breakage. People who face even moderate flood risks should get insurance, which can be purchased for as little as $101 per

MYTH: "Federal disaster aid will reimburse me for losses. Therefore, I don't need to buy flood insurance for my home and belongings."

FACT: Federal Emergency Management Agency disaster aid is only available during Presidentially declared disasters. Federal aid may often be in the form of a loan that you must pay back with interest. Flood insurance policies pay claims whether or not a disaster is declared.

MYTH: "I can only buy federal flood insurance through the federal government."

FACT: You can buy federal flood insurance through most major private insurance companies and licensed property insurance agents who sell homeowners' or property insurance.

MYTH: "My standard home owners' insurance will cover me if my house is damaged or destroyed in a flood."

FACT: Homeowners' insurance does not cover flood damage. Federal flood insurance, purchased through your insurance agent or company, is the only guaranteed flood insurance coverage available for your home.

MYTH: "It is too late for me to purchase insurance."

FACT: You can purchase flood insurance anytime in a participating community. However, there is a 30-day waiting period after you have applied and paid the premium before the policy is in effect. The policy will not, however, cover a loss in progress.

SO, WHAT'S SO GREAT ABOUT FLOOD INSURANCE?

Homeowners, business owners, and renters can all purchase flood insurance, as long as their community participates in the NFIP. Flood insurance puts you in control: you don't have to wait in lines or qualify for disaster assistance that you may have to pay back with interest. You can buy flood insurance no matter where you live in high, low, or moderate-risk areas, as long as your community participates in the NFIP. Flood insurance claims are handled quickly so flood victims can recover quickly. When you file a flood insurance claim, you can get a partial payment immediately, so you can start recovering faster. Flood insurance reimburses you for all covered losses. Homeowners can get up to $250,000 of coverage and businesses up to $500,000. There is separate contents coverage, so renters can get flood insurance, too. Maintaining a flood insurance policy is one of the most important things you can do to protect yourself and reduce the cost of flooding disasters.

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IF AN EVACUATION IS ADVISED……..

DURING AN EVACUATION

- If advised to evacuate, do so immediately. Use travel routes recommended by local authorities.
- Don't try to cross water flowing above your knees.
- Evacuation is much simpler and safer before floodwaters become too deep for ordinary vehicles to drive through.
- Listen to a battery-operated radio for news, updates and evacuation instructions.
- Follow recommended evacuation routes-shortcuts may be blocked.
- Leave early enough to avoid being marooned by flooded roads.

DRIVING IN FLOODED STREETS

- Do not drive where water is covering the road. You can be stranded or trapped. Also, parts of the road may be washed out.
- Do not try to cross waters of unknown depth. The water may be much deeper than it looks. Avoid dips and low spots.
- If your car stalls in a flooded area, abandon it as soon as possible. Floodwater can rise rapidly and sweep a car and its occupants away.

AFTER A FLOOD

- Return home when authorities say it is safe.
- Let qualified specialists inspect your home and make repairs to structural damage and utility breaks before you re-enter.
- When inspecting your home for the first time, use a flashlight, not a torch or lantern. Sniff for gas leaks.
- Wear rubber-soled shoes and rubber gloves in case of severed electrical lines.
- Don't turn on electrical switches
- Check electrical circuits only when electricity has been shut off.
- Don't use flooded electrical appliances until they have been repaired.
- Don't drink municipal water until the health department has declared it safe.
- Don't rush to pump out a flooded basement.